

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Wednesday, 10 February 2016
2.00 pm
Entrust Headquarters, Riverway

John Tradewell
Director of Strategy, Governance and Change
2 February 2016

National Spiritualist Union

Ms Julia Almond, representing the National Spiritualist Union, to speak on Spiritualism today and answer questions prior to the start of the SACRE meeting.

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declaration of Any other Business**
3. **Minutes of the SACRE Meeting held on 11 November 2015** (Pages 1 - 4)
4. **An Update on Key Issues** (Pages 5 - 8)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
5. **Agreed Syllabus Conference Review Update** (Pages 9 - 10)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

It is anticipated that at this point the SACRE meeting will be suspended in order to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
6. **Analysis of Examination Results** (Pages 11 - 20)



Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

7. **Recommendations of Recent Publications as advised by NASACRE** (Pages 21 - 28)

- a) Common themes: Uncommon solutions- NASACRE summary of the reports below.A
- b) New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools- Clarke- Woodhead
- c) LIVING WITH DIFFERENCE: community, diversity and the common good- The Woolf Institute/ Rt Hon Baroness Sloss
- d) RE for Real- developed at Goldsmith's, University of London, under the supervision of Professor Adam Dinham and Martha Shaw
- e) Will GCSE Religious Studies as proposed by the government, meet the requirements to religiously educate pupils at KS4? The judicial review of Mr Justice Warby

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

8. **Application for Membership of SACRE from the Spiritualists' National Union** (Pages 29 - 30)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

9. **NASACRE Update** (Pages 31 - 32)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

10. **Application for Variation of Practice** (Pages 33 - 34)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

11. **SACRE Budget** (Pages 35 - 36)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

12. **AOB**

13. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next SACRE meeting is scheduled for 6 July 2016, 2.00pm, Kingston Centre, Stafford.

Membership

Margaret Crossland	Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf (Chairman)
Paul Moseley	Dr Laow Panyasiri
Sam Kirwan	Muhammad Parekh
Julie Thompson (Co-Optee)	Sam Phillips
Susan Devereux	Sue Blackmore
Mick Dwyer	Colin Hopkins
Sonia Andjelkovic	Rosemary Woodward
Ann Hewetson	Peter Davies
Diana Cutler	Terry Finn
Tajinder Singh	David Williams
Paul Lewis	Caroline Wood
G Devadason	Ian Lawson
Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal (Vice-Chairman)	

MINUTES

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Meeting - 11 November 2015

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

Margaret Crossland, Paul Moseley, Sam Kirwan, Julie Thompson (Co-Optee), Sonia Andjelkovic, Diana Cutler, Dr Laow Panyasiri, Sue Blackmore, Peter Davies, Terry Finn, David Williams and Ian Lawson

Apologies for absence: Susan Devereux, Mick Dwyer, Tajinder Singh, G Devadason, Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal, Muhammad Parekh, Sam Phillips, Colin Hopkins, Rosemary Woodward and Caroline Wood

Also in attendance - Helen Phillips and Mary Gale

PART ONE

12. Welcome to New Members

The Chairman welcomed Paul Moseley, Humanist representative and Margaret Crossland, Quaker representative, to the SACRE.

13. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Nominations had been received for Rev Preb Michael Metcalf and Hifsa Haroon Iqbal to be elected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively. No further nominations were received and it was:

RESOLVED – That Rev Preb Michael Metcalf and Hifsa Haroon Iqbal be elected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively for the ensuing year.

14. Minutes of the SACRE Meeting held on 8 July 2015

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 8 July 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

15. An Update on Key Issues

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

- a) Members were updated on the maternity cover for Emma Jardine by Mary Gale;
- b) Guidance on promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools, with Members hearing about the AREIAC and National Centre for Diversity's training around British values and SMSC in schools;
- c) SACRE lecture entitled "RE Matters" held on 10 November. Feedback from the lecture had been very positive, with delegates finding the event "informative" and "inspiring";

- d) RE teachers are now invited to attend NATRE meetings, with the most recent having been held on 22 October at which information was shared around the role of SACRE and the application process for the RE quality mark; and,
- e) The Woolf Institute had convened a Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public life, whose report, chaired by Baroness Butler-Sloss would be published very soon.

RESOLVED – That the update on key issues be noted.

16. Agreed Syllabus Review

[Karen Coker, Relationship Manager, Education and Wellbeing, in attendance for this item.]

Karen Coker made reference to the Options document previously considered by SACRE. Option A, the preferred option, had suggested 20 days would be needed to produce the Agreed Syllabus, being divided equally between the Entrust RE Advisor and a consultant from RE Today. Whilst the County Council could commission Entrust to produce the syllabus through their commissioning process there was no separate funding available and they were not in a position to commission outside Entrust. Funding the RE Today consultant would not therefore be possible.

The County Council were, however, able to commission the 20 days from within Entrust and separate to the SACRE budget. SACRE Members welcomed this progress.

SACRE noted the minutes of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 8 July 2015.

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

RESOLVED – That SACRE convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference meeting.

[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.]

17. An Update on NASACRE

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

- The NASACRE Annual General Meeting would be held on 17 May 2016 in Central Hall, Westminster. The main speaker was to be Baroness Butler-Sloss. In addition, Adam Dinham of Goldsmith's College would be speaking on Religious Literacy. If circumstances allowed, Secretary of State for Education and Skills Nicky Morgan would also give a short address; and,
- Out of 153 SACREs, 130 had been able to continue their membership of NASACRE, including Staffordshire.

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

18. Application for Variation of Practice

There were none on this occasion.

19. SACRE Budget 2015 - 2016

SACRE received a breakdown of the current SACRE budget for the financial year 2015-2016. NATRE and AREIAC subscriptions were still to be taken from the budget along with the SACRE meetings costs.

RESOLVED – That the budget details be noted.

20. Reports on Stafford and District Friends of Faith

The Stafford and District Friends of Faith (SDFF) hold open meetings to which SACRE members are invited and encouraged to attend. SDFF is affiliated to the National Inter-Faith Network (UK). The meetings discuss issues which have a local or national importance for RE.

SDFF also had a high profile event held at Staffordshire University on Monday 16 November around the theme of peace, with SACRE members invited to attend.

SDFF were looking to develop a five year programme for their work.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and members be encouraged to attend the SDFF meetings.

21. Update on Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural education in schools in the new Common Inspection framework

In the Autumn 2015 a new Common Inspection Framework (CIF) was introduced for all education settings. This replaced the previous Ofsted framework of 2012. One very important aspect inspected was the impact of Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural (SMSC) education on pupils.

SACRE received details of SMSC in the new Framework and noted that tolerance and respect was expected to be intrinsic throughout the school and not only taught through separate SMCC.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

22. Key Recommendations of Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead "A New Settlement Religion and Belief in schools

During the 2015 NASACRE conference a keynote speaker, Charles Clarke, drew the Conference's attention to "A New Settlement Religion and Belief in Schools", a report he had produced jointly with Linda Woodhead. Members received details of the report's recommendations and gave consideration to their impact within RE.

This was not a statutory document but an attempt to spark debate within the world of RE and the Government.

Ofsted had taken some note of this document.

Members gave consideration to and had group discussions on the recommendations.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and the recommendations be noted.

23. Draft SACRE annual report 2014 - 2015

SACRE received their draft annual report 2014-15 for comment prior to it being published.

Any comments and/or amendments should be forwarded to the Clerk and/or Mary Gale by the end of November 2015. The report would then be updated and published.

RESOLVED – That any amendments be forwarded to the Clerk or Mary Gale by the end of November 2015.

24. AOB

The Chairman had received a request from the National Spiritualist Union for membership on the SACRE.

Membership of Committee A was a decision for the County Council but should reflect the diversity of faith communities within the County. There was also the facility to co-opt a member to the SACRE. Such co-opted members could take part in any debate but were unable to participate in any formal voting by Committees.

After some debate Members agreed to consider this in more detail at the February meeting alongside information about the National Spiritualist Union, their representation within Staffordshire, and a reminder of the purpose of SACRE's and their code of conduct.

25. Date of the next SACRE meeting

RESOLVED – That the next SACRE meeting be held on 10 February 2016, 2.00pm, at Entrust Headquarters, Riverway.

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

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

10 February 2016

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 Autumn 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 Telephone number: 07816374873

Cover for RE Consultant to Staffordshire SACRE

Maternity cover for Emma Jardine continues to be carried out by Mary Gale. Emma is due back in April to continue her duties.

The tasks involved continue to be varied, ranging from organising the annual SACRE lecture, advising on RE quality mark application, worship in schools, SMSC, Governor queries, liaison with national bodies, the LA and resource provision to supporting the MEAS team with their valuable work.

Key Issue

Changes to the GCSE regulations. In summary from September 2016 pupils who commence their GCSE studies will be assessed on a scale of 1-9.

Examination boards such as AQA and OCR have produced draft information on what would be covered in their examinations. The problem for schools at the moment is that these draft qualification has not yet been accredited by Ofqual. They have been published to enable teachers to have early sight of the proposed approach to GCSE (9–1) in Religious Studies. Further changes may be required and no assurance can be given at this time that the proposed qualification will be made available in its current form, or that it will be accredited in time for first teaching in 2016 and first award in 2018.

Schools are enquiring whether there will be courses to support the changes. I have reported to them that this will be looked at early in the Summer term and information shared as appropriate.

Queries about the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus

I have been answering a number of queries about the AS and whether it is still to be taught as it is past its review date. I have re-assured schools that there is no problem with them continuing to teach the current AS and this would continue to be the case until the new AS is published. Assessment raises the most queries as currently we are experiencing a life with our levels and previous guidance has been to assess using levels. have again reassured school that they can carry on with their current practice or move to a system in line with the schools' new assessment system looking at age related expectations.

Important reports See agenda item 7

- Common themes: Uncommon solutions- NASACRE summary of the reports below.
- A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools- Clarke- Woodhead
- LIVING WITH DIFFERENCE: community, diversity and the common good- The Woolf Institute/ Rt Hon Baroness Sloss
- RE for Real- developed at Goldsmith's, University of London, under the supervision of Professor Adam Dinham and Martha Shaw.
- Will GCSE Religious Studies as proposed by the government, meet the requirements to religiously educate pupils at KS4? The judicial review of Mr Justice Warby

Annual report

This has been completed and sent on to Sharon Kelly who will send on to schools in due course.

There was only one amendment and that was an alteration to the Chairs commentary

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

10 February 2016

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

Agreed Syllabus Review Update

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To continue 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. This is now overdue

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 sixth meeting of the Agreed Syllabus Conference. At previous meetings 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 is sourcing funds for the Agreed Syllabus review. The Chair of SACRE will update on responses from Staffordshire County Council.

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:

- September 2014 a new curriculum was introduced to all schools, except for Year 2 and Year 6 and KS3 and 4 (Key Stages 1-4), with a clear focus on slimming down the curriculum to allow for more cross curriculum dimensions and interdisciplinary 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.

- September 2015 the new curriculum applies to all pupils at KS 1 and KS 2.
- 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 required to 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 considered a number of options.

These decisions were supported through communication from Entrust and SCC regarding costings.

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

Mary Gale Telephone number:

07816374873

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

10 February 2016

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

An Analysis of Examination Results for Staffordshire Schools 2015

1 Purpose of Report

To present SACRE members with a statistical analysis of the standards achieved in GCSE (Full Course), Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary GCE Religious Studies by pupils examined in the summer of 2015.

2 Summary

Members of SACRE will receive a graphical analysis of the standards achieved.

3 Recommendation

That members of SACRE receive the report.

That letters be sent on behalf of SACRE to identified schools offering congratulations or Support as appropriate.

4 Background

A statistical analysis of the standards achieved by Staffordshire schools in examinations held in summer 2015 is attached to this report.

Key issues identified in the analysis are as follows:

Overall

- a) In 2015 the number of entries for GCSE Full Course has risen again. Since 2012 there are now 2441 more entries for the full course GCSE. Schools are no longer entering students for the short course.
- b) This increase reflects the national changes in the examination system and the de-valuing of the short course GCSE.
- c) The number of schools entering pupils for Full Course GCSE typically fluctuates slightly year on year. This year the number has dropped from 48 in 2014 to 46 in 2015.
- d) It is positive that entries overall have not declined and that examination and accreditation is still favoured at KS4. The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus recommends that students at KS4 study an approved examination syllabus; these findings show that the vast majority of schools are compliant.
- e) Standards achieved at GCSE have declined only slightly from last year in Staffordshire. This reflects the National trend. This decline may reflect the fact that as the numbers of students have increased, more staff may be teaching RE and those staff may

need further training in teaching the full course. Teaching time for pupils may not have been increased to

- f) take account of the extra content involved in short course.
- g) Overall 445 students across 27 schools were entered for AS level and 333 students across 25 schools were entered for A Level at the end of KS5. There is a substantial increase in the number of entries at both AS and A Level.

Full Course GCSE

- a) The number of schools entering pupils for the Full Course has dropped slightly this year. 46 of Staffordshire's schools enter pupils for Full Course GCSE.
- b) The percentage of pupils attaining grades A* to C in Full Course nationally has decreased. This coincides with a decrease in Staffordshire. For the second time in 2 years Staffordshire students have performed slightly below the national average.

Short Course GCSE

- a) There was no local data for GCSE Short Course RE this year.

Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level GCE

- a) The number of entries at AS level has risen substantially this year.
- b) The percentage of pupils gaining higher grades A-B is below the national figures.

Advanced (A) Level GCE

- a) The number of pupils entered for A Level (A2) has risen. At the higher grades Staffordshire pupils attainment is below the national average for both boys and girls but the gap is narrowing.

Teachers and pupils in Staffordshire schools are to be congratulated on their hard work and continued efforts to raise the standard of attainment in the County.

5 Equal Opportunities

This report has been prepared in line with the County Council's policy on Equal Opportunities.

6 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications

See Appendix 1

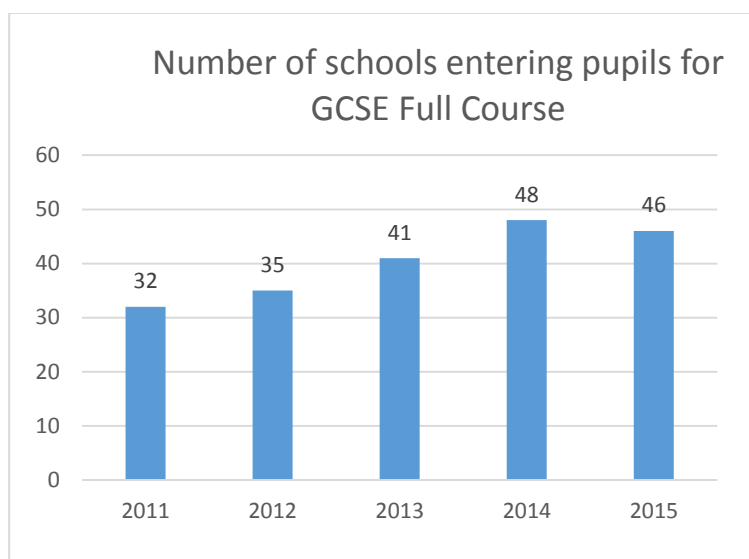
Examination Results 2015-2016

Full Course GCSE in Religious Studies

Results Analysis 2015

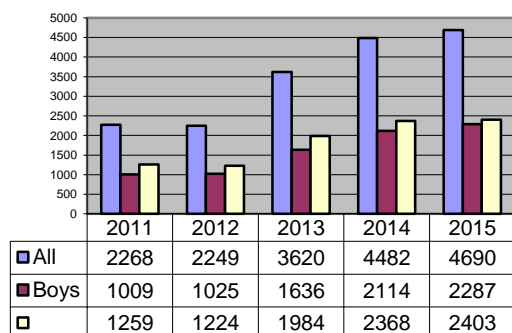
National Average A* to C 70.6% (72% in 2014)

Staffordshire Average A* to C 68.4% (68.5% in 2014)



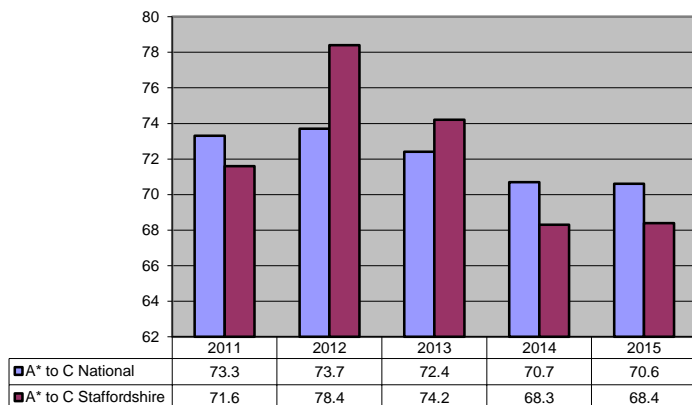
- The number of schools entering pupils for Full Course GCSE typically fluctuates slightly year on year. This year the number has dropped from 48 in 2014 to 46 in 2015.

Number of students entered for Full Course GCSE



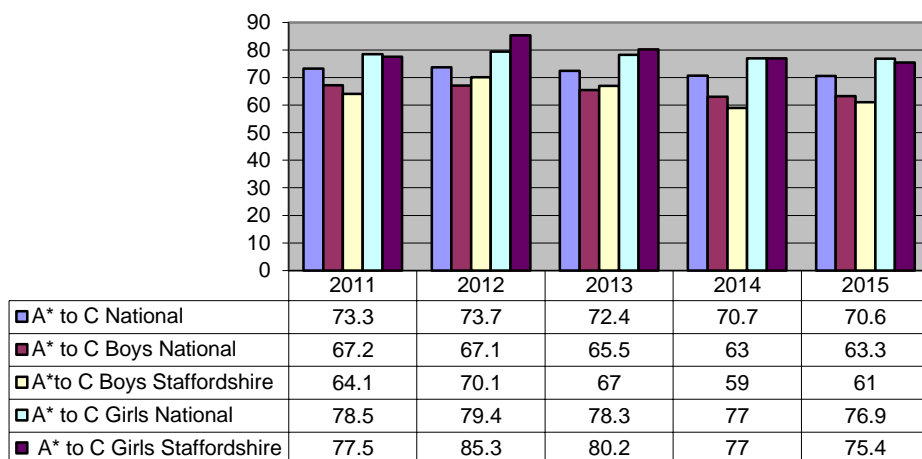
- The numbers of entries has significantly increased once again this year for both boys and girls. 4690 in 2015 and 4482 in 2014
- Since 2012 there are now 2441 more entries for full course GCSE
- This increase reflects the national changes in the examination system and the de-valuing of the short course GCSE.
- The increase in entries is once again a strong indication that in Staffordshire the feared impact on RE of changes nationally has been relatively small.
- The increase is also a positive indication that the KS4 recommendations in the agreed Syllabus are being followed and that schools are working hard to credit their students learning and achievements.

Percentage of students gaining A* to C grades in Full Course



- The percentage of pupils attaining grades A* to C in Full Course nationally has slightly decreased from 2014 at 70.7% to 70.6% in 2015. This coincides with a slight decrease in Staffordshire to 68.4. (-.01%)
- The differential between the 2015 national average and the Staffordshire average is -2.2% percentage points. Over the past three years Staffordshire students have performed slightly below the national average.
- This decline may reflect the fact that as entries have increased sharply this may be the only the second attempt at full course RE for many schools, there may be staffing pressures in schools, staff may need further training in teaching the full course as opposed to the short course, teaching time for pupils may not have been increased to take account of the extra content involved in the short course.

Attainment by gender Full Course



- In 2015 Staffordshire boys have performed below the national average and girls have slightly below the average for girls nationally.

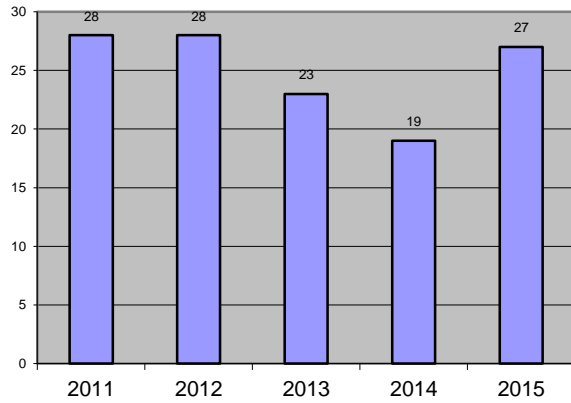
Advanced Subsidiary (AS) GCE in Religious Studies Results Analysis 2015

National Average A to B 43.1% 27.1% (2014)

Staffordshire Average A to B 38.7% 20.7% (2014)

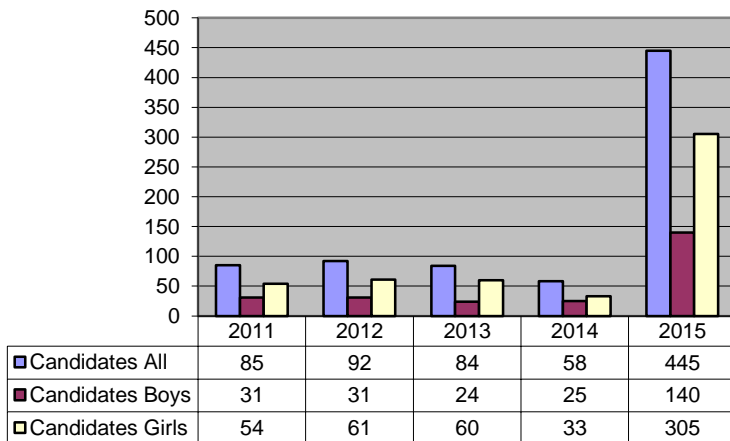
Year 12

No of schools entering students for AS in Year 12



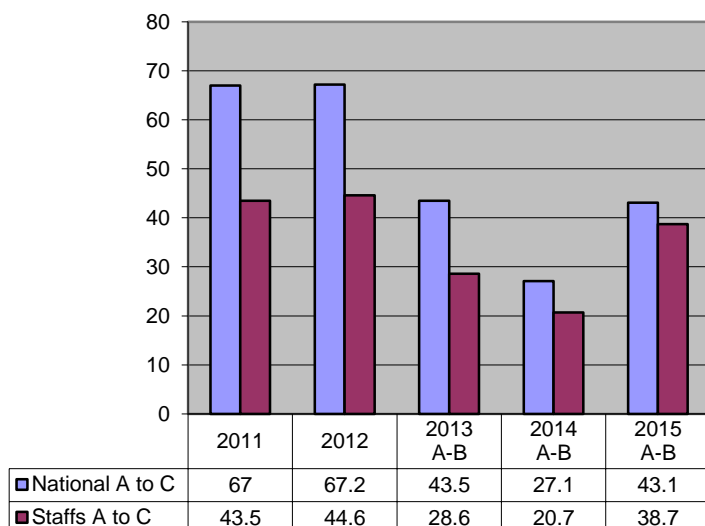
- The number of schools entering students for AS in Year 12 has risen this year to 27 schools, a substantial leap from 19 schools in 2014.

Number of students entered for Advanced Level AS in Year 12



- The numbers of students entered for AS has risen considerable to 445 students in 2015, compare this with 58 pupils in 2014.

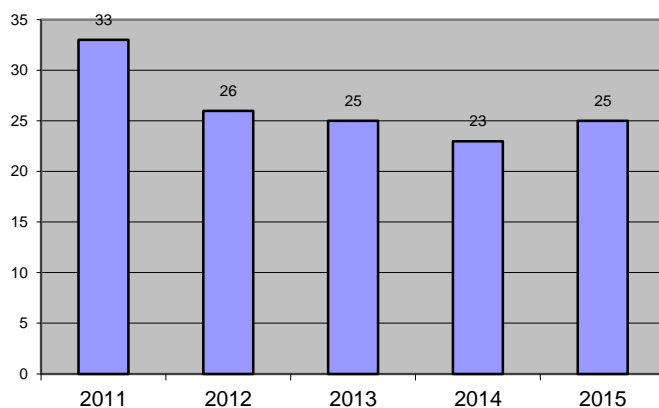
Percentage of students gaining A to C in Year 12



- This graph shows results in Staffordshire for grades A-C at AS RS. The measure has changed, however to A-B which is reflected in the figures for 2013 and 2014.
- Grades nationally and in Staffordshir have risen. Results in Staffordshire at the higher grades A-B fall below the national average.

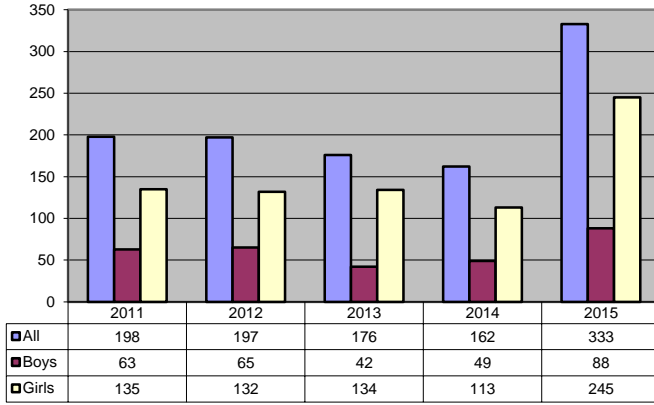
**Advanced level
GCE in Religious Studies Results Analysis 2015**
National Average A* to B 54.5% (51.7 % in 2014)
Staffordshire Average A to B 52% (42.6 % in 2014)

Number of schools entering pupils for
Advanced Level A2



- The number of schools entering students for Advanced Level (A2) RS fluctuates slightly from year to year.
- 25 schools entered students in 2015.

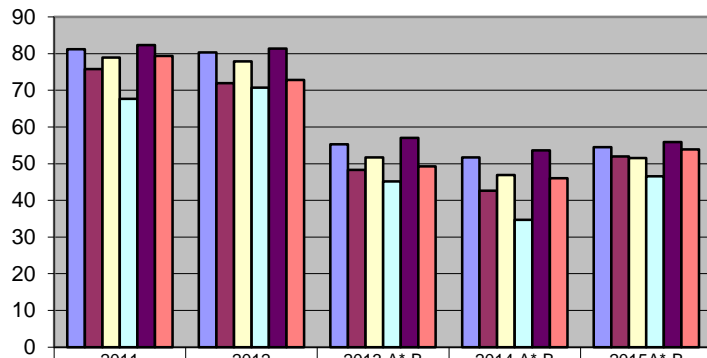
Number of students entered for Advanced Level (A2)



- The number of Staffordshire pupils entered for Advanced Level (A2) has remained fairly consistent for the past five years but has risen considerably this year.
- The ratio of girls to boys is approximately 3:1

Percentage of students gaining A to C grades at Advanced Level (A2)

- This graph shows results in Staffordshire for grades A*-C at RS. The measure has changed, however to A-B which is reflected in the figures for 2013, 2014 and 2015.
- Results in Staffordshire at the higher grades A-B have been below the national average for both boys and girls in 2013 and 2014 this trend continues in 2015, but the gap is narrowing.



	2011	2012	2013 A*-B	2014 A*-B	2015 A*-B
A to C National	81.2	80.3	55.3	51.7	54.5
A to C Staffordshire	75.8	72	48.3	42.6	52
A to C Boys National	78.9	77.9	51.7	46.9	51.5
A to C Boys Staffordshire	67.7	70.7	45.2	34.7	46.6
A to C Girls National	82.3	81.4	57	53.6	55.9
A to C Girls Staffordshire	79.4	72.8	49.3	46	53.9

Staffordshire schools well above the national average

GCSE Full Course

School	Number On Role	Number Of Entries	Well above national average A* to C (72.%)
Sir Thomas Boughey High School.	153	15	100
Tamworth Enterprise College and AET Academy	184	18	100
Norton Canes High School, Cannock	87	30	100
The Friary School, Lichfield	199	90	96.7
Wolstanton High School, Newcastle	191	30	93.3
The Staffordshire University Academy	78	12	91.7
University Academy Kidsgrove	125	11	90.9
John Taylor High School	214	213	90.6
Moorside High School	145	143	86
King Edward VI School, Lichfield	214	21	85.7
Clayton Hall Business & Language College	192	189	84.7
Blessed William Howard High Catholic	122	118	83.9
Painsley Catholic College	196	193	83.4
Walton High School, Stafford	202	17	82.4
Chase Terrace Technology College	228	21	81
Sir John Fisher Catholic High	162	159	81.1
Paulet High School	119	10	80
Thomas Alleynes High School, Uttoxeter	263	252	78.6
Netherstowe	113	18	77.8
The De Ferrers Academy	310	304	77.6
Westwood College	194	57	77.2
Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Sports College	116	107	75.7
Abbot Beyne School	108	94	72.3

Staffordshire schools well below the national average

GCSE Full Course

school	NOR	NOE	Well below national average A* to C (70.7%)
Cannock Chase High School	184	98	31.6
NCHS - The Science College	74	68	33.8
Clough Hall Technology School, Kidsgrove	69	66	25.8
Stafford Sports College	62	52	21.2

Staffordshire schools well above the national average

AS level

school	NOE	Above national Average A to B (43.1%)
John Taylor High	37	70.3
Thomas Alleyne's	13	69.2
Blessed William Howard Catholic	20	50
Kingsmead	10	50
Sir John Fisher	12	50
Sir Graham Balfour	2	50
Cheslyn High	11	45.5
Walton High	16	43.8

Staffordshire schools well above the national average

A level

school	NOE	Above national Average A to B (54.5%)
Painsley Catholic	2	100
Walton High School	18	77.8
Codsall High	4	75
Moorside High	4	75
Erasmus Darwin Academy	7	71.4
Cardinall Griffiths High	18	66.7
Blessed William Howard Catholic	24	58.3

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

10 February 2016

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

Recommendations from Recent Publications as Advised by NASACRE

Key Recommendations of the following

- A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools- Clarke- Woodhead
- LIVING WITH DIFFERENCE: community, diversity and the common good- The Woolf Institute/ Rt Hon Baroness Sloss
- RE for Real- developed at Goldsmith's, University of London, under the supervision of Professor Adam Dinham and Martha Shaw
- Will GCSE Religious Studies as proposed by the government, meet the requirements to religiously educate pupils at KS4? The judicial review of Mr Justice Warby
- Common themes: Uncommon solutions- response from NASACRE

1 Purpose of Report

To present SACRE members with the key recommendations of the above documents

2 Summary

2015 saw the publication of a number of significant reports for religious education, collective worship, SACREs and ASCs. This detailed paper written by Chair of NASACRE, David Hampshire, brings together proposals from these reports and the judgement of Mr Justice Warby in relation to the Secretary of State's position regarding non-religious worldviews as part of GCSE Religious Studies. The reports do not cover the same themes, but there is significant overlap between them.

3 Recommendation

That members of SACRE note the recommendations.

4 Background

It is good practice for SACREs to review and reflect on such recommendations

5 Equal Opportunities

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

6 Financial implications

There are no immediate financial implications

Contact Officer: Mary Gale Telephone number: 07816374873

A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools

This report was the subject of a previous SACRE meeting and that briefing should be consulted for additional information. Since that briefing, the RE Council has decided to put in motion a process of consultation by setting up an independent commission to discuss the proposals with a view to putting the recommendations to government. It is clear that the RE Council believes that there is a clear political window of opportunity to move things forward in terms of the Clarke-Woodhead proposals. SACREs are represented on the RE Council by NASACRE and, therefore, it is important that NASACREs representatives on the RE Council know and understand the 'mind' of SACREs as this process unfolds.

LIVING WITH DIFFERENCE: community, diversity and the common good

The REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON RELIGION AND BELIEF IN BRITISH PUBLIC LIFE, chaired by The Rt. Hon. Baroness Elizabeth Butler-Sloss GBE covers much ground, not simply religious education and collective worship. The commission was first convened by The Woolf Institute in September 2013 and the report comes after two years of research and reflection, although it's not without challenge. The relevant sections of the full report are reproduced below.

Religious Education

Syllabuses, teaching and worship

4.13 A range of problems and challenges were put to us in relation to schools beyond the question of segregation in admissions policies and four of these are considered below. Some of them are pressing in all four of the UK's nations, whereas others are primarily an issue in just one nation. Not all the matters referred to below are equally serious everywhere. With particular regard to issues in England, most of the problems mentioned have been highlighted and documented by Ofsted and a range of major reviews.

4.14 First, the relevant curricula throughout the UK are extremely diverse. There are in theory 174 different agreed syllabuses in local authorities in England and Wales, a range of different syllabuses in different Anglican and Roman Catholic dioceses and several thousand different syllabuses in academy schools, which are now a majority of secondary schools in England. The diversity arguably reflects remarkable trust in, and respect for, local decision making. But also it implies a lack of diligence and concern, for it seems anomalous to have so many different syllabuses in different localities across the country. No other curriculum subject is treated in this way. On the contrary, the approach to religion and belief education in England is in distinct contrast to the way other subjects are regulated. In these, only one programme of study is set for each subject, and although academies are free not to teach it, most do because of pressures applied by Ofsted inspections

4.15 Second, the content of many syllabuses is inadequate. They fail to reflect the reality of religion and belief, having a rather sanitised or idealised form of religion as their content. They tend to portray religions only in a good light, focusing for example on the role of religions in encouraging peace, harmony and caring for the poor or the environment and tend to omit the role of religions in reinforcing stereotypes and prejudice around issues such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity and race, and the attempts to use religion as a justification for terrorism. Further, a great many fail to include non-religious worldviews, for example humanism, and do not deal with competing truth claims. They do not deal with the full spectrum of religion and belief issues covered in this report. Experienced and knowledgeable teachers of education about religion and belief can usually overcome such weaknesses in written documents and achieve better teaching than the syllabus might suggest. Good teaching, where it exists, undoubtedly helps children and young people to learn both about religion and from it, and makes a powerful contribution to mutual understanding and cohesion.

4.16 Third, the shortage of well-trained teachers of education about religion and belief in England and Wales (in contrast to Scotland) means that shortcomings in official syllabuses are compounded in practice. Many primary school teachers are so poorly trained in relation to teaching about religion and belief that, whatever the curricula provided, the handling of the issues contained in them is extremely variable. Of the teachers who were questioned in a survey of over 300 primary schools, only 19 per cent reported receiving more than 11 hours of initial training devoted to religious education. In secondary schools, there are fewer specialist teachers of religion and belief education than for any other academic subject. A massive recruitment and retraining for teachers of education about religion and belief is required if these matters are to be treated seriously and deeply in these unprecedented times of religious confusion and tension.

Collective worship

4.17 Fourth, there are still requirements on most schools across the UK to provide religious worship and for this to be Christian. The arguments in favour of retaining compulsory Christian worship in UK schools are however, no longer convincing. There are arguments for total repeal but there is also widespread support for an alternative provision, as distinct from abolition. In this connection we applaud the joint initiative in Scotland between the Humanist Society Scotland and the Church of Scotland to work together for an inclusive 'time for reflection'. The commission endorses this approach as an example for the rest of the UK and notes that it would build on the good practice of holding inclusive assemblies that already exists in many schools but remains technically unlawful.

The commission makes a number of recommendations on the basis of the report's findings:

6. Statutory entitlement

Governments across the UK should introduce a statutory entitlement for all schools within the state system for a subject dealing with religious and non-religious worldviews. They should establish content and learning objectives that can be flexibly applied by teachers, allowing the minimum requirements to be built on differently by different schools. The content should be broad and inclusive in a way that reflects the diversity of religion and belief in the UK, and the subject should have the same status as other humanities subjects. (Paragraphs 4.22–4.24 and 4.27)

7. Collective worship

Governments should repeal requirements for schools to hold acts of collective worship or religious observance and issue new guidelines building on current best practice for inclusive assemblies and times for reflection that draw upon a range of sources, that are appropriate for pupils and staff of all religions and beliefs, and that will contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. (Paragraphs 4.17 and 4.28)

The claim in 4.15 that the content of many syllabuses is inadequate may be a useful starting point for Agreed Syllabuses Conferences, although it is not clear how the commission came to this judgement. Similarly, the claim that there are potentially 174 different agreed syllabuses does read as rather absurd, and it is indeed misleading (see the Letter of the Chair of NASACRE to the Church Times, 11th December, 2015 in response to Lord Harries).

RE for REal

The **RE for REal project** has been developing at Goldsmith's, University of London, under the supervision of Professor Adam Dinham and Martha Shaw. It surveyed students, teachers, parents and employers in light of current literature. SACREs may find it useful to discuss the findings from these four groups as a way of reflecting on the impact that RE is having within their local authority area and as a way of informing ASC discussions. The ten recommendations from this report are:

1. A statutory National Framework for Religion and Belief Learning should be developed, and be applicable to all schools, balancing shared national approaches with school level determination.
2. Since SACREs currently play a leading part in religion and belief learning, there is an urgent need for review of their role, and the role of others, such as professional bodies, local

education authorities, schools themselves, and other experts, in the forming of learning. This should inform and result in the appointment of a national panel to develop the framework.

3. The National Framework panel should be mandated to consider and make recommendations about i) the purpose, ii) content and iii) the structures of teaching and learning. It should also consider and make recommendations about the relationship between learning inside RE, outside in other subjects, and in the wider life of schools, especially in relation to the Act of Worship, and the right to withdraw.
4. Religion and belief learning should be a compulsory part of the curriculum to age 16, and consideration should be given to what, if anything, happens in post-16 learning. The panel should consider the related question of appropriate progression pathways and connections between education in primary, secondary, FE, HE and in to CPD.
5. Content should reflect the real religious landscape, as revealed by cutting edge theory and data in the study of contemporary religion and belief.
6. The process of producing a National Framework for Religion and Belief Learning should determine the mix, content and location of religion and belief learning specific to RE, and that which takes place in a distributed way in learning outside of RE.
7. GCSE Religious Studies should remain as an optional subject for schools, and consideration should be given to clearly demarcating the boundary between academic study of the real religious landscape, and other religion and belief learning associated with citizenship and SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development) outside of the GCSE.
8. There should be continued investment in Initial Teacher Training for subject-specialist RE teachers.
9. There should be increased investment in continuing professional development for non-specialist teachers of religion and belief.
10. The process of producing a National Framework should include a review and decision on the name or names of religion and belief learning in schools.

Will GCSE Religious Studies as proposed by the government, meet the requirements to religiously educate pupils at KS4? The judicial review of Mr Justice Warby

The Claimants' case is that the state has a duty to ensure that any educational provision it makes for religious education ("RE") treats religious and non-religious views on an equal footing, and in a non-partisan way; and that it has failed to discharge that obligation.

(Paragraph 5)

Furthermore... the Claimants contend that delivery of that content (as set out by the DfE) will not exhaust the state's obligation to provide RE (Paragraph 6).

This was made in relation to the DfE's statement that:

“By setting out the range of subject content and areas of study for GCSE specifications in religious studies, the subject content is consistent with the requirements for the statutory provision of religious education in current legislation as it applies to different types of school.”

This appears to be at odds with the definition of RE given in the 1996 Education Act 375 (3) 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.

Given that the judgement from Mr Justice Warby applies to the State, it may have an impact on the current definition of RE contained within the 1996 Education Act but it does not apply to Agreed Syllabus Conferences. The DfE has responded to the judgement on its [website](#) in light of claims made for the judgement by the British Humanist Association. The judgement does not say that RE must include non-religious worldviews rather the judgement states:

It is undoubtedly true that the ultimate decisions about syllabus content are made at the local level, by the ASCs and individual schools. (Paragraph 56).

There is no need for a SACRE to request the Authority to appoint an Agreed Syllabus Conference on the basis of this judicial review but may wish to consider the place of non-religious world view in its next review of the Agreed Syllabus.

Common themes: Uncommon solutions- response from NASACRE

There are a number of themes that SACREs may wish to discuss.

Nationally determined RE. Clarke-Woodhead writes about a National Syllabus for RE, Butler-Sloss appears to indicate a National Curriculum Order (aligned with Humanities subjects) and Dinham-Shaw, a National Framework (aligned with Citizenship and SMSC). What is not clear is whether they are talking about the same thing or not. It is not clear where RE would be in relation to the National Curriculum. Dinham-Shaw however, does consider learning about religion and belief outside of RE and its contribution to pupils' religious education.

All agree that RE does not currently cover the **diversity** that it should, or that it reflects the nature of religion and belief as it exists in current British society. What is not clear is what this means in practice. There seems to be little attention given to the amount of time that RE has within the curriculum, the need for depth as well as breadth or to how teachers might make sense of the diversity on the ground whilst teaching about traditions as a whole. There

has been much support for these proposals from across a wide variety of groups but it is not clear which groups, beliefs and practices would or would not be included. The reality is there is not enough time within the curriculum for every group to have 'its fair share of attention'. None of reports actually have any clear indication of how these proposals would be worked out in practice.

All three reports focus on the need for more **high quality training**. This is both at initial teacher training and as part of teachers' continuing professional development. Given the government's current policy on ITE and CPD, these proposals would seem difficult to achieve. SACREs may wish to look seriously at the training that is being provided by ITE providers and those providing CPD to the schools and academies in their local authority's area. The key question would have to be about the quality of training. How would an ITE or CPD provider, or school/academy know whether the training provided was of quality? What would the impact of effective training be in contrast to mediocre or poor training?

- **Withdrawal from RE.** Clarke-Woodhead takes this challenge up in a way that Butler-Sloss and Dinham-Shaw do not. Clarke-Woodhead proposes that parents would lose the right to withdraw from RE if the school/academy adopted the National Syllabus for RE, but would retain the right in schools/academies that didn't. If the Butler-Sloss proposals went forward and there was a National Curriculum Order for RE then the right to withdraw would be taken away in schools that had to follow it, but not Academies and Free Schools as they do not have to follow the National Curriculum at all – although they do currently have to provide religious education.

Collective worship. Clarke-Woodhead proposes national guidance on assemblies but leaves the detail up to the governors of the school in question. Butler-Sloss proposes national guidance but does not indicate who would make decisions about what this would mean in specific schools. It would appear that Butler-Sloss would like to see a *national* settlement for this and Clarke-Woodhead a *local* settlement. The report ***Collective Worship and Religious Observance in Schools: An Evaluation of Law and Policy in the UK*** (2015) by Cumper and Mawhinney calls on the government to undertake a thorough review of the current legislation and guidance for England produced by the DfE. What Cumper-Mawhinney does not allude to is the guidance on collective worship given by local SACREs, this is also true for Clarke-Woodhead and Butler-Sloss. Indeed, all of the debates appear to neglect the local in terms of collective worship

Conclusion

As can be seen these are exciting times for RE, collective worship, SACREs and ASCs. There is no indication, at the moment, that the government is interested in legislative change and all of the proposals put forward may come to nothing. Nevertheless, NASACRE will

continue to update member SACREs on the RE Council consultation and inform them how they might become involved.

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

10 February 2016

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

Applications for membership of SACRE by a member of the Spiritualists' National Union

1 Purpose of Report

To consider the application for membership of SACRE.

2. Recommendation

That members of SACRE make a decision on this application.

The suggestion is to offer a co-opted place for a Spiritualist o SACRE. If this is agreed, the chair will inform Cabinet Member Ben Adams of these proceedings. He will be able to make a decision on his own authority.

3. Background

There has been an application prior to the November meeting for a member of the Spiritualists' National Union to join SACRE

4. Equal Opportunities

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

5. Financial implications

There are no immediate financial implications

Contact Officer : Mary Gale
Telephone number: 07816374873

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

10 February 2016

**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 oral 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:

Mary Gale

Telephone number:

07816374873

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

10 February 2016

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

Applications for variation of practice

1 Purpose of Report

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

2 Summary

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

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

4 Background

No applications have been received at this time.

7 Equal Opportunities

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

Financial implications

There are no immediate financial implications

Contact Officer : Mary Gale
Telephone number: 07816374873

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

10 February 2016

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities

SACRE Budget 2015 – 2016

1 Purpose of Report

To advise members of SACRE of the current budget position for 2015-2016.

2 Summary

A breakdown of the current SACRE budget for the financial year 2015-2016 is included.

3 Recommendation

That members of SACRE receive the report

4 Background

A budget had been made available to support the work of SACRE during the financial year 2015 – 2016 as approved by the Corporate Director (Children and Lifelong Learning). The outturn statement is provided below.

The 2015-2016 budget will continue to be monitored in terms of the number of days that the RE consultant is permitted to support the SACRE. This is required to reflect the funding. See budget.

5 Equal Opportunities

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

6 Financial implications

Financial implications are indicated in the budget account.

Contact Officer
Telephone number:

Mary Gale
07816374873

SACRE Budget 2015/2016 up to January 2016

Cost Centre EM1100

Expenditure from 01/04/15 to 31/03/16

Allocation	12,370.00
Carry Forward	800.00
	13,170.00

<u>Expenditure</u>	£
SDA Funding	6,500.00

Other	
RMB029127 - 08/07/15 SACRE Meeting	105.00
RMB024580 - 08/07/15 SACRE Meeting	45.00
RMB029128 - 11/11/15 SACRE Meeting	105.00
RMB024582 - 11/11/15 SACRE Meeting	45.00
1 day for Caroline Johnson - Event	575.00
1 day for Mary Gale - Event	575.00
Booklets - PO rec 05/10/15	525.00
Staffordshire SACRE NASACRE conference	90.00
NASACRE Annual Subs	95.00
	8,660.00

Balance Remaining	4,510.00
--------------------------	-----------------

Updated 15/12/15

Other potential costs:	
Spring Term SACRE Meeting	105.00
Additional support for schools	575.00
AREIAC subscription	70.00
Spring Term SACRE Meeting	45.00
Insurance recharge	44.13
	839.13

Remaining	3,670.87
-----------	-----------------