

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Wednesday 17 November 2021

14:00

Council Chamber, County Buildings, Stafford

John Tradewell
Director of Corporate Services
9 November 2021

A G E N D A

1. **Welcome to New Members (if any)**
2. **Apologies**
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting Held on 1 July 2021** (Pages 1 - 6)
4. **Update on Key Issues** (Pages 7 - 16)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
5. **NASACRE Update** (Pages 17 - 18)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
6. **Update on Agreed Syllabus review process** (Pages 19 - 22)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
7. **Agreed Syllabus conference** (Pages 23 - 28)

See separate agenda in the report



8. **Annual Report for 2020-2021** (Pages 29 - 52)
 Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
9. **The SACRE Budget 2021-2022** (Pages 53 - 54)
 Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
10. **Development Plan 2021-2022** (Pages 55 - 60)
 Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
11. **Applications for variation of practice** (Pages 61 - 62)
 Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
12. **Date of future meetings**
- 2 February 2022 2pm
 29 June 2022 2pm
 16 November 2022 2pm
- 1 February 2023 2pm
 28 June 2023 2pm
 15 November 2023 2pm

Membership

Mohamed Sedky	Vickie Longson
Linda Goodwin	Lydia Bartlett
Julie Thompson	Shaun Miles
Tajinder Singh	Maddy Bell
G Devadason	Harold Gurden
Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf (Chairman)	Zoe Cahalan
Sam Kirwan	Vicky Priestley
Dr Laow Panyasiri	Philip Atkins, OBE
Mohamed Parekh	Paul Northcott
Sam Phillips	Mike Wilcox
Lauren Nicholson Ward	Ian Horsewell
Judy Wyman	Kath Perry, MBE
Gabi Oldfield	Paul Snape

MINUTES

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Meeting - 1 July 2021

Present: Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf, Linda Goodwin, Mohamed Parekh, Sam Phillips, Vickie Longson, Vicky Priestley, Philip Atkins, OBE, Paul Northcott, Samantha Thompson and Mike Wilcox

Apologies for absence: Julie Thompson, Tajinder Singh, Sam Kirwan, Lauren Nicholson Ward, Judy Wyman, Gabi Oldfield, Lydia Bartlett, Shaun Miles, Maddy Bell, Harold Gurden, Zoe Cahalan and Ian Horsewell

Also in attendance - Mary Gale (SACRE advisor) and Mandy Pattinson (Clerk)

PART ONE

Prior to the start of the meeting a minutes silence was held for all those who had been affected by the Pandemic.

89. Welcome to New Members

The Chairman welcomed new members, both those present and those who unfortunately hadn't been able to attend.

For the benefit of new members, the Chairman explained the format of the SACRE, its statutory requirements and method of voting.

It was reported that Councillor Price had been replaced on SACRE as he was now the Cabinet Member for Education. Councillor Atkins questioned the authority of the Cabinet Member to agree membership of the SACRE.

NOTE by Clerk: SACRE Membership of Committee A is agreed by the Cabinet Member. Local Authority members are appointed by the Political Group leaders and reported to Council.

90. Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2021

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 3 February 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Paragraph 2 Page 3, last line should read 'The LA would be asked to adopt the membership of the SACRE to be members of the ASC.'

91. An Update on Key Issues report

SACRE considered the report which covered the main issues affecting Religious Education (RE) in Staffordshire since the last meeting. Further to the written report, the following information was provided:

- Training had halted during the pandemic. There had been an increase in email activity from teachers keen to get advice on their Continuous Professional Development.
- With regard to the Sacred Spaces project, it was hoped that this would resume in September. Funding of the project would be discussed under the budget report. Information on the project would be sent to Vicky Priestley.
- It was reported that the Church of England had recently issued guidance on Collective Worship. This would be added to the draft guidance currently being prepared for schools.
- The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC) meetings had been held online. A further report on their work would be considered at the November meeting.
- SIAMs referred to Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools who had their own inspection regimes.

RESOLVED: That the report be received.

92. An Update on NASACRE (including conference feedback)

The Chairman explained to new members that NACACRE stood for National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education and that he was also the Treasurer for the organisation. He reported that the recent online annual conference held on 24 May 2021 had been a huge success with nearly 200 people joining. He had attended alongside Mary Gale the advisor.

The main speakers/items discussed had been:

- Professor Denise Cush from the University of Bath who presented findings of the ways authority is expressed in religions, worldviews and RE.
- Richard Kueh the RE lead in Ofsted. A separate report was to be considered later on the agenda.
- AREIAC was working on a joint project with NASACRE on collective worship and how schools/SACREs and Local Authorities (LA) are supporting it.
- NASACRE had carried out a Freedom of Information request to every LA regarding funding for SACREs. The response rate had been high. The results had been varied but showed that most SACREs did not receive the share of the Combined Schools Support Block Grant (CSSBG) that they should in order to support SACRE. Staffordshire received approximately 2% which was average. The report had provided useful evidence in NASCREs discussions with Government.
- NASACRE was working to standardise the SACRE annual report format.

Due to the success of the online event, there would now be a number of monthly online training events ranging from how to use National data, to support for new SACRE members.

RESOLVED: That the update report be noted.

93. Procedures for Agreed Syllabus review

The Education Act 1996 required Local Authority's to review its locally agreed syllabus every five years. Staffordshire's syllabus was due to be reviewed in 2021. A Standing Conference had to be established in order to agree the revised syllabus which would then be formally approved by the County Council.

The Chairman had written to the Cabinet Member to gain his approval to establish the conference and carry out the review using SACRE membership. The request had been raised but no formal response had been received. The Clerk would contact the Cabinet Member to gain a response.

The procedure for carrying out the review was listed in the report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The SACRE Meeting was adjourned in order for the Agreed Syllabus Conference to be convened.

94. Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Conference

The Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) was convened.

Rev Metcalf was appointed as the Chair of the Conference.

The first stage of the review was to gain feedback from the Schools and stakeholders on how the current syllabus was being used and any problems/issues with it.

The second part would take into account any developments or changes in RE and collective worship since the previous syllabus was written.

Mary Gale outlined the work undertaken so far and different ways of collecting the information needed from schools and stakeholders. Working Groups would be established to consider specific themes within the Syllabus. SACRE Members would be asked if they wished to join these.

A business case had been agreed by Entrust which would provide for £3,000 to complete the review. This would include the additional costs of the advisor.

ASC's would be held directly after SACRE meetings and it was hoped that the Syllabus would be finalised and approved by the Cabinet Member in June 2022 with a launch prior to Autumn term in September 2022.

RESOLVED: Each of the four SACRE Committees agreed to the Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Review and the work undertaken.

The SACRE meeting for formally reconvened.

95. Ofsted research into the teaching of RE under the 2019 Education Framework (EIF)

The SACRE were informed that Ofsted had recently published a research review into RE and what made a good RE Curriculum. To compliment the review, Ofsted were also carrying out a number of 'deep dive' reviews in schools to establish how RE was being delivered in the class rooms. This would result in a further report. It was intended that both of these reviews would be used in the Agreed Syllabus review.

Following a question on what the penalty was for schools who failed to teach RE, it was reported that they would be deemed to be in breach of the law and could be put under increased scrutiny from Ofsted. The local authority could also approach the Secretary of State if they were concerned. It was noted that although SACRE had no direct responsibility for academies they could refer specific schools to the regional office if they believed that no RE was being taught.

Academies did not have to use the County Councils Agreed Syllabus, but they did need to identify what syllabus they were using. It was noted that aided schools often used their own syllabus.

The link between RE and mental health was discussed and if schools failed to deliver RE could it be argued that they were not meeting their requirements to safeguard the mental health of pupils? It was reported that Ofsted could look at this under their remit.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

96. Current budget 2021-22 and previous budget 2020-21

SACRE considered the update report on both the 2020/21 budget and the current 2021/22 budget. The meeting was informed that there was a contingency fund of £1003.50 which could go towards the Annual Syllabus Review and the launch of the new syllabus in 2022.

There had been a small increase in this years budget. Funds were still available for 2021/22 projects. It was suggested that £1,000 be allocated to the Sacred Spaces project to further expand the work in the Secondary Schools.

The previously agreed Engage, Explore Reflect project could also be expanded and hopefully start again in September. This could cost up to £2,000.

It was also reported that the Agreed Syllabus review would require £2,000 which would be funded from the SACRE Budget.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted and the following funding approved:

- £1,000 Sacred Spaces Project;
- £2,000 Engage, Explore Reflect;
- £2,000 Agreed Syllabus review.

97. Applications for variation of practice

There were none on this occasion.

98. Date of future meetings

It was noted that the next meeting was due to be held on Wednesday, 17 November 2021.

**Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf
Chairman**

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
17th November 2021
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and
Communities
An Update on Key Issues

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present members of SACRE with a brief update on key issues that have developed or arisen since the last meeting of SACRE.

2 Summary

2.1 Members of SACRE will receive a brief report on a number of key issues. These are matters which have either been raised at previous SACRE meetings and which have moved forward or matters on which it is appropriate to brief members of SACRE.

3 Recommendation

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report and note the contents

4 Background

4.1 Since the summer term meeting of the SACRE there have been developments in a number of areas which had previously been agenda items for SACRE or which have local or national importance for RE.

4.2 Members will be briefed on these key developments.

5 Equal Opportunities

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

6 Financial implications

6.1 Financial implications may be raised by individual items. These have been dealt with elsewhere or will be raised at future meetings of SACRE.

Contact Officer

Mary Gale 07816374873

Key Issues Report November 17th, 2021

i) Westhill Legacy project- Explore, Engage, Reflect in conjunction with Youth Net. Autumn Term 2021.

This project is restarting this term. A timetable of workshop support for schools has been devised. The chosen schools are mostly concentrated in the Newcastle area this term. The workshops started in October 2021 and will continue this term until December. It is hoped that seven schools will have had support by the end of term. Mary Gale will visit the schools to receive feedback and quality assure the project in November and December. This feedback will be presented at the February 2022 meeting.

SACRE have funded this project through commissioning the Entrust Minority Ethnic Achievement Service- MEAS- to deliver workshops on Islam in conjunction with Youth Net who will deliver workshops on Christianity.

ii) Continuous Professional Development

Mary Gale has been supporting RE leaders in several schools through email, virtual meetings and face to face meetings. This has involved supporting schools in understanding *greater depth* in RE assessment, whole class reading through RE texts, planning and preparation for Ofsted '*deep dives*'.

Planning support is needed most. Mary has re written some of the planning to support schools. One topic that needed a refresh was learning about *Sacred Texts* in year 5.

Church of England schools have also asked for support with preparation for their next SIAMS inspection. Mary Gale has facilitated this.

iii) Update on Sacred Spaces/ Christianity conference. The Big Picture work in conjunction with Youth Net

This project is aimed at key stage 3-years 7, 8 and 9 in High schools.

This conference has been designed to give an overview of Christianity and it covers Worship, Prayer, the Bible, Church, Jesus and Big Questions.

This experiential learning is supported with an introduction looking at 'Who is God' and then an opportunity for Questions and Answers at the end.

This is now being advertised and schools have been offered the opportunity to take part.

A timetable of support for schools will then be devised.

iv) Ofsted reports update

The Ofsted schedule of inspections resumed fully in Autumn 2021.

References to RE are made in 150 out of 3,000 national reports so far. On the whole the references indicate that RE needs to improve.

One school in Staffordshire had a deep dive into RE this term and was found to be lacking. They had confused the Agreed Syllabus with the resource called Understanding Christianity

and told the inspectors that UC was the AS for Staffordshire. Mary Gale is now supporting this school.

There will be a further update in the February 2022 meeting.

v) Report writing for the LA

The consultant -Mary Gale was requested to write a report on the impact of the SACRE on schools over the past couple of years.

Here is a copy of the report.

How SACRE has facilitated the improvements in education outcomes for Staffordshire schools over the past two years.

All schools in Staffordshire have available to them support for the delivery of RE and Collective Worship this is through the work of the SACRE.

The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus is the primary document that supports the delivery of quality RE, this is written and agreed by the SACRE

Monitoring of Staffordshire school RE provision is carried out by SACRE.

- There was a 95% increase in responses in 2021 compared to previous years. This increase was due to the fact that governors were encouraged to support their schools in carrying out the monitoring through the Entrust Governor Information Pack.
- This has resulted in governors and leaders being more aware of their statutory duties with regard to the delivery of RE and RS teaching in their schools.
- The Agreed syllabus has a positive impact on teaching and learning in schools as evidenced through the monitoring of provision survey.
- 100% of the responding schools agreed that the Agreed Syllabus clearly presents what is required by their school in RE.
- 100% of the responding schools agreed that the Agreed Syllabus provides effective guidance for assessment in RE.
- Provision of RE for pupils is good with over 70% of responding schools stating that they meet the statutory requirements in line with the recommendations of the SACRE in the Agreed Syllabus guidance.
- Over 80% of responding schools had reviewed RE provision in the past 3 years as a result of prompts from SACRE and had improved their RE delivery as a result.
- Overall, Religious Studies (RS) GCSE results from the most recent external data base found that the aggregated national results of state funded schools in 2019 for Grade 9-5 were at 60.9% compared to Staffordshire's 50.9% - therefore Staffordshire is closely in line with national for Grades 9-5. Comparison from previous years have found a similar pattern.
- The aggregated national results of state funded schools in 2019 for Grade 9-4 are at 72.4% compared to Staffordshire's 2019 Grade 9-4 are at 64.7%

In 2020 Staffordshire results improved to 74% for Grade 9-4 compared to the National of 78%. (We know these results have to be treated with some caution due to the anomaly over the awarding of grades)

- Where schools were identified through external data bases and monitoring as not teaching RE to its pupils, interventions were carried out and the process for leaders to receive support was strengthened eg through Headteacher Performance Management support.
- Training, pre covid, supported schools and their staff in teaching and assessing RE this was in the form of network meetings and day courses. Quality assurance from these courses indicated that this improved the delivery of RE and improved the % of pupils working at the expected standard as per the Staffordshire Agree Syllabus assessment criteria.
- Support during Covid-19 has been through email. Support for planning and collective worship has been higher than in previous years. SACRE have initiated the provision of resources such as planning grids and Collective worship to support the delivery of quality RE and Worship.
- Impact of support for the Agreed Syllabus through workshops and visits to school have through quality assurance shown that they have a positive impact on the understanding of diversity and world views.

vi) Attendance at NASACRE training

Mary Gale, the associate consultant, attended virtual training on the writing of the annual report and the implications for the next annual report from the SACRE.

See Appendix 1 for the new format for next year's report.

vii) Association of Religious Education Inspectors and Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC) and the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) Meetings.

Mary Gale attended a virtual Midlands AREIAC group meeting on 22nd June. Items discussed included.

Ofsted's Research Review
[Nobody Stands Nowhere - YouTube \(eventbrite.com\)](#) Theos Think Tank
A Statement of Entitlement and Expectation" Collective worship CofE Education Office
Templeton Grant to fund a toolkit of materials
Ian Stevenson's Research "Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation"

The next meeting is on 30th November 2021

The next local meeting of the NATRE group will be held in Chadsmead Primary Lichfield on 23rd November 2021 at 4.30. Mary Gale is hoping to attend.

viii) Standards and achievement

Staffordshire SACRE reviews and discusses standards and achievement in RE during meetings as appropriate. There were no external examination results from the summer of 2020 due to the pandemic.

Throughout 2020-21 Religious Education network meetings which schools can choose to attend would have included moderation of standards across year groups and schools to support schools with the judgements they make against the revised 2016 Agreed Syllabus Age Related Expectations. There were no face-to-face courses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The advisor offered to provide support information through an online virtual webinar, but no schools took up this offer.

a) Public examination entries in Religious Education (RE) and Religious Studies (RS)

In the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, legal requirements state that RE should be provided as part of the basic curriculum for all registered pupils attending a maintained school, this includes High schools.

Background

At Key Stage 4 all pupils should fulfil their entitlement by following as a basis an accredited specification (from a recognised examination board) in Religious Studies. Schools should provide reasonable time for pupils to complete this and if appropriate, to attain an external qualification.

At KS5 pupils may follow the programme of study provided within the Agreed Syllabus or an accredited specification (from a recognised examination board) in Religious Studies.

Schools that do not offer this opportunity to their students are requested to apply to the SACRE for a variation of practice. This academic year no schools have applied for, or been granted, a variation.

Staffordshire SACRE recognises the independence of Academies and Free Schools. However, it commends the Agreed Syllabus to them as a constructive and collaborative way to meet their legal requirements in Religious Education.

Staffordshire SACRE recognises the independence of Academies and Free Schools. However, it commends the Agreed Syllabus to them as a constructive and collaborative way to meet their legal requirements in Religious Education.

Update

During lock down due to the Covid-19 pandemic this was a not a priority for schools, although schools made reasonable adjustments to adhere to the requirement. In the majority of schools RE was not a priority. In summer 2021 there were improvements to the delivery of RE and RS. Schools are now in the autumn term offering their normal RE and RS delivery. They spent the time during Covid-19 evaluating their planning and as a result some schools are reporting that their delivery is now improving.

b) Overall GCSE results 2020-21 not just for RE

The GCSE system continues to use the new grading of 9-1, with 9 being the exceptional grade. There were no external public examinations in 2020-21.

Grades were awarded following different processes in 2020 and 2021 after public exams were cancelled for all schools in the UK. This led to a large increase in the share of top grades.

c) Religious Studies GCSE 2020

Background information

The number of pupils taking GCSE Religious Studies in England has remained stable in 2020 despite ongoing challenges, reflecting the relevance of the subject and its popularity among young people.

In England, RS GCSE entries for the full course fell by less than 1% to 225,719 compared to 227,913 in 2019. Overall entries in England, including both full and short courses, fell by 2.3% to 243,786, compared with 249,443 in 2019.

Full course entries in 2020 were still almost one third higher than in 2010.

Full and short course entries reached a high of 461,795 in 2011 but declined rapidly as schools in England opted not to enter pupils into the short course following Government policy changes, despite a requirement among all schools, including Academies, to provide Religious Education to all pupils at all key stages.

The key outcomes for Religious Education in England at Key Stage 4 in 2020 are as follows:

There were 225,719 entries in England, a fall of less than 1% from 2019 (227,913 England

Despite a decline since the peak in entries, the number of pupils receiving a full course GCSE in Religious Studies in England in 2020 (225,719) is still 32% greater than in 2010 (170,767).

Staffordshire information

We cannot yet report to SACRE precisely the data for our schools regarding RE and RS however the following information provided by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales and the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education gives the national picture for A-level and GCSE entries this year.

Staffordshire LA have been unable to provide a break down school by school of the RE/RS grades. This request is being investigated. However, there are some overall figures to report.

Key outcomes

Staffordshire % entries for the full RS course in 2020= 46%.

England % entries for the full RS course in 2020 = 39%

Therefore, Staffordshire entered 5% more than England.

Staffordshire % achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2020= 74%

England % achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2020= 78%

Therefore Staffordshire % of students achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2020 was 4% lower than the England average.

Historically

2019 National Average 9 to 4= 72.4%

2019 Staffordshire Average 9 to 4= 64.7%

Therefore Staffordshire % of students achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2020 improved by 9% compared to the England results which improved by 6%.

Caution- grades were awarded following different processes in 2020 and 2021 after public exams were cancelled for all schools in the UK. This led to a large increase in the share of top grades.

d) Religious Studies A-level

The number of Religious Studies A-level exam entries has declined at a lower rate than other humanities in 2020, performing better than some subjects despite a backdrop of overall declining entries and changes to the examination system.

15,692 RS A-level entries were recorded in England and Wales this year, compared with 17,490 in 2019. This represents a decline of 10.3%.

The overall number of A-Level entries in England and Wales fell in 2020 year 2.6% from 768,217 in 2019 to 748,905 in 2020. The reduction reflects both a smaller cohort of 18-year-olds (599,393 in 2020 compared with 618,873 in 2019 [Office for National Statistics]) and changes to the assessment of A level and AS examinations that had an impact in 2018, when most schools changed their policies to recommending three A-levels, versus four in previous years.

The number of AS exam entries also declined by 24.6% following AS and A-level reforms. The demographic shift and changes to the examination system mean that it is difficult to draw concrete conclusions from comparisons with previous years.

The key outcomes of the 2020 A level results in England and Wales for Religious Education are as follows:

15,692 RS A-level entries were recorded, a decrease of 10.3% on 2019.

Despite the decrease in entries for RS, there are still 41% more entries than in 2003 (11,132 entries were recorded in 2003).

The relative stability of entries suggests that candidates continue to recognise the value of RS A-level for Higher Education entry, graduate employment, and as a valuable life skill.

It has not been possible to access the 2020 A level results for Staffordshire schools to date.

Agenda Item 4 Appendix 1

Format for the new Annual Report from Sept 2021 onwards

NASACRE in conjunction with the DfE will be carrying out a national analysis of Annual Reports using this framework from September 2021.

1. An introduction including:

- Table of contents
- Words from the Chair of SACRE
 - welcoming new members, celebrating successes, thanks, etc.
- Overview, number of times SACRE has met and attendance at meetings, venues, and a brief

overview of content of these meetings including Self-evaluation too – link to SACRE

Development plan

- Overview as above for the ASC if this is currently sitting, working groups, progress
- Executive summary (if report is over 10 A4 pages long this might be helpful as a separate document, so readable for schools?)

2. A section on RE (statutory responsibilities) including:

- The local agreed syllabus and RE in schools, including whether any academies have adopted

the LAS

- Monitoring the AS, relationship with an AS review
- Work of the ASC and associated working parties if this is currently sitting showing progress, links to other work nationally or locally
- Standards and monitoring of RE
 - This can include monitoring by scrutinising exam data, conversations with schools, teacher groups, website trawls, presentations from teachers. What has SACRE done and how has the monitoring helped SACRE to commend successes and support improvements?
 - Have any schools applied for or achieved REQM awards?
- Teacher training and materials and advice for schools
- Other information (withdrawals and how the SACRE monitors, advises or supports schools with this, complaints)
- Advice to the LA

3. A section on Collective Worship (statutory responsibilities) including:

- Standards and monitoring of CW

- This can include monitoring by scrutinising Ofsted reports, conversations with schools, teacher groups, website trawls, presentations from teachers. What has SACRE done and how has the monitoring helped SACRE to commend successes and support improvements?

- Determinations

- How many are current and how many have been applied for and what happened? Link to Determination Process documents online. Is that refreshed, or does it need updating?

<http://www.nasacre.org.uk> Page 2

- Teacher training provided (locally or national training circulated to schools) materials and advice for schools

- Other information (withdrawals and how the SACRE monitors, advises or supports schools with this, Complaints)

- Advice to the LA

4. A section on links with other bodies

- National bodies, e.g. NASACRE, the REC, central faith and belief organisations

- Local bodies, e.g. Dioceses, Inter Faith Groups, Peace Walks, HMD events

5. A section on other areas of SACRE involvement locally

- Governor training

- Advice on issues within the community, e.g. Ramadan advice for schools in partnership with

the local communities

6. A section on SACRE's own arrangements (statutory responsibilities) including:

- Professional and administrative support and how the LA supports the SACRE (clerking, adviser, links to council initiatives)

- Membership, representation & recruitment - quoracy, issues and successes with recruitment

- Training for SACRE (and ASC) members

- Finance given to SACRE for its work

7. Appendices

- Table of GCSE – short and full, A/S & A Level RS results

- Details on CPD provided to schools

- Any LA/SACRE policy statements on RE or CW

- Development plan tied to funding
- Circulation details for this AR

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
17th November 2021
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and
Communities
An Update on NASACRE

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present members of SACRE with a brief update on key issues that have developed or arisen since the last meeting of SACRE.

2 Summary

2.1 Members of SACRE will receive a brief report on a number of NASACRE issues. These are matters on which it is appropriate to brief members of SACRE.

3 Recommendation

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the verbal report.

4 Background

4.1 NASACRE is the national body of SACRE's. National meetings and conferences are held to which members of SACRE are invited and encouraged to attend. These have been held virtually due to Covid-19. Issues are discussed which have local or national importance for RE.

4.2 Members will be briefed on any key developments.

5 Equal Opportunities

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

6 Financial implications

6.1 Financial implications may be raised by individual items. These have been dealt with elsewhere or will be raised at future meetings of SACRE.

Contact Officer:

Mary Gale

0781637487

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
17th November 2021
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and
Communities
Procedures for Agreed Syllabus review

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To remind members of the review process for the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education to SACRE Members.

2 Summary

2.1 Members of SACRE are reminded of the following-

2.2 The Education Act 1996 requires the Local Authority to institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus every five years after the completion of its last review.

The legal requirements regarding RE and school worship can be found in the Education Reform Act 1988 (Sections 6-13). They are reaffirmed in the Education Act 1996 (Sections 375-389) and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Sections 69-71)

2.3 The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus was last reviewed and issued to school in 2016. A review therefore falls due in 2021, ready for implementation in September 2022.

3 Recommendation

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the information

4 Background

4.1 The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus was last reviewed and issued to schools in 2016. A review therefore is now underway in 2021.

5 Equal Opportunities

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

6 Financial implications

6.1 Financial implications may be raised by individual items. These have been dealt with elsewhere or will be raised at future meetings of SACRE.

Contact Officer: Mary Gale 0781637487

Agenda item 6

Procedures for Agreed Syllabus (AS) review 2021- reminder

Staffordshire SACRE Agreed Syllabus review information due to be reviewed 2021-2022.

Requirements:

SACRE must consider reviewing its RE Agreed Syllabus after five years. An Agreed Syllabus Conference is set up to conduct the review.

Background:

The provision of a clear, well-structured, up-to-date and professional agreed syllabus is probably the single most important function of SACRE. Combined with on-going implementation training and resources, a new syllabus offers the possibility of raising achievement in RE in all local schools.

An agreed syllabus must *'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'*.

Education Act (1996 Section 375 (3)) / School Standards and Framework Act (1998, Schedule 19, para.5)

In 2021 and going forward... it is essential to consider how this relates to

- the revised inspection requirements
- to developments in assessment and in teaching and learning
- revised GCSEs
- the National Report from the Commission on RE
- the 'British Values' agenda
- all related educational change.
- Ofsted emphasis on curriculum planning-their intent, implementation and the impact.

An effective AS needs to be able to support schools in all three of these aspects.. It needs to have a good rationale for its structure; it needs to be operable in diverse school settings; it needs to show schools how they can see what impact the syllabus is having on pupil achievement.

In addition it is essential that the AS

- be clear about expected knowledge and understanding about religion(s) and belief(s)
- support and empower teachers to plan effectively
- offer coherent progression across the ages and key stages
- support clear and focused assessment

Religious education is not a national curriculum subject, but it must be taught in all state funded schools as enshrined in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The curriculum for religious education is to be determined locally by Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs) (Bastide, 2007), formed under Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs).

The focus is that: 'Every agreed syllabus shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.' (Great Britain. Education Act, 1996, section 375)

Local authorities are required to establish a SACRE which, as its chief aim, is to advise the said authority upon matters pertaining to religious education and collective worship.

The Education Reform Act states the composition of SACRE members, who may also comprise Agreed Syllabus Conferences, are drawn from: Christian and other faith communities, the Church of England, teachers' groups and democratically elected councillors.

In addition to this role, it can require a local authority to review its agreed syllabus which then necessitates a standing conference to review it. It is called an agreed syllabus because it must be agreed by those with an interest in the teaching of religious education.

This process continues in this November 2021 meeting.

SCC and Entrust are aware of the need to review the syllabus and have agreed for this to be carried out in house by the current advisor as agreed by SACRE

There is separate funding provided by SCC.

Religious Education Agreed Syllabus conference November 17th 2021.

Agenda

- Present
- Apologies
- Minutes of the July 1st meeting
- Matters Arising
- Update see below
- Date of next meeting

Update on Milestones.

Convening of SACRE conferences to review and consider the recommendations for the new AS on the following dates

July 1st 2021- **completed.**

November 17th 2021- **in process**

Set up SACRE mini working group to formulate exact wording- **volunteers have put forward their names and some have attended a meeting in October.**

Virtual meetings held so far October 10th and October 19th

Discussions with stakeholders Summer 2021 through to early Spring 2022-**commenced.**

Survey sent out to over 200 schools, academies and maintained covering all sectors.

See below for questions and access to the survey

Future actions

AS conferences February 2nd, 2022, and June 29th, 2022.

First presentation of the reviewed AS after discussions in Feb 2022.

Entrust support for illustrations summer 2022

Final presentation summer 2022 ready for confirmation

Launch event if deemed appropriate- twilight event late summer term 2022

Roll out to schools ready for September 2022

Opportunity to take part as SACRE members

Please could you encourage stakeholders to click the following link and provide comments on the current syllabus. These comments will support the review.

This is your opportunity to influence change.

Link to the survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/KR5XDTH>

To reference the AS for Staffordshire, just google

Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus

Stakeholder review of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education carried out by SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education)

Q1 Do you use the 2016 Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus?

Answer Choices
Yes
No
Some parts of it
We use another syllabus eg Diocesan
Comments

Q2 Please indicate education phase.

Answer Choices –
Infant
Junior
Primary
First
Middle
Secondary
All through school
Other

Q3 Please indicate type of school.

Answer Choices –
LA Maintained school
LA CE VC school
CE VA school
Roman Catholic school
Multi- Academy Trust
Single Academy Trust
Special school
Foundation school
Other

Q4 Are you aware of the three aims which underpin the current Agreed Syllabus- Exploring, Engaging, Reflecting?

Answer Choices –
Yes
No
Unsure
Comments

Q5 Are you aware of the six broad dimensions which support the aims?

- ie- 1. Beliefs, teachings and sources 2. Practices and ways of life
3. Expressing meaning 4. Identity, diversity and belonging 5. Meaning, purpose and truth, 6. Values and commitments

Answer Choices –
Yes
No
Unsure
Comments

Q6 The Agreed Syllabus provides me with guidance to scaffold my teaching of RE.

Answer Choices –
Yes
No
Unsure
Comments relevant to each key stage

Q7 Regarding this Agreed Syllabus review, would you be happy with:-

Answer Choices –
No changes
Minor changes
Major rewrite
Comments

Answer Choices –

Q8 The Assessment information within the Agreed Syllabus is user-friendly.

Answer Choices –
Yes
No
Unsure
Comments

Q9 The legal framework within the Agreed Syllabus is clear.

Answer Choices –
Yes
No
Unsure
Comments

Q10 What changes, if any, would you make to the Agreed Syllabus.

Answer Choices –

No changes

I would make the following changes:-

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
17th November 2021
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
Draft SACRE Annual Report 2020-21

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present to members of SACRE the Draft SACRE Annual Report 2020-21

2 Summary

2.1 This draft report covers the work of SACRE from September 2020- September 2021

3 Recommendation

3.1 That members of SACRE consider the report and offer advice on any omissions or errors so that a final report can be published and electronically distributed to schools.

4 Background

4.1 SACREs are required to produce an annual report on its work to provide information for schools.

5 Equal Opportunities

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

6 Financial implications

6.1 There are no immediate financial implications

Contact Officer :

Mary Gale 07816374873



**Staffordshire
Standing Advisory Council
on Religious Education-
DRAFT**

**30th Annual Report
September 2020 - September 2021**

From the Chair of SACRE

Staffordshire SACRE Annual Report for 2020-21 – Chair's Foreword



In writing this Foreword, introducing Staffordshire SACRE's Annual Report for 2020-21, I am deeply aware that we have all just passed through the most strange and disconcerting school year we have ever experienced. Schools continued in lockdown; pupils' education had to be radically restructured to enable home learning and online tuition; social distancing and other measures had a profound impact on relationships, personal development and mental health. School management teams and subject leaders, and indeed all teachers, wrestled daily with the challenge of sustaining pupils' engagement and progress across the whole curriculum.

Inevitably, the delivery of Religious Education and Collective Worship in Staffordshire schools was likewise disrupted by the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. Staffordshire SACRE therefore warmly thanks and commends RE teachers across the county, who strove faithfully to ensure pupils received their statutory entitlement. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some schools may even have been prompted to overhaul and refresh their RE or Collective Worship programmes, with pupils' activity and work materials being more immediately "visible" to parents!

Meetings of Staffordshire SACRE customarily include some interactive element, both to promote good relationships among SACRE members and also to engage in practical training or development. This element was lacking this year, with two SACRE meetings being held online, and the third taking place in the rather unsympathetic venue of the Council Chamber itself. Meetings sought to cover all relevant business, the most significant being the setting up of an Agreed Syllabus Conference to carry out the five-yearly review of the county's Agreed Syllabus in RE.

SACRE welcomed a new group of County Councill members in July, following the municipal elections in May, and continues to be appreciative of the support it receives both directly from the Council and indirectly through the Council's partnership with Entrust. Staffordshire in fact came out well in a National Association of SACREs survey, noted by the government, of how adequately local authorities were resourcing their SACREs, for which they have a statutory responsibility.

Staffordshire SACRE heartily applauds the county's RE Consultant and Advisor, Mary Gale, for the excellent support and encouragement she has been able to give to schools during lockdown. Necessarily there has been very limited contact in person with schools and teachers, but she has responded creatively and energetically to many online requests for resources and guidance and has ensured that SACRE itself has been furnished with as much data and documentation as could be collated, together with her invaluable advice and expertise.

I commend this Annual Report to the County Council and to all our county's schools.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael R. Metcalf".

Rev. Prebendary Michael Metcalf Chair Staffs SACRE

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1. Introduction

This report covers the work of the Staffordshire SACRE during the academic year from September 2020 to July 2021. Three meetings were held during the period covered by the report. Due to Covid-19 restrictions two meetings were held virtually and one meeting was face to face as Covid-19 restrictions started to lift.

This report is sent to the headteachers of all schools in the County, to the teachers' associations, to the local faith communities and NASACRE.

Further copies are available from:

The Clerk to SACRE,
Democratic Services,
Martin Street,
Stafford ST16 2LH.

The report is also available on the Entrust Religious Education website at <https://www.entrust-ed.co.uk>

The statutory duties of the SACRE are given in Appendix 1 Page 16

The membership of the SACRE is given in Appendix 2 Page 17

2. A summary of the work of the SACRE September 2020-2021

- Monitoring of Staffordshire primary school RE provision is normally carried out in late Spring but due to the COVID-19 pandemic this did not occur.
- Monitoring of Staffordshire Secondary school RE provision is normally carried out in late Spring but due to the COVID-19 pandemic this was did not occur
- The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus recommends that students at KS4 study an approved examination syllabus. It was not easy for the SACRE to monitor provision and attainment in externally accredited courses in Religious Studies in 2020 due to the pandemic, the only information available states the following.

The aggregated national results of state funded schools in 2019 for Grade 9-4 in RE are at 72.4% compared to Staffordshire's 2019 Grade 9-4 at 64.7%

In 2020 Staffordshire results improved to 74% for Grade 9-4 compared to the National of 78%. (We know these results must be treated with some caution due to the anomaly over the awarding of grades). Staffordshire LA have been unable to provide a break down school by school of the RE grades. Scrutiny of school websites also does not provide these results. The results that are available are still the 2019 results.

- Historically the Westhill Engage project in conjunction with Youth Net and the Entrust MEAS team supported over 400 pupils across Staffordshire to gain a greater understanding of Christianity and Islam and of living with diversity. This work was suspended from March 2020 onwards due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- Originally Entrust offered a programme of CPD to support RE teachers across the year, but due to the pandemic this did not go ahead.

Bespoke support therefore was provided in response to individual school requests, this was mostly addressed through email correspondence and virtual Teams meetings.

- Staffordshire SACRE continues to be represented at the NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs) AGM, NATRE Conference and AREIAC meetings. Some of these meetings have been held in the virtual environment.
- The partnership with NASACRE remains strong. Members of SACRE are also representatives on other SACREs and on bodies such as Stafford and District Friends.
- No determinations have been requested during this academic year.

3. Standards and quality of RE and CW provision

3.1 Monitoring

Monitoring for this academic year took place via email conversations, online conversations and face to face conversations where deemed safe due to Covid-19.

Where SACRE is concerned about the provision offered by schools then a formal procedure is followed. See Appendix 3.

General comments

- The syllabus is used in most schools that provided information, those who do not use the syllabus are Catholic or Church Aided schools, or in an Multi Academy Trusts.
- Schools are currently exploring best practices, to ensure consistency across the school.
- Schools are exploring ways to assess learning of RE but feel the syllabus provides support in this area.
- Local faith leaders contribute to CW in some areas of the county through the virtual environment, particularly where there were youth leaders to support this.
- Staff confidence in delivering collective worship is developing but dipped in community schools during Covid-19.
- Leader confidence in Church of England schools regarding the delivery of CW improved with the help of resources from SACRE. Some leaders stated that the delivery of CW improved because it was more consistent in its approach and well planned as they were observed by pupils and parents and staff through online platforms.
- Worship teams (pupils) organise worship occasionally but due to Covid-19 opportunities were limited.
- Varied weekly timetables of collective worship were the norm during Covid-19
- RE has become less effective in the sample of schools evaluated during Covid-19.
- Allocation of resources to RE has decreased in some schools since last year.
- RE makes a positive contribution to SMSC in most schools especially during online support for learners.

Primary and Secondary Monitoring headlines:

- Collective worship is led by a variety of staff. Online worship and assemblies were led mostly members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- The variety regarding the provision for collective worship varies from school to school with schools operating CW in their bubbles or online for the class or whole school.
- Collective worship continues to take many forms including thought for the day, Relationship and Health Education, and well-being aspects.

- Withdrawal from CW was not an issue due to Covid-19
- Schools have reviewed their collective worship provision in the past 2 years, especially during Covid-19.
- Schools agreed that the Agreed Syllabus clearly presents what is required by their school in RE.
- Provision of RE for pupils has decreased due to Covid-19 lockdown as schools concentrated on Maths and English
- The majority of schools contacted stated that they had reviewed their RE provision during lock down as they had time to do this.

3.2 Standards

Staffordshire SACRE reviews and discusses standards and achievement in RE during meetings as appropriate. There were no external examination results from the summer of 2020 due to the pandemic.

Throughout 2020-21 Religious Education network meetings which schools can choose to attend would have included moderation of standards across year groups and schools to support schools with the judgements they make against the revised 2016 Agreed Syllabus Age Related Expectations. There were no face-to-face courses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The advisor offered to provide support information through an online virtual webinar, but no schools took up this offer.

a) Public examination entries in Religious Education (RE) and Religious Studies (RS)

In the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, legal requirements state that RE should be provided as part of the basic curriculum for all registered pupils attending a maintained school, this includes High schools.

Background

At Key Stage 4 all pupils should fulfil their entitlement by following as a basis an accredited specification (from a recognised examination board) in Religious Studies. Schools should provide reasonable time for pupils to complete this and if appropriate, to attain an external qualification.

At KS5 pupils may follow the programme of study provided within the Agreed Syllabus or an accredited specification (from a recognised examination board) in Religious Studies. Schools that do not offer this opportunity to their students are requested to apply to the SACRE for a variation of practice. This academic year no schools have applied for, or been granted, a variation.

Staffordshire SACRE recognises the independence of Academies and Free Schools. However, it commends the Agreed Syllabus to them as a constructive and collaborative way to meet their legal requirements in Religious Education.

Staffordshire SACRE recognises the independence of Academies and Free Schools. However, it commends the Agreed Syllabus to them as a constructive and collaborative way to meet their legal requirements in Religious Education.

Update

During lock down due to the Covid-19 pandemic this was a not a priority for schools, although schools made reasonable adjustments to adhere to the requirement. In the majority of schools RE was not a priority. In summer 2021 there were improvements to the delivery of RE and RS. Schools are now in the autumn term offering their normal RE and RS delivery.

They spent the time during Covid-19 evaluating their planning and as a result some schools are reporting that their delivery is now improving.

b) Overall GCSE results 2020-21 not just for RE

The GCSE system continues to use the new grading of 9-1, with 9 being the exceptional grade. There were no external public examinations in 2020-21.

Grades were awarded following different processes in 2020 and 2021 after public exams were cancelled for all schools in the UK. This led to a large increase in the share of top grades.

c) Religious Studies GCSE 2020

Background information

The number of pupils taking GCSE Religious Studies in England has remained stable in 2020 despite ongoing challenges, reflecting the relevance of the subject and its popularity among young people.

In England, RS GCSE entries for the full course fell by less than 1% to 225,719 compared to 227,913 in 2019. Overall entries in England, including both full and short courses, fell by 2.3% to 243,786, compared with 249,443 in 2019.

Full course entries in 2020 were still almost one third higher than in 2010.

Full and short course entries reached a high of 461,795 in 2011 but declined rapidly as schools in England opted not to enter pupils into the short course following Government policy changes, despite a requirement among all schools, including Academies, to provide Religious Education to all pupils at all key stages.

The key outcomes for Religious Education in England at Key Stage 4 in 2020 are as follows:

There were 225,719 entries in England, a fall of less than 1% from 2019 (227,913 England). Despite a decline since the peak in entries, the number of pupils receiving a full course GCSE in Religious Studies in England in 2020 (225,719) is still 32% greater than in 2010 (170,767).

Staffordshire information

We cannot yet report to SACRE precisely the data for our schools regarding RE and RS however the following information provided by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales and the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education gives the national picture for A-level and GCSE entries this year.

Staffordshire LA have been unable to provide a break down school by school of the RE/RS grades. This request is being investigated. However, there are some overall figures to report.

Key outcomes

Staffordshire % entries for the full RS course in 2020= 46%.

England % entries for the full RS course in 2020 = 39%

Therefore, Staffordshire entered 5% more than England.

Staffordshire % achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2020= 74%

England % achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2020= 78%

Therefore Staffordshire % of students achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2020 was 4% lower than the England average.

Historically

2019 National Average 9 to 4= 72.4%

2019 Staffordshire Average 9 to 4= 64.7%

Therefore Staffordshire % of students achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2020 improved by 9% compared to the England results which improved by 6%.
Caution- grades were awarded following different processes in 2020 and 2021 after public exams were cancelled for all schools in the UK. This led to a large increase in the share of top grades.

d) Religious Studies A-level

The number of Religious Studies A-level exam entries has declined at a lower rate than other humanities in 2020, performing better than some subjects despite a backdrop of overall declining entries and changes to the examination system.

15,692 RS A-level entries were recorded in England and Wales this year, compared with 17,490 in 2019. This represents a decline of 10.3%.

The overall number of A-Level entries in England and Wales fell in 2020 year 2.6% from 768,217 in 2019 to 748,905 in 2020. The reduction reflects both a smaller cohort of 18-year-olds (599,393 in 2020 compared with 618,873 in 2019 [Office for National Statistics]) and changes to the assessment of A level and AS examinations that had an impact in 2018, when most schools changed their policies to recommending three A-levels, versus four in previous years.

The number of AS exam entries also declined by 24.6% following AS and A-level reforms. The demographic shift and changes to the examination system mean that it is difficult to draw concrete conclusions from comparisons with previous years.

The key outcomes of the 2020 A level results in England and Wales for Religious Education are as follows:

15,692 RS A-level entries were recorded, a decrease of 10.3% on 2019.

Despite the decrease in entries for RS, there are still 41% more entries than in 2003 (11,132 entries were recorded in 2003).

The relative stability of entries suggests that candidates continue to recognise the value of RS A-level for Higher Education entry, graduate employment, and as a valuable life skill. It has not been possible to access the 2020 A level results for Staffordshire schools to date.

3.3 Quality of teaching, quality of leadership and management

Informal monitoring revealed a picture in the primary schools that responded with a high number of schools engaging in regular reviews of their RE provision. This was due to Covid-19, as schools used time to review their RE provision so that on return to full time education, the curriculum would be fit for purpose. The picture was equally positive for provision in the secondary sector with the majority of schools demonstrating that they reviewed their provision.

Schools have the option to purchase further bespoke support and evaluation of their leadership of RE from Entrust. This is a voluntary option. One school in 2020 requested face to face support, and email support was provided for twelve schools following requests.

There has also been a programme of CPD available for schools. Schools did not book on this programme of CPD. Schools preferred to access support through email.

3.4 Teacher recruitment and retention, level of specialist provision

Information regarding monitoring, recruitment and retention continues to be reliant on the collation of evidence from advertisements in the educational press. There is no established method of gathering data within the LA.

Information gleaned from the national press indicated that there was a relatively low turnover of subject leaders at the end of the academic year with few changes taking place. This could be attributed to Covid-19.

Looking forward newly qualified teachers will be referred to as Early Career Teachers- ECTs

3.5 Resources

The work of the Entrust consultant for RE was carried out virtually due to Covid-19. This involved support for Religious Education planning and Collective worship. Resources were sent to schools to support online RE and CW. These were well received by schools.

4 Managing the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other stakeholders

4.1 SACRE meetings

Two virtual meetings were held on November 18th, 2020, and February 3rd 2021. The final meeting of the year on July 1st, 2021, was held as face to face at the Council Chambers in the County Buildings Stafford, ST16 3AD. All meetings were held at 2.00 p.m.

At the Autumn term 2020 meeting the Rev. Prebendary Michael Metcalf was elected as chair for the following year.

4.2 Membership

There was a review of membership in the previous year. It was noted at that time that there were several vacancies which the SACRE tried to fill over the year. Covid-19 halted aspects of this.

Several changes to the membership of the SACRE were noted during the year. See Appendix 2 for full details.

All new members are required to sign the SACRE Code of Conduct on appointment.

4.3 Training

During 2020-2021 professional development activities were offered virtually to teachers, due to the pandemic these activities centred around email support for planning and advice regarding the Agreed Syllabus planning and collective worship. Governors were updated three times by way of a general update webinar over the year to support their link governor roles- this was well received.

Reverend Preb. M.R. Metcalf and M Gale (Advisor to SACRE) attended the 2021 virtual NASACRE conference on 24th May 2021.

M Gale Advisor to SACRE attended two of AREIACs regional meetings in 2020-21. She also attended the virtual two-day AREIAC conference in July 2021

Members scrutinised an Ofsted research report into Religious Education in July 2021

4.4 SACRE developments

Development Projects

The Explore- Engage -Reflect pupil workshops provided for pupils across Stafford, Stone and Newcastle were all cancelled due to Covid-19.

The proposed High school conferences in conjunction with Youth Net entitled Sacred Spaces were also postponed until Autumn 2021.

Additional Support

The advisor to SACRE provided support on remote learning for schools during the pandemic.

In addition, advice was provided on Collective Worship and planning for RE including short term and long-term planning.

4.5 LA support for the SACRE

The LA continues to commission its support for Religious Education from Entrust. Support for SACRE 2020/21 was provided by Mary Gale, director of Mary Gale Consultancy. She was commissioned to provide support and advice to SACRE and schools for 2020/21 This commission continues into 2021-22.

4.6 Financial support

£6,180 was made available to support the work of SACRE during the financial year 2020-2021 as approved by the Service Delivery Agreement (SDA) between Staffordshire County Council and Entrust. Continuing priorities for the year 2020-21 were identified as supporting schools to be aware of their statutory responsibilities and to provide support in relation to fulfilling the statutory functions for SACRE, including but not limited to:

- (i) provision of advice and guidance on teaching and learning on the Religious Education syllabus.
- (ii) providing updates to maintained school RE teachers with a refresh on the requirements to the RE Syllabus.
- (iii) Support for specific projects in a small selection of schools ranging from support for resources for CW and RE to enhancing global links.

The budget was a standing item on the agenda at each meeting see Appendix 4. Looking forward to 2021-22 the SACRE hopes to realise its plans to support the

- Westhill Legacy project (continuation of project)
- Commencement of Sacred Spaces projects (delayed due to Covid-19)

SACRE provided information to NASACRE regarding their funding form the LA This resulted in a report of all LA support for SACREs. It is pleasing to note that our funding is average for SACRES around the country receiving approximately 2%.

The results from various SACREs was varied but showed that most SACREs did not receive the share of the Combined Schools Support Block Grant (CSSBG) that they should in order to support SACRE. The report had provided useful evidence in NASCREs discussions with Government.

4.7 Information and advice

During the period covered by this report, the SACRE received information on the impact of Covid-19 on schools within the county and the steps being taken to ensure RE and CW remained in the curriculum of schools. Members were advised of the national picture with regard to RE. SACRE has used this information effectively to advise the LA on the range of issues covered elsewhere in this report.

4.8 Partnerships with other Key Stakeholders

NASACRE

The Chair of Staffordshire SACRE, Michael Metcalf, is also treasurer of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). A report from NASACRE is a standing agenda item at each meeting. At each meeting, the Chair gave a brief update on key issues raised by the National Association of SACREs. Matters for 2020-21 are included in the minutes from each meeting. SACRE subscribes to NASACRE receiving updates as appropriate. The SACRE received a number of reports including: -

- Supporting a pilot project about developing local RE and further exploration of the publication 'RE and World Views' Work had started to develop thinking around this and the implications of delivering RE in schools.
- A substantial paper was being prepared by the Religious Education Council (REC) looking at mapping out the future of school collective worship.

AREIAC (Association for Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants) and NATRE (National Association for the Teaching of RE)

SACRE subscribes to these organisations, receiving updates as appropriate. The consultant adviser also attends meetings and conferences with members of these organisations ensuring SACRE receives regular information which supports them in carrying out their core duties. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 all communication has been through online platforms. It is hoped that face to face meetings will resume as and when it is deemed safe to do so.

NATRE

Chris Giles, regional ambassador for the NATRE joined the November meeting to discuss the development of a West Midlands Hub for Teachers/SACRE's and professionals. The Hub would provide information and advice on, amongst other things:

- Information on places of worship in Staffordshire
- National/local and regional events
- Local group meetings and university resource centres

Local Authority

In September 2016, the new Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was introduced into schools. Schools receive a reminder regarding the statutory status of this syllabus. As the key curriculum document for pupils in Staffordshire's maintained schools the local authority is responsible for ensuring that guidance is in place. The Advisor to

Staffordshire SACRE and the County Commissioner for School Quality Assurance and Intervention have continued to remain in regular contact and work together to ensure that schools are clear about their statutory responsibilities for Religious Education. The review of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus commenced in July 2021 in line with legislation which advises that the AS is reviewed every 5 years. It is hoped that the revised syllabus will be ready for September 2022

5 The effectiveness of the local agreed syllabus

5.1 Additional guidance/monitoring and evaluation of the agreed syllabus

In September 2016, the revised Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was formally adopted by Staffordshire County Council and introduced into Staffordshire's schools. As writers of the syllabus, Staffordshire SACRE worked to ensure a sharply focused syllabus to support high standards of Religious Education in Staffordshire schools.

Additional guidance was provided in the following formats:

- RE news was provided through the headteacher E Bag Governor Information Pack and emailed to schools to support them with aspects of teaching and learning.
- Home school learning information for RE was provided for schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was also provided via Radio Stoke when Mary Gale was asked to provide a broadcast to that effect.
- Schools have been invited to phone/email the commissioned consultant for Religious Education at Entrust for advice and support on all aspects of their RE provision- there have been a number of queries.
- Long and medium-term plans have been made available to schools to support high quality Religious Education.

5.2 The Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC).

This took place in July 2021 where each of the four SACRE Committees with the support of the Staffordshire Local Authority, agreed to the Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Review and the work to be undertaken

Rev Metcalf was appointed as the Chair of the Conference.

The review stages were outlined including feedback from schools and stakeholders on how the current syllabus was being used. The second stage of the review would take into account any developments or changes in RE since the previous syllabus was written.

6 Collective worship

6.1 Practice and provision for collective worship

An advice booklet was made available to Staffordshire schools to support their statutory duties regarding collective worship.

Schools can also email the commissioned consultant advisor for Religious Education at Entrust for additional support. This academic year there have been no specific training courses for collective worship although email advice has been provided. Several schools

have requested face to face meeting with the commissioned consultant to discuss these aspects, it is hoped that this support will resume in 2021-2022

6.2 Monitoring determinations for collective worship

There are no existing determinations in Staffordshire.
No determinations have been applied for or granted in this academic year.

7 Contribution of the SACRE to the wider community

7.1 Representative nature of the SACRE

The membership of the SACRE indicates that it is representative in nature.
There are currently vacancies which the SACRE are seeking to fill.

7.2 Knowledge and understanding of the local religious, cultural and ethnic minority

A number of the SACRE members are also representatives on the Stafford Friends of Faith Forum, a local interfaith network. Where opportunities arise SACRE members and members of Stafford Friends of Faith Forum support each other's events to promote positive community relations. This has been difficult during Covid-19. This relationship supports SACRE members knowledge and understanding of the local religious, cultural and ethnic minority.

The commissioned consultant/advisor for RE works alongside the MEAS (Minority Ethnic Support Team) employed by Entrust and the local Youth Net team.
There are several Inter faith/cultural experiences available for schools to book as Covid allows, which aim to enhance RE in Staffordshire schools.
These offer the opportunity for an interactive experience for pupils where they meet with members of a faith and learn about what that faith means to them. The MEAS team support the Westhill Legacy project. The SACRE are pleased to be associated with the work of the MEAS team.

Support for schools, particularly around diversity and race relations had been provided through information on Black History month, on the Holocaust Educational Trust learning support tool and Interfaith support. Emphasis had been put on the schools embedding all such aspects in all that they do, not just during the national awareness periods.

7.3 Understanding the intrinsic contribution which RE can make to social, racial and religious harmony and to the wider community

The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education affirms that the role of RE is to foster in each pupil a growing level of religious literacy, through three complementary aims, encapsulated as Exploring, Engaging, Reflecting.
These three aims call for pupils to "acquire a growing range of the social, spiritual and emotional skills and dispositions appropriate to living well in a religiously plural and open society, by reflecting on the reality of religious diversity and on the issues raised by living in a diverse world".

Pupils studying RE are now specifically required to reflect on the issues raised by living in a diverse world. These three aims namely highlight the key role played by Religious Education in developing, supporting and promoting a knowledgeable society with respect for and sensitivity towards the beliefs and life choices of others. The current syllabus emphasises that, in a civilised society, difference can be celebrated when we also seek out and build on shared values and experiences.

The SACRE is committed to the syllabus and to the role it plays in building a cohesive community. Further virtual guidance was provided to schools experiencing difficulties fulfilling the third syllabus aim in 2020-21

The SACRE considered the research paper produced by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues from the University of Birmingham which was published in Autumn 2020. The report focused on pupil character development as defined by Ofsted and the influence a teacher of RE could have on character development of pupils' dependent on their own views.

The report found that:

- Personal worldviews informed RE teachers approaches in the classroom.
- RE teachers were found to have fair and tolerant views of other religions and worldviews.
- There was strong agreement among RE teachers that RE contributes to pupils' character development.
- RE teachers that have a religious faith were more likely to think religions promote good character.

Appendices



30th Annual Report September 2020-September 2021

Appendix 1

The Statutory Duties of a SACRE

All LAs are required to establish a SACRE.

A SACRE's main function, as set out in the 1996 Education Act is:

"to advise the local education authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in county schools and the Religious Education to be given in accordance with the agreed syllabus as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit". [s.391(1)(a)]

Such matters include:-

"methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers".

A SACRE also:

- can require the local authority to review its current agreed syllabus [s.391(3)]
- must consider applications made by a headteacher, that the requirement for collective worship in county schools to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character shall not apply to the collective worship provided for some or all of the pupils in a particular school ('determinations'). [s.394(1)]

Every SACRE must, by law, produce an annual report on its work and on actions taken by its representative groups, specifying any matters on which it has advised the local authority, broadly describe the nature of that advice and set out reasons for offering advice on matters not referred to it by the local authority. [s.391 (6) and (7)]

A copy of the report should be sent to The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)

Appendix 2

Membership

SACRE Membership

Attendance at Meetings and Vacancies 2020 / 2021

✓ = Attended

A = Apologies Submitted

Blank = No Response

NA = Not a member at the time of the meeting

	18 November 2020	3 February 2021	1 July 2021
Committee A			
Christian and other religious denominations			
Free Churches (4)			
Vacancy			
Sam Phillips	✓	A	✓
Maddie Bell		A	A
Vacancy			
Hindu (2)			
Vacancy			
Mr. G. Devadason			
Jewish (1)			
Vacancy			
Muslim (2)			
Mohamed Sedky	✓	✓	
Mohamed Parekh	✓	✓	✓
Quakers - (1)			
Gabi Oldfield	A	A	A
Roman Catholic (2)			
Vacancy			
Vacancy			
Sikh (2)			
Mr Tajinder Singh	✓		A
Vacancy			
Salvation Army (1)			
Lydia Bartlett	A	✓	A
Buddhist (1)			
Ven. Dr Phramaha Laow Panyasiri		A	
Humanist			
Ian Horsewell	NA	NA	A
Baha'i			
Julie Thompson	✓	✓	A
Committee B			
Church of England (5)			
Vickie Longson	✓	✓	✓
Vicky Priestley	NA	NA	✓
Lauren Nicholson Ward	✓	✓	A
Rev. Preb. Michael Metcalf	✓	✓	✓

Zoe Cahalan	NA	NA	A
Committee C Teacher Associations (5)			
Samantha Kirwan (NEU)	✓	✓	A
Judy Wyman (ASCL)	✓	✓	A
Shaun Miles (NAHT) (Appointed end Nov 2018)	✓	✓	A
Linda Goodwin (NEU)	✓	✓	✓
Harold Gurden (NAHT)	NA	NA	A

Committee D Local Education Authority (5) (Membership change in May 2021)			
Ian Lawson, replaced by Philip Atkins in May	✓	✓	✓
Syed Hussain replaced by Paul Northcott in May	✓	✓	✓
Mark Sutton replaced by Kath Parry in July 2021	✓	✓	NA
Bob Spencer replaced by Samantha Thompson in May	✓	✓	✓
Kyle Robinson replaced by Mike Wilcox in May	✓		✓
Co-opted			
Spiritualist National Union			
Vacancy			
Clerk to SACRE:			
Mandy Pattinson	✓	✓	✓
Officers:			
Mary Gale	✓	✓	✓

Appendix 3

Procedures for schools causing concern

Where, in carrying out its statutory duty to monitor the provision of Religious Education as appropriate within the Local Authority, the SACRE has identified a cause for concern:

1. The SACRE or a sub-committee will request that a letter be sent from the Consultant Adviser for RE or an appropriate LA officer to outline concerns to the school and offer support.
2. Any responses will be referred to the SACRE or a sub-committee for consideration.
3. Where no reply is received, a further letter will be sent by the chair of SACRE reiterating concerns and offering the support of the Senior Adviser or appropriate LA officer.
4. Any responses will be referred to the SACRE or a sub-committee for consideration.
5. Where no reply is received, the SACRE, through the chair, will send a further letter to the school reiterating concerns and alerting the school to further action:
 - a) Concerns to be raised with relevant LA officers with a request that the SACRE be informed of the outcome of any ensuing discussion.
 - b) A note of concern be sent to the Senior LA officer with responsibility for SACRE.
 - c) The SACRE to hold a note of concern on its records

Appendix 4

Budget for 2020-21 Total available to spend £6160

NML400

Total allocation
£6160

GL Account Codes for : Enquiry Group: Curr Budget (v2) v Act + GRNI/GL Account Code Range: EM1100/***** to EM1100/***** / Enquiry Year: 2020/21

<u>GL Account Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Current Budget (v2)</u>	<u>Actual + Grni</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Variance Bud v(Act +GRNI)</u>
EM110010002	Grants/contingency	1003.50	0.00	0.00	0.00
EM110041008	SACRE Catering Provisions	0.00			
EM110044038	SACRE QLS Curriculum Advice	4600.00			
EM110046204	SACRE Conference Fees	0.00			
EM110047202	SACRE Subscriptions General	210			
EM110048342	SACRE Contingency				
					346.50 underspend

0.00

0.00

Screen Data Export - SACRE (2021-22)

Total allocation
 £6220 an
 increase of £40

GL Account Codes for : Enquiry Group: Curr Budget (v2) v Act + GRNI/GL Account Code Range: EM1100/*** to EM1100/***** / Enquiry Year: 2020/21**

<u>GL Account Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Current Budget (v2)</u>	<u>Actual + Grni</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Variance Bud v(Act +GRNI)</u>
EM110010002	Grants/contingency	00000	0.00	0.00	0.00
EM110041008	SACRE Catering Provisions	00000			
EM110044038	SACRE QLS Curriculum Advice				
EM110046204	SACRE Conference Fees	40.000			
EM110047202	SACRE Subscriptions General				
	SACRE Contingency				
EM110048342	£6220				

£6180 to spend

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**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
November 17th 2021
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and
Communities
Current budget 2021-22**

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To advise members of SACRE on the current budget position for 2021-2022.

2 Summary

2.1 A breakdown of the current SACRE budget for the financial year 2021-2022.

3 Recommendation

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report.

4 Background

4.1 A budget had been made available to support the work of SACRE during the financial year 2021-2022 as approved by the Corporate Director (Children and Lifelong Learning).

4.2 Please note information on the current budget for 2021-2022

4.3 The 2021-2022 budget will continue to be monitored and clarified.

5 Equal Opportunities

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

6 Financial implications

6.1 Financial implications are indicated in the budget account.

**Contact Officer:
Mary Gale 07816374873**

Budget for 2021-2022

- £6620 provided to spend. Commitments not showing are those that are to be provided for

- The Westhill Legacy project -£2,000 Engage, Explore Reflect
- £1,000 Sacred Spaces Project
- £2,000 Agreed Syllabus review, if required for support for revised planning.

Also due in Jan 2022 NATRE subscription of £110

GL Account Codes for : Enquiry Group: Curr Budget (v2) v Act + GRNI/GL Account Code Range: EM1100/**** to EM1100/**** / Enquiry Year: 2020/ Period: 00 to 12						
GL Account Code	Description	Current Budget (v Actual + Grni	Actuals	Variance Bud v(Act +GRNI)		
EM110010002	SACRE Teachers Gross	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
EM110044038	SACRE QLS Curriculum Advice	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
EM110046204	SACRE Conference Fees	0.00	40.00	40.00	(40.00)	Attendance at the NASACRE Conference
EM110047017	SACRE Grants to third parties	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
EM110047202	SACRE Subscriptions General	0.00	105.00	105.00	(105.00)	NASACRE Annual Subscription
EM110048342	SACRE Contingency	6,220.00	0.00	0.00	6,220.00	
EM110064550	SACRE Tfrs to Oth Accounts	(9,880.00)	(9,880.00)	(9,880.00)	0.00	Former ESG Retained Duties (in year adjustment)
		(3,660.00)	(9,735.00)	(9,735.00)	6,075.00	
	Total Available before commitments				6,075.00	
	Less committed amounts:					
	Available				6,075.00	

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
November 17th 2021
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and
Communities**

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present to members of SACRE a draft development plan for 2021-22

2 Summary

2.1 A breakdown of the current SACRE plans for the year 2021-2022.

3 Recommendation

3.1 That members of SACRE receive and approve the report.

4 Background

4.1 A draft plan is available to support the work of SACRE

4.2 Please note information on the plan

4.3 The plan will continue to be monitored and clarified.

5 Equal Opportunities

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

6 Financial implications

6.1 Financial implications are covered in the budget plan.

**Contact Officer:
Mary Gale 07816374873**

Agenda item 10 November 17th 2021

DRAFT SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN and AS PLAN

Staffordshire SACRE							
Chair	Michael Metcalf			Date Range for completion:	June 2021 – September 2022		
Commissioned support adviser	Mary Gale						
Self-evaluation:				Self-evaluation:			
Objective	Activities	Time scale	Led by	Success criteria	Evidence	Evaluation	RAG
Page 57	1. New members become familiar with roles and responsibilities	Attendance at 3 annual meeting	July 2021- Summer 2022	Chair and consultant	SACRE members are familiar with roles and responsibilities	Through meetings, knowledge is evidenced of the process	A
	2. SACRE are made aware of current philosophy regarding RE and CW	Update information received at meetings	July 2021- Summer 2022	Chair and consultant	SACRE members are aware of current philosophy regarding RE and CW	Through meetings, knowledge is increased.	A
	3. Review of the Agreed Syllabus - system and processes review	Familiarisation of procedures and processes regarding review. Seek clarification on funding and agreement from SCC to carry out the review.	July 2021	Chair	SACRE members are familiar with procedures and processes regarding review. Funding is identified.	Through meetings, knowledge is evidenced of the process. Budget is monitored	G
	4. ASC conference is convened	ASC members confirmed. ASC conference delegates meet and the outcomes minuted x3 Agreement on next steps eg working party identified	July 2021- September 2021	Chair and consultant	ASC members are identified and attend ASC first conference meeting and next steps identified. Working party members identified	Minutes of ASC. Feedback from the working party under Agenda item of	G

					November SACRE meeting		
5. ASC working party meet	Working party meet in virtual environment and become familiar with current AS and its content	October 2021	Chair and consultant	Working party re familiarise itself with content of current 2016 AS	Feedback from the working party under Agenda item of November 2021 and 2022 February SACRE meeting		A
6. Engagement with stakeholders	Review of opportunities for greater and more effective engagement. Virtual meeting with stakeholders. Survey sent to 300 plus schools.	Autumn Term 2021- Spring 2022	Chair and consultant Chair and consultant. Consultant	Engagement activities - opinion and debate on current AS. Survey results provide information	Feedback minuted under Agenda item of November 2021 and February 2022 meeting Feedback minuted under Agenda item of November 2021 and February 2022 SACRE meeting		A
7. Content of current AS reflected upon and modified if appropriate.	Current AS reflected upon and modified if appropriate in light of feedback from stakeholders	Autumn Term 2021- Spring 2022	Chair and consultant.	ASC delegates feel confident in their decisions about modified. Stakeholder's views on modified content sought.	Feedback minuted under Agenda item of November 2021 and February 2022 SACRE meeting		R
8. Draft versions of 2022 syllabus produced for scrutiny and agreed on.	ASC	June 2022	Chair and consultant.		New 2022 AS is available and completed by graphics department		R

9. Launch of AS -	Launch of AS -schools receive copies of the AS and reassurance on dates of roll out.	July 2022	LA with Entrust and members of SACRE		New AS is utilised in schools.		R
Impact Summary				Area/s for further development			

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
17th November 2021
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and
Communities
Applications for variation of practice

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider any applications for variation of practice to religious education and or collective worship.

2 Summary

- 2.1 Upon receipt of a written application from a headteacher of a county school SACRE should determine whether it is appropriate to dis-apply the requirement for broadly Christian collective worship and/or make amendments to the way the Agreed Syllabus is followed in the case of that school.

3 Recommendation

- 3.1 That members of SACRE are updated on any new developments in this area.

4 Background

- 4.1 No applications have been received at this time.

5 Equal Opportunities

- 5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

6 Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no immediate financial implications

Contact Officer:

Mary Gale 07816374873

