

## **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

Wednesday, 12 November 2014  
**2.00 pm**  
Kingston Centre, Stafford

John Tradewell  
Interim Chief Executive  
4 November 2014

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### **A G E N D A**

1. **Apologies**
2. **Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**
3. **Welcome to New Members**
4. **Declaration of Any other Business**
5. **Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2014** (Pages 1 - 4)
6. **An Update on Key Issues** (Pages 5 - 10)  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People
7. **Agreed Syllabus Conference** (Pages 11 - 24)  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People
  - a) Convening of the Agreed Syllabus Conference
  - b) Minutes of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 9 July 2014
  - c) Update from Chairman's meeting of 27/10/14
  - d) Consideration of options for the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus Review
  - e) Review of other locally agreed syllabus
8. **Applications for Variations of Practice** (Pages 25 - 26)



Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

9. **NASACRE Update** (Pages 27 - 28)

Oral update by the Chairman

10. **Annual SACRE Report** (Pages 29 - 30)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

11. **The SACRE Budget** (Pages 31 - 32)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

12. **AOB**

13. **Date of next meeting**

The next SACRE meeting is scheduled for 11 February 2015, 2.00pm, Kingston Centre, Stafford.

#### **Membership**

Julie Thompson (Co-Optee)	Muhammad Parekh
Susan Devereux	Sam Phillips
Barrie Scott	Sue Blackmore
Mick Dwyer	Mary Gale
Sonia Andjelkovic	Colin Hopkins
Ann Hewetson	Rosemary Woodward
Diana Cutler	Peter Davies
Tajinder Singh	Terry Finn
Paul Lewis	Tricia Budd
G Devadason	Conor Wileman
Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal (Vice-Chairman)	David Williams
Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf (Chairman)	Caroline Wood
Dr Laow	Bill Walley





**MINUTES**

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Meeting - 9 July 2014**

Present: **Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf**

Barrie Scott, Diana Cutler, Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal (Vice-Chairman), Muhammad Parekh, Sue Blackmore, Peter Davies, Terry Finn, Tricia Budd, Liz Williams, Conor Wileman, Caroline Wood, Bill Walley and Susan Devereux

Apologies for absence: Mick Dwyer, Sonia Andjelkovic, Sam Phillips, Colin Hopkins, Rosemary Woodward and David Williams

Also in attendance - Helen Phillips and Emma Jardine

**PART ONE**

**22. Welcome to New Members**

The Chairman welcomed new SACRE members.

There had been a number of membership changes since the last SACRE meeting, these being:

- Mr Bill Walley re-joined SACRE replacing Jane Essex as the Society of Friends representative, Jane had recently changed jobs and was working out of the area
- Mrs Susan Devereux replaced Lieutenant Christine Chadwick as the Salvation Army representative
- Due to ill health Liz O'Brien had resigned as one of the Catholic representatives
- Liz Williams informed SACRE that this would be her last meeting and that the new ATL representative would be Sam Kirman

Mrs Julie Thompson was present at the meeting as an observer, representing the Baha'i faith.

The Chairman expressed his gratitude for the work of those members who were leaving the Staffordshire SACRE and welcomed new members. Members felt it would be helpful to receive a membership list detailing each member's representation on the SACRE.

**23. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2014**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 12 February 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

Members were informed that Keele University had closed its teacher training department.

**24. An Update on Key Issues**

SACRE received an update on key issues that had occurred since their last meeting, including:

- a) RE and Tolerance: Early Day Motion – SACRE members were encouraged to write to their Members of Parliament asking them to sign the early day motion urging measures to ensure that all children explore and discuss religious and non-religious beliefs at school be pursued by the Government;
- b) RE and Academies – updating SACRE on RE provision in academies and the role of SACRE within that. Members discussed the teaching of RE at the JCB Academy and were informed that the RE teaching requirements depended on the specifics of the original funding agreement of a sponsored academy;
- c) Young Ambassadors for RE – the Religious Education Council (REC) had launched a Young Ambassadors for RE scheme and schools were being invited to apply. This could be a suitable replacement for Staffordshire’s student council for RE. Members received details of the application process and were happy to support promotion of this scheme within Staffordshire schools.

**RESOLVED** – That the update on key issues be noted and the Young Ambassadors for RE scheme be promoted in Staffordshire schools.

## **25. NASACRE Update**

The Chairman gave an update on recent NASACRE events, including:

- The NASACRE AGM had taken place in May and had been very successful. The main speaker had been Stephen Lloyd, the Member of Parliament chairing the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE. His speech had been inspirational and encouraging; and
- The NASACRE website was a very important and useful means of communication. Parts of the site were password protected, with passwords only given to SACREs who had paid their NASACRE subscription. A new password would be issued in September to those SACREs who had subscribed.

**RESOLVED** – That the oral update by the Chairman be noted.

## **26. Applications for Variation of Practice**

There were none at this meeting.

## **27. The SACRE Budget 2013-2014**

Members received a breakdown of the SACRE budget for the financial year 2013-2014.

In light of SACREs recent request for funding to support the Agreed Syllabus Review the SACRE budget had come under close inspection, with the contract between Entrust and the County Council in respect of SACRE support being used to clarify the support available within the funding allocation. SACRE would need to be creative in how it approached such events as the SACRE awards and lecture as funding was no longer available for these.

Emma Jardine was allocated 14 days within the budget for all her SACRE support work over the year.

There was no extra funding available from Entrust to support the proposed Agreed Syllabus Review.

Professional development for RE teachers would continue, with courses often commissioned by schools.

Members regretted the restrictions now placed on them and the implications this will have for the work of the Staffordshire SACRE.

**RESOLVED** – That the SACRE budget limitations be noted.

## **28. Agreed Syllabus Review**

SACRE noted the minutes of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 12 February 2014.

It was proposed that SACRE convene the second meeting of their Agreed Syllabus Conference.

**RESOLVED** – That SACRE convene the second meeting of their Agreed Syllabus Conference.

[Note by Clerk: The SACRE meeting was formally closed whilst the Agreed Syllabus Conference was convened. Once the Agreed Syllabus Conference had concluded the SACRE meeting formally re-opened.]

## **29. Implications from "Trojan Horse" investigations in Birmingham**

In June 2014 Ofsted published its findings from the "Trojan Horse" issue which alleged a socially-conservative sect of Muslims had been trying to infiltrate governing bodies and subsequently oust certain head teachers from Birmingham schools. This had been a high profile and emotive issue. A more balanced response to the report was expected from members of the RE community in July.

Members shared their views on the causes and possible implications of this issue, specifically their concern at the potential for this to become inflammatory if handled carelessly. Whilst Staffordshire schools were not involved SACRE members wanted to help support schools in promoting community cohesion and understanding.

**RESOLVED** – That SACRE be kept informed of any developments.

## **30. 20+ Ideas for SACRE**

At the NASACRE Annual General Meeting this year Lesley Prior had shared a list of ideas with delegates for SACRE's consideration. This list gave members an opportunity for self reflection and consideration of good practice.

In light of concerns over governance in some of the Birmingham based schools within the Trojan horse incident, Members felt that the most important listed item to consider was: "Engage governors- The information included in pages 40-41 of the Governors Handbook about RE is not clear and NASACRE might submit a rewrite".

**RESOLVED** – That the issue of how to engage governors be included on SACREs next agenda.

**31. AOB**

- The Interfaith Network was looking to develop intergenerational programmes. The Interfaith week would be run again in November and SACRE Members would be kept informed.
- Members had received a copy of a letter from Councillor Dr Barry Henley sharing Birmingham SACRE's comments on the Religious Education Council's review of RE which had been launched in October 2013.
- Members were informed that this years Explore Islam week would take place at Staffordshire University on 24 November.

**32. Date of next SACRE meeting**

**RESOLVED** – That the next SACRE meeting be held on Wednesday 12 November 2014, 2.00pm.

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

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Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**12<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People**

**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 spring 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**  
**Telephone number:**

**Emma Jardine**  
**01785 27799**

## The SACRE Lecture

On Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September SACRE held their annual lecture. This year's lecture was led by Dilwyn Hunt. Dilwyn led an interesting talk about assessment. He took into account the changes nationally regarding assessment and the move towards assessment without levels. He showed examples of how to increase rigour in assessment and how to ensure that all students were challenged appropriately. He certainly gave us food for thought as we consider options for reviewing the Staffordshire agreed syllabus. The turnout was once again excellent with well over 30 delegates.

## School governors: responsibilities for RE

Dr Barbara Wintersgill, has produced two briefing papers for governors (one each for primary and secondary) which outline schools' responsibilities with regard to RE, give an overview of the problems identified by the report and suggest some actions governors might undertake to bring about improvement in their schools.

## THE PROVISION AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNING BODIES OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The purpose of this paper is to make school governors aware of the findings and recommendations of *Religious Education the Truth Unmasked*, which reports the outcomes of the recent inquiry held by the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE (APPG). The full text of the report can be found on the RE Council website: <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg/news/2013-03-18/appg-re-final-report-the-truth-unmasked>

### Governors' legal responsibility for religious education (RE)

Governing bodies and headteachers in all state schools must ensure that provision is made for RE for all pupils, unless they are withdrawn by their parents. Further details, in particular guidance on the RE curriculum to be taught in different types of school, may be found in two documents on the Department for Education (DfE) website:

- 1 *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010.*  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0064886/religious-education-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>
- 2 *Religious Education (RE) in academies and free schools.*  
[http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/re\\_and\\_collective\\_worship\\_in\\_acads\\_a.pdf](http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/re_and_collective_worship_in_acads_a.pdf)

### The importance of RE

The APPG concluded that:

*Religious Education has a vital and powerful contribution to make in equipping young people, whatever their backgrounds and personal beliefs with the skills to understand and thrive in a diverse and shifting world. The ... subject is now under threat as never before, just at the moment when it is needed most.*

### The staffing of primary RE

Ofsted has found that pupils' achievement in RE is very inconsistent. At the time of Ofsted's most recent report on RE (Ofsted 2010)<sup>1</sup> primary school pupils' achievement in RE was good or outstanding in only 4 out of 10 schools. The APPG inquiry identified four key concerns related to the deployment of teachers that contributed to these disappointing standards in RE.

- a) ***The excessive use of teaching assistants to teach RE.*** Ofsted has found that class teachers use their RE lesson time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) more than they use other subject time. In over half of the 300 primary schools participating in the APPG inquiry, some or all pupils were taught RE by someone other than the class teacher. In 24% of schools in the inquiry RE was taught to some children by higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs), a practice almost unknown in foundation subjects such as history, geography and design and technology. The outcome is not always negative and Ofsted has reported that in the few occasions 'where the teaching assistants were very carefully supported, managed and monitored, their enthusiasm and interest in the subject could have a very positive impact on pupils' learning' (Ofsted 2010:36). BUT generally the practice is not good and reflects the low status of RE in many schools (2.2-2.5).

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<sup>1</sup> Ofsted (2010) Transforming Religious Education

- b) **Teachers' lack of confidence.** About a half of primary teachers and trainee teachers lack confidence in teaching RE (2.6-2.10). Evidence presented to the APPG shows that the following reasons account for trainees' caution/lack of confidence with RE:
- Fear of bias (especially in those of faith)
  - Feeling of unpreparedness/ lack of experience
  - Fear about pronunciations
  - Fear of offending
  - Unsure about the RE curriculum
  - Fear of teaching controversial topics
  - Uncertainty about the place of RE in the curriculum
- c) **RE subject leaders' lack of expertise.** About a half of subject leaders who replied to the inquiry said that they lacked the expertise or experience to undertake their role effectively (2.11-2.13) Over a third of primary RE subject leaders in responding schools had no qualifications in RE above GCSE/O Level.
- d) **Insufficient teacher training in RE.** There is a wide variation in the extent of initial teacher training in RE and too many trainee teachers had little or no effective preparation for teaching the subject.(2.14-2.16)

### **Support for primary teachers of RE**

The APPG inquiry found that in spite of many teachers' weak subject knowledge and confidence, too little in service training in RE is available (6.1-6.3). In particular:

- a) RE subject leaders responding to the APPG identified three particular CPD needs above all others:
- improving their knowledge of world religions
  - help with implementing a new agreed syllabus
  - how to assess pupils' learning
- b) The ability of SACREs to provide support for teachers of RE at a local level has been dramatically reduced by local authority funding decisions. (6.31-6.36)
- c) Primary teachers and subject leaders in schools without a religious character have particularly limited access to RE CPD (6.13-6.21)
- d) Teachers' access to RE CPD is a postcode lottery; it depends on the resources of their local SACRE or diocese, proximity to training and the priority given to RE in schools.
- e) CPD is sometimes provided by other organisations, if teachers know where to look. In particular the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) provides after-school RE support groups in some areas. In addition several websites (e.g. NATRE) and journals (e.g. RE Today) offer subject knowledge and ideas for teaching. Charitable trusts such as Culham St Gabriel's and the Farmington Institute also offer CPD opportunities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **In response to the APPG recommendations governors should:**

- require a review of RE in the school to find out
  - the extent of teachers' confidence in teaching RE, and the reasons for any lack of confidence
  - how many teachers, if any, are not teaching RE to their class and the reasons why
  - the training, expertise and enthusiasm of staff covering other teachers' RE classes
- require the school leadership to:
  - make proper provision for continuing professional development for RE subject leaders and others with responsibility for teaching RE in order to improve its quality
  - ensure that the RE subject leader knows where to find training and support locally and from national organisations
  - provide regular opportunities for RE subject leaders to train their colleagues in subject knowledge and planning and assessing RE.

## THE PROVISION AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNING BODIES OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The purpose of this paper is to make school governors aware of the findings and recommendations of *Religious Education the Truth Unmasked*, which reports the outcomes of the recent inquiry held by the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE (APPG). The full text of the report can be found on the RE Council website: <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg/news/2013-03-18/appg-re-final-report-the-truth-unmasked>

### Governors' legal responsibility for religious education (RE)

Governing bodies and headteachers in all state schools must ensure that provision is made for RE for all pupils, unless they are withdrawn by their parents. Further details, in particular guidance on the RE curriculum to be taught in different types of school, may be found in two documents on the Department for Education (DfE) website:

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<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0064886/religious-education-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>
- 2 *Religious Education (RE) in academies and free schools.*  
[http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/re\\_and\\_collective\\_worship\\_in\\_acads\\_a.pdf](http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/re_and_collective_worship_in_acads_a.pdf)

### Why does RE matter?

The APPG concluded that:

*Religious Education has a vital and powerful contribution to make in equipping young people, whatever their backgrounds and personal beliefs with the skills to understand and thrive in a diverse and shifting world. The ... subject is now under threat as never before, just at the moment when it is needed most.*

### To what extent are standards and the teaching of secondary RE a problem?

The most recent Ofsted report on RE found that pupils' achievement in RE in secondary schools shows a very mixed picture. It was good or outstanding in 40 of the 89 schools visited, requiring improvement in 45 schools and inadequate in 14 schools. The APPG inquiry identified five key concerns related to the management of teachers that contributed to these disappointing standards in over half of all secondary schools.

- a) **The excessive use of non-specialists.** The DfE has argued that pupils' attainments are affected "above all other factors" by the quality of their teachers. Ofsted has found that the lack of teachers' subject qualifications is a key factor affecting pupils' examination success. Nevertheless, nearly half of those teaching RE in secondary schools have no qualification or appropriate expertise in the subject and are unlikely to have the subject knowledge to meet the DfE's national teaching standards.
- b) **The inappropriate use of non specialists.** Non specialists can be effective when they receive training and are well supported by subject specialists. The APPG identified particular weaknesses in teaching where:
  - non specialists are deployed to teach RE because they have gaps in their timetables, rather than from any interest in the subject
  - several non specialists are used to teach a few RE lessons each week, rather than one non specialist who can develop subject expertise and experience
  - different non specialists are used every year, inhibiting continuity and the development of subject expertise.

The APPG found that in such cases non specialists often lacked the confidence to move beyond the predictability of a text book or work sheet and found that other commitments made attendance at departmental meetings difficult.

- c) **Schools misunderstanding the legal position of RE.** Some secondary school leadership teams understood the omission of RE from the EBacc as a statement that it no longer has to be taught at Key Stage 4. This is not the case and Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Education has said, 'The Government is committed to maintaining the status of RE as a compulsory subject that all pupils must study throughout their schooling'.
- d) **Insufficient continuing professional development (CPD) in RE.** In nearly 40% of schools RE teachers have inadequate access to continuing professional development. RE teachers in schools without a religious character have particularly limited access to CPD. RE Teachers' access to CPD is a postcode lottery; it depends on the resources of their local SACRE or diocese, proximity to training and the priority given to RE in schools

### **What are the most urgent needs of RE heads of department and teachers of RE?**

The APPG identified the following needs as priorities for heads of RE:

- a) Training in the accurate evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of all aspects of RE in the school; in particular answering the questions 'Are standards in RE high enough?' and 'Is RE teaching good enough?'
- b) Training in planning for the development of RE in the school with a focus on raising standards and improving teaching.
- c) A balance of internal and external training. External training gives RE specialists access to information about such priorities as curriculum change, new resources and local faith community contacts. Courses also provide invaluable opportunities to meet and exchange experiences with subject specialists from other schools.
- d) Subject training for **all** non specialist teachers of RE, focusing on the development of subject knowledge.

### **In response to the APPG recommendations governors should:**

- a) initiate a review of RE in the school to find out
  - to what extent the school is meeting legal requirements to teach RE to all pupils, except those withdrawn by their parents
  - the subject qualifications and training of all teachers of RE (including non specialists)
  - the number of non-specialists teaching RE, the number of weekly lessons taught by each and the number of years each has been teaching RE
  - where teachers of RE find support for their teaching
  - how much subject-specific CPD RE teachers have had in the last three years
  - the proportion of Key Stage 4 and post-16 pupils entered for public examinations in RE
- b) work with the school leadership to:
  - use non-specialists to teach RE only when all other possibilities have been explored
  - identify only one or two non specialist teachers who are willing to teach RE, where the use of non-specialists is necessary
  - provide training for all non-specialists teaching RE. High quality, inexpensive subject knowledge booster courses are available on line, for example see Culham St Gabriel's ([www.cstg.org.uk](http://www.cstg.org.uk))
  - provide high quality RE throughout the school, assessed where possible through public examinations
  - make proper provision for continuing professional development for the RE head of department and others who teach RE in order to improve its quality
  - ensure that the RE subject leader knows where to find training and support locally and from national organisations. In addition to the local SACRE, the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) provides after-school RE support groups in some areas. Several websites (e.g. the RE Council, NATRE and REOnline) and journals (e.g. RE Today, REsource) offer subject knowledge and ideas for teaching. Charitable trusts such as Culham St Gabriel's and the Farmington Institute also offer CPD opportunities and bursaries for higher degrees.

**Minutes of the Miscellaneous Meetings Meeting held on 9 July 2014**

Present: Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf (Chairman)

Sue Blackmore	Muhammad Parekh
Tricia Budd	Barrie Scott
Diana Cutler	Bill Walley
Peter Davies	Conor Wileman
Susan Devereux	Liz Williams
Terry Finn	Caroline Wood
Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal (Vice-Chairman)	

**Also in attendance:** Emma Jardine and Helen Phillips

**Apologies:** Sonia Andjelkovic, Mick Dwyer, Colin Hopkins, Liz O'Brien, Sam Phillips, David Williams and Rosemary Woodward

**PART ONE**

**1. Minutes of the 12 February 2014 Agreed Syllabus Conference**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 12 February 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**2. Agreed Syllabus Conference - Syllabus Review**

At their meeting of 12 February Members had felt that a complete review and re-write of the syllabus was required to take account of the wide ranging changes within RE. However sourcing the funding for such a review had been problematic and did not appear to currently be available from either Entrust or the County Council. This may mean that the Conference will need to consider a less radical re-write within the limited funding available to them.

Members remained concern that the significant changes in RE should be reflected within the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus. The last revision of the Syllabus was issued to schools in 2009 and since then a number of major changes had taken place in education which had a direct impact on religious education, including:

- from September 2013 a new curriculum was introduced to all schools (Key Stages 1-4), with a clear focus on slimming down the curriculum to allow for more cross curriculum dimensions and inter-disciplinary studies and the removal of levels of attainment. Religious education needed to take account of these changes on order to play a full and active role in the new curriculum;
- in 2012 the Religious Education Council (REC) completed a review of the current National Non-Statutory Framework for Religious Education. SACRE's must take account of the document, which was referred to in all national documentation relating to RE, including examination syllabuses and the SACRE self-evaluation materials produced by Ofsted

SACRE had hoped that the revised syllabus would be available for use by schools in September 2014 in order to make best use of the momentum generated by the implementation of the changes in the curriculum. In reality, however, the review was likely to be a 12 month process from start to finish.

SACRE considered a number of options available to it, including choosing to undertake a much smaller review. The Councillor Members present felt that in the first instance they would like to discuss this issue with Mr Ben Adams, Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills, prior to SACRE making a decision on the type of review undertaken.

**RESOLVED** – That a decision on the type of review undertaken be deferred until Councillor SACRE Members have discussed this issue with the Cabinet Member.

**Chairman**

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Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.

# **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**12<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

## **Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People**

### **Agreed Syllabus Review 2014**

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To set in motion the process to review the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

#### **2 Summary**

2.1 The Education Act 1993 requires the Local Authority to institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus every five years after the completion of its last review.

2.2 The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus was last reviewed and issued to school in 2009. A review therefore falls due in 2014.

2.3 It is for the Local Authority to convene an agreed syllabus conference for the purpose of reviewing a syllabus. However the SACRE can, in writing, request that the LA reconsider its agreed syllabus.

#### **3 Recommendation**

3.1 This is the third meeting of the Agreed Syllabus Conference. At the previous meeting members decided to formally begin the Agreed Syllabus review process with the support of Cllr. Adams.

3.2 Members also began the process of sourcing funding for a radical review of the Agreed Syllabus. This included letters and meetings. Entrust will be unable to fund any Agreed Syllabus review. The Chair of SACRE will update on responses from Staffordshire County Council.

3.3 The Agreed Syllabus Conference may wish to discuss ways forward and a possible rethink of the type of review process available to them at this time.

#### **4 Background**

4.1 The last revision of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus was issued to schools in 2009.

4.2 Since the revision a number of major changes have taken place in education which have a direct impact on religious education:

- From September 2013 a new curriculum will be introduced to all schools (Key Stages 1-4), with a clear focus on slimming down the curriculum to allow for more cross curriculum dimensions and inter-disciplinary studies and the removal of levels of attainment. Religious education needs to take account of these changes in order to play a full and active role in the new curriculum.
- In 2012 the REC completed a review of the current National Non-Statutory Framework for Religious Education. This is the document that SACRE's must take account of and is referred to in all national documentation relating to RE, including examination syllabuses and the SACRE self-evaluation materials produced by Ofsted.

4.3 It was originally proposed that should any revisions be required the revised Staffordshire agreed syllabus should be in place for September 2014 in order to make best use of the momentum generated by the implementation of the changes in the curriculum. In reality, however, the review process is a 12 month process from start to finish.

4.4 SACRE has a number of options available to it. SACRE may choose to make radical changes to the syllabus. SACRE may choose to make small changes to the syllabus. SACRE may choose to make no changes to the syllabus. What follows is a proposal for potential radical change.

## **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 Expenses incurred will be met from the SACRE budget.

**Contact Officer**  
**Telephone number:**

**Emma Jardine**  
**01785 27799**

### 6.a update of meeting held 27.10.14

Present: Trudy Pyatt, Michael Prisk, Michael Metcalf, Emma Jardine, Helen Phillips.

Focus: Meeting held to discuss funding arrangements for the Agreed Syllabus Review.

Outcome: at this time funding can only be provided via the SDA. This means that SCC will pay for an amount of days to enable Emma Jardine only to review the syllabus. There is currently no budget to facilitate any external support for the review process. SACRE members are however invited to submit a paper detailing their preferred approach to Agreed Syllabus Review for further consideration.

### 6.b Agreed Syllabus Review Options

	What is involved	opportunities	risks
bronze	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A set amount of days funded for Emma Jardine to review the syllabus</li> <li>• An update on key information which is no longer in date</li> <li>• New inclusions subject to SACRE approval e.g. reference to the census, a statement on British values</li> <li>• <i>NO new approach to assessment</i></li> <li>• <i>NO focus groups</i></li> <li>• <i>NO Planning and resources for use within the classroom</i></li> </ul>		
silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for both Emma Jardine and an external consultant e.g. RE Today</li> <li>• A comprehensive rewrite of the syllabus</li> <li>• Focus groups held with headteachers, teachers, students in order to account for their views</li> <li>• A new approach to assessment including a guide to assessment without levels</li> <li>• <i>NO Planning and resources for use within the classroom</i></li> </ul>		
gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for both Emma Jardine and an external consultant e.g. RE Today</li> <li>• A comprehensive rewrite of the syllabus</li> <li>• Focus groups held with</li> </ul>		

	<p>headteachers, teachers, students in order to account for their views</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full programmes of study for each year group/key stage including long and medium term plans</li> <li>• Resources available for teachers to use to support the highest quality RE</li> <li>• A new approach to assessment including a guide to assessment without levels</li> </ul>		
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### **6.c Review of other Locally Agreed Syllabuses**

SACRE members are invited to review a range of Agreed Syllabuses to see what aspects they would like to see included in their new Agreed syllabus.

## RE in the school curriculum in different school types

RE is a statutory subject in each year of the school curriculum of maintained schools. Academies and Free Schools are contractually required through the terms of their funding agreements with DfE to make provision for the teaching of RE to all pupils on the school roll, and Academies in Sheffield are warmly invited by SACRE to use this syllabus, a local, contemporary, practical, supportive and widely approved framework for RE.

The Sheffield 2014 RE Agreed Syllabus has been developed in line with the strategic priorities of the Local Authority and in consultation with the City Wide Learning Body.

RE offers distinctive opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, cultural, social and moral development. RE lessons should offer a structured and safe space during curriculum time for learners' own reflections on meaning and values in life. Teaching in RE should engage pupils in discussion, dialogue and debate which enables them to make their reasoning clear and which supports their cognitive and linguistic development. Teaching in RE lessons should also allow for timely and sensitive responses to be made to unforeseen events of a religious, moral or philosophical nature, whether personal, local, national or global.

### The breadth of RE: from local to global

The law requires that RE in schools that are not designated with a religious character

***“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.”***

This means that from ages 4-19 pupils learn about diverse religions and worldviews including Christianity and the other principal religions. Some schools with a religious character will prioritise learning one religion, but all types of school should recognise the diversity of our city, our region, the UK and the world and the importance of learning broadly and deeply about religions and world views, including those with a significant local presence. This may include some minority religious communities as well as those named above.

## What must we teach? RE and the law.

### The statutory requirements for Religious Education in schools

The main statutory requirements relating to RE in schools and the Local Authority's responsibilities are in the Education Acts 1996 and 2002, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Children Act 2004 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The Department for Education also published its current guidance in "Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance 2010". The key points are:

- **RE For every child.** RE must be provided for all registered pupils on the school roll, from reception classes through to 16-19s in the sixth form. This does not include nursery schools, nursery classes or sixth form colleges but does include as far as practicable PRUs and special schools.
- **Parents' rights.** Parents may withdraw their children from RE lessons and require that they are given alternative religious instruction (subject to certain provisions). Schools may have a policy setting out their approach to provision and withdrawal.
- **Teachers' rights.** If they choose not to, teachers cannot to be required to teach RE.
- **The scope of the syllabus.** At community, foundation and voluntary controlled schools without a religious character RE must be taught in accordance with the Local Authority's Agreed Syllabus
- **Faith schools.** Denominational voluntary aided schools with a religious character are not required to use the Agreed Syllabus but must follow the requirements of their trust deed or the tenets of their denomination where the trust deed does not specify requirements. The Agreed Syllabus must be taught, however, where parents request it and the child cannot reasonably attend a school where the Agreed Syllabus is being taught.
- **Education, not religious nurture.** RE provided in compliance with the Agreed Syllabus must not be denominational in character but it is permissible to teach about denominational differences. It must however "reflect the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain."
- **Inspection.** The provision and quality of RE is subject to inspection by OFSTED or by denominational inspection systems in the schools to which they apply.
- **RE in Academies.** Academies are required by their Funding Agreements with DfE to teach RE to all their pupils but are not **required** to use their local Agreed Syllabus. Sheffield SACRE warmly invites them to do so however, because this syllabus is local and has been agreed with all major stakeholders.
- **Sheffield SACRE and its work.** The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to maintain a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) to advise the Authority on matters connected with RE.

- **Heads and governors: responsible for RE.** In relation to community schools, foundation and voluntary schools without a religious character, the Authority, Governing Body and Headteacher have responsibilities to ensure that legal requirements are followed.

## British values

**School inspection, from September 2014, explores and judges the contribution schools make to actively promoting British values.**

### **RE makes a key educational contribution to pupils' explorations of British values**

Teaching the Nottinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education will enable pupils to learn to think for themselves about British values.

Questions about whether social and moral values are best described as 'British values' or seen as more universal human values will continue to be debated, but for the purposes of teachers of RE, the subject offers opportunities to build an accurate knowledge base about religions and beliefs in relation to values. This in turn supports children and young people so that they are able to move beyond attitudes of tolerance towards increasing respect, so that they can celebrate diversity.

Values education and moral development are a part of a school's holistic mission to contribute to the wellbeing of all people within our communities. The RE curriculum focuses learning in some of these areas, but pupils' moral development is a whole school issue.

- **Mutual Tolerance.** Schools do not accept intolerant attitudes to members of the community: attitudes which reject other people on the basis of race, faith, gender, sexual orientation or age are rightly challenged. The baseline for a fair community is that each person's right to 'be themselves' is to be accepted by all. Tolerance may not be enough: RE can challenge children and young people to be increasingly respectful and to celebrate diversity, but tolerance is a starting point. It is much better than intolerance.
- **Respectful attitudes.** In the RE curriculum attention focusses on developing mutual respect between those of different faiths and beliefs, promoting an understanding of what a society gains from diversity. Pupils will learn about diversity in religions and worldviews, and will be challenged to respect other persons who see the world differently to themselves. Recognition and celebration of human diversity in many forms can flourish where pupils understand different faiths and beliefs, and are challenged to be broad minded and open hearted.
- **Democracy.** In RE pupils learn the significance of each person's ideas and experiences through methods of discussion. In debating the fundamental questions of life, pupils learn to respect a range of perspectives. This contributes to learning about democracy, examining the idea that we all share a responsibility to use our voice and influence for the wellbeing of others.
- **The Rule of Law:** In RE pupils examine different examples of codes for human life, including commandments, rules or precepts offered by different religious communities. They learn to appreciate how individuals choose between good and evil, right and wrong, and they learn to apply these ideas to their own communities. They learn that fairness requires that the law apply equally to all, irrespective of a person's status or wealth.
- **Individual liberty.** In RE, pupils consider questions about identity, belonging and diversity, learning what it means to live a life free from constraints. They study

examples of pioneers of human freedom, including those from within different religions, so that they can examine tensions between the value of a stable society and the value of change for human development.

## **Additional Support and Guidance**

As well as this statutory syllabus, SACRE have provided a wide range of guidance and support materials for the teacher of RE. These include key items to help teachers:

- a. **Launch the syllabus with our 'ready to use' presentation.** A PowerPoint presentation to use with staff and governors in every school to introduce the new syllabus and to provide an inspiring vision of the place and value of RE in every child's education.
- b. **Put the RE poster up in classrooms and staffrooms.** The Sheffield SACRE RE Poster (ready to print and available to adapt).
- c. **Use the exemplar medium term plans.** Twelve ready to use medium term exemplar plans for pupils across the age range 4-14.
- d. **Write more plans to the standard template.** A blank template of a curriculum investigation plan for teachers to use in writing their own plans for RE.
- e. **Improve confidence and subject knowledge with our Beginners' Guides.** Beginners' Guides to the six religions in the syllabus and to Humanism - for the teacher to use as a 'first base' reference point when they teach a religion with which they are less familiar
- f. **Use the pyramids to describe RE outcomes clearly:** a PDF of the three pyramids for use as a classroom or staffroom poster.

## **Which Religions and Beliefs are to be Studied?**

It is through teaching RE's aims and Attainment Targets that high standards in RE can be established. Pupils' experience of the subject is the focus for their exploration of human experience and beliefs. It is also important that pupils are taught in depth and detail about particular religions and beliefs through each of the key stages.

This Agreed Syllabus requires schools to contribute to enabling pupils in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton to develop an overall understanding of the six principal religions in Great Britain. The balance between depth of understanding and the coverage of material in these religions is important, so the syllabus – as did earlier versions – lays down the recommended religions to be taught at each key stage. This is in line with the law, which states that RE shall have regard to 'the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. There is an emphasis on the depth of study of religions and beliefs, rather than mere 'coverage'.

This can be seen as a minimum entitlement to learning about religions, and some schools may plan the study of more religions than this minimum through the choice they make about units of work. A wider range than the minimum may be especially appropriate where pupils from many religions are present in one class or school. The syllabus thus promotes continuity and progression between schools. Schools may plan some RE that goes beyond the minimum requirements – for example in response to topical events or local needs – but regard must be given to the importance of enabling pupils to study religions and beliefs in depth.

Additionally, schools may use material from other religious traditions and belief systems represented in the school, the local area, the region or the UK, such as Rastafari, the Baha'i Faith, the Jehovah's Witnesses, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Brahma Kumaris or Humanists.

The Agreed Syllabus requires religions to be studied in depth as follows:

	Schools should consider the pupils they serve in deciding whether to go beyond the minimum entitlements to learning about religions, which are:	<p>This is the minimum requirement. Many schools may wish to go beyond the minimum. Schools should consider the pupils they serve in deciding whether to go beyond the minimum entitlements to learning about religions.</p>
<b>EYFS including Reception</b>	<b>Christianity</b> Religions and beliefs represented in the local area	
<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Christianity and either Judaism or Islam</b> Pupils may also learn from other religions in thematic units.	
<b>Key Stage 2</b>	<b>Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam</b> Pupils may also learn from other religions in thematic units.	
<b>Key Stage 3</b>	<b>Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism and Islam</b> (an additional study of Judaism and Hinduism may be undertaken) Pupils may also learn from other religions in thematic units.	
<b>Key Stage 4</b>	<b>At least two religions including Christianity</b> (through a recognised national RS qualification course such as GCSE full or short RS courses or CoEA RS) Pupils may also learn from other religions in thematic units.	
<b>16–19 RE for All</b>	<b>Belief systems or life stances as appropriate</b> Pupils may also learn from other religions in thematic units.	



**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**12<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People**

**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 disapply 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**  
**Telephone number:**

**Emma Jardine**  
**01785 277997**



**12<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People**

**An Update 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 key issues. These are 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 NASACRE is the national body of SACRE's. National meetings are held to which members of SACRE are invited and encouraged to attend. 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**  
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**Emma Jardine**  
**01785 277997**



**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**12<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People**

**The SACRE Annual Report**

**1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To present the SACRE with it's Annual Report.

**2 Summary**

2.1 SACRE produces an annual report of its work which is published as a public document. A copy of the 2013-2014 SACRE Annual Report will be presented at the meeting for approval by members prior to distribution.

**3 Recommendation**

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report

**4 Background**

4.1 SACREs are required to produce an annual report of their work. This report is sent to headteachers of all schools in the county, to the teachers associations and to the local faith communities. The report is also made available on the Staffordshire Learning Net.

4.2 Members are requested to read and approve the report prior to general distribution.

**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**  
**Telephone number:**

**Emma Jardine**  
**01785 27799**



**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**12<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People**

**SACRE Budget 2014 - 2015**

**1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To advise members of SACRE of the current budget position

**2 Summary**

2.1 A breakdown of the SACRE budget for the financial year 2013 - 2014 to date will be presented at the meeting.

**3 Recommendation**

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report

**4 Background**

4.1 A budget has been made available to support the work of SACRE during the financial year 2014 – 2015 as approved by the Corporate Director (Children and Lifelong Learning).

4.2 The budget will be monitored strictly this year in terms of the number of days that the RE consultant is permitted to support the SACRE. This is required to reflect the funding.

4.3 There are many items that will remain unchanged. The extras will no longer be funded by Entrust. The SACRE lecture will be funded for this academic year as it has already been advertised. The SACRE awards could be presented in schools by SACRE members or alternatively could be distributed at the SACRE lecture for this year.

**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**  
**Telephone number:**

**Emma Jardine**  
**01785 27799**

<b>SACRE non negotiables</b>	Days	Income from EM1100 £12030
Annual Membership of NASACRE		95
Annual Membership of AREIAC		70
Membership of NATRE		100
Attendance at NASACRE AGM (Chair of SACRE)		90
Attendance at AREIAC 1 day conference (Consultant to SACRE) Fee:		90
Consultant time to attend conference	1	575
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1020</b>
<b>Minimum Required Consultant Support for SACRE</b>		
3xhalf day meetings including prep time	3	1725
Monitoring RE provision including creating, distributing and collating surveys	1	575
Liaison with Chair/Clerk	1	575
Budget		
Annual report	4	2300
Printing and distribution of annual report		878
Strategic information and advice via phone/email to schools	3	1725
Admin and research		
Responding to SACRE instructions data/praise	0.5	300
	2	1150
Familiarisation and Liaison with related organisations e.g. NATRE, AREIAC, NASACRE	3	1725
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>11973</b>
<b>SACRE Extras currently supported by consultant to SACRE/Entrust</b>		
refreshments at meetings x3		81
Annual SACRE Lecture (1xspeaker £500, half day consultant time £300, refreshments £27)	0.5	875
student conference/consultation (1 day+2 days prep)	3	1725
Annual SACRE Awards (2 days consultant prep time, half day consultant time for awards ceremony, refreshments £50)	2.5	1450
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>16104</b>
<b>Additional Statutory SACRE duties</b>		
Agreed Syllabus Review <b>once every 5 years</b> . The 2014 review has been agreed by Cllr Adams and has found that a full rewrite would be advisable due to far reaching education changes in the past 5 years. This work takes 12 months, involves stakeholder consultations at all key points and requires the creation of educational materials from reception to post 16. The additional support of an external body is required		

**NB Consultant days are charged at £575 full day and £300 half day**

**Work against budget correct as of 31.10.14**

- **All non negotiables paid for and attendance at conference will occur on 27.11.14**
- **1xhalf day prep for plus one meeting**
- **RE survey created**
- **Annual report written**
- **Meeting with Lat Blaylock**
- **SACRE annual Lecture**

**Extra's which have not been funded**

- **Student conference**
- **SACRE awards**