

# **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**

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## **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