

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
7th February 2018
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
An Update on Key Issues

1 Purpose of Report

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

2 Summary

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

3 Recommendation

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

4 Background

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

4.2 Members will be briefed on these key developments.

5 Equal Opportunities

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

6 Financial implications

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

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Materials for schools

Staffordshire schools have now received the SACRE Annual Report and a copy of the guidance on visits. Both documents have been well received.

The NASACRE/AREIAC one day conference

The Commission on RE: The Interim Report came out in late September. In order to debate the content, and hopefully influence the final report, NASACRE held a joint conference with AREIAC in Birmingham on the 24th November 2017.

As conference delegates we were able to discuss vital questions regarding the Commission on RE: The Interim Report including what its recommendations might mean for pupils, teachers, advisers & SACREs.

Amongst the recommendations were:

- A National Entitlement to Religious Education for all pupils
- Holding schools to account for their provision for religious education
- A new and expanded role for SACREs
- A National Plan for improving teaching and learning

The conference panel included:

- Rt Hon. Charles Clarke patron of NASACRE
- Denise Cush
- Dr Anthony Towey
- Lat Blaylock

20:20 RE: Practice, Policy and Powerful Knowledge A conference for professionals in religious education

NASACRE is working with AREIAC, AULRE and NATRE to organise a **two-day conference** in Crewe (13-14 October 2018) which aims to enhance the quality of Religious Education by drawing together professionals in RE – teachers, academics, researchers, advisers, and providers of professional development.

The conference organisers warmly **invite your proposals** for a practical workshop, academic seminar, or talk, in one of the breakout sessions. We will consider all proposals and reserve the right to accept, reject or combine proposals where appropriate. We are particularly keen to draw on the expertise of Members of SACREs from the faith communities: could you offer a workshop/seminar/talk at this conference, of 20, 30 or 60 minutes where you help others from the world of RE to better understand your faith and how to present it to pupils? Ideas to be submitted by **February 18th** to chair@nasacre.org.uk

Book early for the 25th Jubilee Conference and AGM in London, 24 May 2018

Theme: Stronger Together - Celebrating the power of Community

NASACRE are excited to announce that the 25th Annual General Meeting and Conference of NASACRE will be held **Thursday 24 May 2018** at **Merchant Taylors' Hall** in the City of London. The closest underground station is Bank and the closest railway stations are Cannon Street, Fenchurch Street and Liverpool Street.

Full details of the Conference will be circulated nearer the time. If SACREs are concerned about their LA's SACRE budget for the next financial year, they may wish to register and pay for delegates before the end of the current financial year in March. The cost will be £100 per person for delegates from member SACREs and £130 for others.

BBC Religion & Ethics Review

In December 2017 the BBC produced its report Religion and Ethics Review which is interesting for SACREs for a number of reasons.

Firstly, there is a definite focus on young people and enabling them to access high quality, age-appropriate information about religions and beliefs in an accessible way. Naturally this will be of interest to schools as is the continued commitment shown to supporting Religious Studies GCSE.

Secondly, to improve religious literacy the 'mainstreaming' of religion in drama is seen to be important – putting religion back into the mind of viewers in a positive way.

Some interesting points of action from the review include recognition that journalists need to be trained in religion and belief and that editors should be much better educated about religion so that it can be appropriately represented.

One to watch out for is the pledge of the BBC to make 2019 a 'Year of Religion' across all of its platforms. SACREs could certainly capitalise on this and make 2019 a 'Year for Religious Education' for all children and young people in schools in their geographic area irrespective of whether they are LA schools or not.

David Hampshire, Inter Faith Network

CATHEDRALS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES: A report on the diverse roles of cathedrals in modern England

A report commending England's forty-two Anglican cathedrals for their continued importance as places of worship, their wider community work and their commitment to promoting local economic growth, was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 29 December 2017. The report is the

culmination of a year-long tour which saw the Minister for Faith, Lord Bourne, visit all of England's forty-two Anglican cathedrals to better understand their continued importance both to local communities and wider society.

The report sets out the outcomes of Lord Bourne's visits, but it is not intended for a school audience. However, it has some interesting findings which schools might find useful. The report is twenty pages long and covers the sort of work that Anglican Cathedrals do:

- Helping refugees
- Supporting the homeless and rough sleepers
- How cathedrals can be hubs for regeneration and businesses.
- How cathedrals are architecturally, artistically and culturally significant.

What may also be of interest to pupils is the number of jobs that a cathedral generates in the local area.

Whilst this report is about Anglican cathedrals the eagle-eyed will spot that one Roman Catholic cathedral has slipped in. Perhaps this could be a starter exercise for SACRE members, before discussing the usefulness of sharing the report with the LA and its schools to support the teaching of Christianity as part of the Agreed Syllabus.

David Hampshire, Inter Faith Network