

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
5th February 2020
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and
Communities
An Update on Key Issues

1 Purpose of Report

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

2 Summary

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

3 Recommendation

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

4 Background

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

4.2 Members will be briefed on these key developments.

5 Equal Opportunities

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

6 Financial implications

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

Contact Officer

Mary Gale 07816374873

Key Issues Report February 5th 2020

Westhill Legacy project- Explore, Engage, Reflect in conjunction with Youth Net

This project has continued with the support of SACRE, see report on Agenda item 9.

Continuous Professional Development

Schools were offered the opportunity to attend a RE training full days training in the Autumn 2019 and in Spring 2020 a network afternoon training. These training opportunities are advertised in the training calendar.

10 schools booked to attend. Mary Gale has been commissioned by Entrust to facilitate this CPD

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

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

NATRE Strictly RE conference- Heathrow London

In January Mary Gale attended the NATRE conference on 25th January 2020. She took part in a number of workshops including updates on the latest creative curriculum resources to deliver quality RE and address curriculum balance and *deep dives* in RE as a result of the changes to the Ofsted framework

Support for KS 3

SACRE agreed to purchase a key stage 3 textbook for maintained high schools and middle schools. These have now arrived and paid for in the last couple of weeks and are ready to be distributed. Mary will facilitate this.

Update on Sacred Spaces/ Christianity The Big Picture work in conjunction with Youth net

This is aimed at key stage 3 so years 7, 8 and 9

This conference has been designed to give an overview of Christianity and it will cover Worship, Prayer, the Bible, Church, Jesus and Big Questions. This experiential learning will be supported with an intro looking at 'Who is God' and then an opportunity for Q and A at the end.

It will work best as a double period in high school and will need a hall or large area to put up 6 gazebos. This is now being advertised and the money will then be released for 4.5 days of support for schools.

More information in the June 2020 meeting.

SACRE support from April 2020-2021

Mary Gale has been approached by Entrust to continue in her current role as support for SACRE until April 2021. Mary has agreed and asks for confirmation from SACRE that this meets with their requirements.

Ofsted reports update

Below is an extract from the most recent NASACRE briefing on their website regarding Ofsted.

The new Ofsted schedule is in full swing now, with 100s of schools having been inspected. Paul Smalley, the NASACRE Chair, has probably looked at every Ofsted report in a state secondary and most if not all of the primary reports which comment on RE. He reports that it is clear that the number of RE *Deep Dives* in secondaries is small but growing. He has had some correspondence with Sean Harford (Ofsted's National Director, Education) on this matter. There are more examples of primary *Deep Dives* into RE. Many reports, in the section about personal development have a comment about religious literacy, knowledge of world religions, often mentioning visits to places of worship as good practice, for example:

Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures during lessons and by visiting places of worship. Last year pupils visited a synagogue in Liverpool to learn about Judaism. Leaders make sure that pupils are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Such comments are appearing in VA and VC schools as well as community schools and academies. The focus, however, is clearly on the curriculum. There are examples of schools with RE curricula clearly in line with their Agreed Syllabus that are being praised:



What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' plans for curriculum development highlight the order in which subjects will be reviewed, the development of skills within a subject and a review of the sequence of learning. Where this has already been undertaken, in subjects such as mathematics, religious education, science and physical education, pupils are making strong progress. Leaders are focused on the sequencing of learning from Reception to Year 6 in all subjects. Leaders need to complete this work for history, geography and design and technology, so that the sequence in these subjects is as detailed as it is in other subjects.

And others, usually where the Agreed Syllabus is not being followed, where schools are being directed to improve their RE provision:

I am undertaking some research into determinations on Collective Worship. Circular 1/94 contains the current Collective Worship guidance for SACREs and schools. <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/dfe/circular1-94.pdf> Paragraph 74 states that "It is for each SACRE to decide how applications should be made, and to make available any necessary guidance to schools."

I would be grateful if you could respond to the following three questions.

1. At the time of receiving this enquiry does your SACRE have a procedure in place for determining school applications to lift or modify the requirement for collective worship of a broadly Christian nature?

Yes

2. If your SACRE does have a determination procedure in place is it freely accessible (e.g. online or contained within school guidance) or by request only?

by request only

3. If you do have a determination procedure in place please attach it and any accompanying guidance to your reply.

Schools email the local authority who pass on the request to SACRE. This is normal custom and practice in our county. All queries go to a central point, re-distributed and then are dealt with by the appropriate authorities