

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

8th February 2017

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

Accord Award Update

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To consider an application for an Accord Award

2 Summary

2.1 The 2017 Accord Inclusivity Award is seeking to reward those SACREs that work hardest in their area towards boosting the growth of inclusion, cohesion and mutual understanding between those of different religions and beliefs.

3 Recommendation

3.1 That members of SACRE are invited to discuss our work and achievements in this area to see whether Staffordshire SACRE should complete an application form.

4 Background

4.1 Michael Metcalf submitted an application for an Accord Award on behalf of Staffordshire SACRE. The application revealed an in-depth picture of the work and achievements of Staffordshire SACRE.

4.2 Regretfully, Staffordshire SACRE was not placed by the judges in this year's Inclusivity Award. The judges did view Staffordshire as a serious candidate and were grateful for the efforts gone to in applying for the Award, and the efforts that the SACRE is making. The nomination drew particular praise for:

- the production of separate guidance given for special schools
- the wide range of SACRE reps
- letters of praise to high performing and letters of advice to low performing schools

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 There are no immediate financial implications

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Get recognition for your SACRE's work in national Award

The 2017 Accord Inclusivity Award, is seeking to reward those SACREs that work hardest in their area towards boosting the growth of inclusion, cohesion and mutual understanding between those of different religions and beliefs. If your SACRE takes these aims seriously then please don't miss out on this rare opportunity for it to be recognised for its work. Until now the Award - which has run every year since 2010 - has rewarded schools in England and Wales that excel on these grounds. For the 2017 Award however judges have decided to only invite nominations for SACREs, given the important role SACREs can play through their work in promoting respect, empathy and social cohesion.

Religious Education has always been of key importance for Inclusivity Award judges, who have consistently rewarded schools for excellence in the subject (and often thanks to recommendations from SACREs). For example, the first placed school in 2013, Little Heath School in Redbridge, won strong praise from judges for its approach to RE which was later highlighted by Ofsted as an example for other special schools to follow. Newbury Park Primary School in Ilford came first in 2014 for its 'Ambassadors of Faith and Belief' scheme that was supported by its SACRE and which served to help improve pupils understanding of the nature of faith and belief as a real life experience. The winning school in the 2016 Award, the Chestnut Grove Academy in Balham, stood out for the way in which its RE deepened and extended pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion and belief while simultaneously dealing with a range of controversial issues, such as around sexual diversity, homophobia and gender. But this coming year presents a chance for SACREs themselves to shine.

The Award is free to apply for. The full line up of another respected and experienced panel of experts will soon be announced. Previous judges have included former Secretary of State for Education, Lord Baker; the Chair of the Education Select Committee, Neil Carmichael MP; the then Chair of the Religious Education Council of England, John Keast OBE; the Bishop of Buckingham, The Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson, and journalist Polly Toynbee.

RE is subject to many demands and pressures. If your SACRE works hard at trying to ensure local schools provide inclusive and high quality RE and assemblies that take seriously the promotion of the growth of mutual understanding between those of different beliefs and backgrounds, then please make sure someone is mandated to submit a completed nomination on its behalf.

For more information on the Award please visit Accord's website at <http://accordcoalition.org.uk/inclusivity-award-2017/>. The deadline for entries is Monday December 12th and prizes will be announced in the New Year. Please contact Accord's National Coordinator, Paul Pettinger, at paul@accordcoalition.org.uk or on 020 7324 3071 with any queries.

Every winner of the Inclusivity Award has received national press coverage for their success. Don't miss this chance to draw attention to you and your colleagues' efforts.

Yours sincerely,

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain MBE
Chair of the Accord Coalition for Inclusive Education

<http://www.accordcoalition.org.uk>