

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
6th November 2019
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and
Communities
Report on the Westhill Project Legacy

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present SACRE members with an update on the Westhill Project Legacy

2 Summary

2.1 Follow up on the Explore-Engage-Reflect Westhill legacy project. This report shows how this work now continues to support learners in Staffordshire with difference and diversity through the exploration of Christianity and Islam

3 Recommendation

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the reports

4 Background

4.1 During the year 2017-2018 SACRE received a grant from Westhill/NASACRE to launch the new Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE through a conference entitled Explore-Engage-Reflect. Youth Net in conjunction with the Entrust Minority Ethnic Advisory Service (MEAS) team have taken this forward and are providing support and resources and workshops on Christianity and Islam, for those schools who choose throughout Staffordshire.

7 Equal Opportunities

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

8 Financial implications

8.1 Financial implications that need to be considered are whether SACRE is willing to provide further funds from its budget to support the project so that more Staffordshire learners receive the opportunity to take part in this project. Costs that need to be covered include the input from the Entrust MEAS team to support the learning on Islam. This in turn keeps the costs down for Youth Net and therefore the costs for schools.

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Explore, Engage, Reflect Westhill Legacy Project

Background

During the year 2017-2018 SACRE received an award grant from Westhill/NASACRE to support the implementation of the new Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE through a conference entitled "Explore, Engage Reflect".

Youth Net in conjunction with the Entrust MEAS team have taken this forward and are providing support through resources and workshops on Christianity and Islam, for those schools who choose throughout Staffordshire. This enables learners to encounter diversity at first hand.

Report

Schools continue to receive an invitation letter to take part in the project. There is a choice of morning or afternoon sessions. The sessions in 2020 will be run at Rising Brook Baptist Church Stafford ST17 9LT on 22nd January from 9.30-11.30 and 1-3pm. Any members of the SACRE are invited to attend and support, but please let Mary Gale know if you intend to visit. This project, possibly in a revised format, will be further extended to the Burton-upon-Trent area later in the spring term. Watch this space.

The project offers an inspirational face to faith experience for pupils run by a team of education consultants who are also adherents of Christianity or Islam thus enabling pupils to learn together about issues regarding faith, diversity and what it means to live out beliefs today, in dynamic and exciting ways. It also acts as an exceptional CPD opportunity for the staff and volunteers attending as throughout the day, they were given an opportunity to increase their own subject knowledge, and how to use the methods of 'Explore, Engage, Reflect' to enhance learning back in their schools in line with Agreed Syllabus.

Pupils are given the opportunity:

- To learn about faith and beliefs through **exploring** artefacts, images and text
- To think for themselves, **engaging** with key questions relevant to the people of faith they will meet
- To think deeply and creatively about the value of faith **reflecting** on what it means for people to live a faith within England through a real opportunity for dialogue.

The learning methods are creative and focused on thinking about the values, traditions and lives of modern Christians and Muslims in England today. The children experience both Christian and Islam exhibitions enhanced with additional hands on activity related learning.

Mary Gale Adviser to SACRE