

# Swindon Borough Council

## Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

**Tuesday, 4 December 2012**

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices (Anticipated meeting room)

At 6.00 p.m.

<b>Group A:</b>	Mr Arun Bedi, Sikh Community
<b>Christian Denominations</b>	Mr David Burbidge, Baptist Church
<b>and Other Religions or</b>	Mr Mark Cawte, Methodist (Vice-Chair)
<b>Religious Denominations</b>	Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte, United Reformed Church
	Reverend David Howell, Swindon Evangelical Alliance
	Mr M S Khan, Muslim Community
	Mr Tony McAteer, Catholic Community
	Mr Dinesh Patel, Hindu Community

<b>Group B:</b>	Miss Janet French
<b>The Church of England</b>	Reverend Norma McKemey
	Ms Steph Mundin
	Mrs Penny Summers
	Reverend Beth Brown

<b>Group C:</b>	Mrs Tracy Mason, NUT
<b>Teacher Associations</b>	Miss Lottie Rowe, NASUWT
	Mrs Mandy Sandleton, NASUWT
	Mr Paul Sunners, NAHT

<b>Group D:</b>	Councillor Claire Ellis
<b>The Local Authority</b>	Councillor Russell Holland
	Councillor Fay Howard
	Councillor James Robbins

Support Officers:	Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor
	Sarah Foulkes, Primary Link Adviser

**Committee Officer:** Sarah Lawrence (Telephone 01793 463603)  
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Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street,  
Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

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## AGENDA

### 1. Minutes Silence

A Minutes Silence will be held at the start of the meeting in remembrance and tribute to Councillor Doreen Dart.

2. **Appointment of Chair**
3. **Apologies for Absence**
4. **Declarations of Interest**  
Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.
5. **Public Question Time**  
See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.
6. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 4)  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2012.
7. **Membership Update** (Pages 5 - 6)
8. **RE Council Review of Religious Education** (Pages 7 - 46)
9. **SACRE Self-Evaluation and Draft Development Plan 2012-2014** (Pages 47 - 56)
10. **National Developments in RE** (Pages 57 - 62)
11. **Update on Network Meetings** (Pages 63 - 68)
12. **Date and Time of the Next Meeting**  
The next meeting of the SACRE is on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at 6 pm.

**Date of Despatch:** 26 November 2012

**Key: Officers:**

GDC – Group Director: Children

DLDS - Director of Law and Democratic Services

**Public Question Time** - Swindon Borough Council is committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. Up to 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from members of the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters and specific planning applications). Questions must be relevant, clear and concise. Because of time constraints Public Question Time is not an opportunity to make speeches or statements. Prior notice of a question to the Director of Law and Democratic Services is desirable - particularly if detailed background information is needed.

**Access Arrangements** – The Venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you would wish to attend the meeting but have any special requirement to enable you to do so please contact the Committee Clerk above, as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

If you would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size please contact the Committee Officer whose name appears on the first page of this agenda.

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**TUESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2012**

PRESENT:-

**Group A:** Mr Mark Cawte (Methodist) (Vice-Chair),  
Christian Denominations and Reverend David Howell (Swindon Evangelical  
Other Religions or Religious Alliance), Mr M S Khan (Muslim Community) and  
Denominations Mr Tony McAteer (Catholic Community).

**Group B:** Miss Janet French, Reverend Norma McKemey,  
Church of England Ms Steph Mundin, Mrs Penny Summers and  
Reverend Beth Brown.

**Group C:** Mrs Tracy Mason, Miss Lottie Rowe, Mrs Mandy  
Teacher Organisations Sandleton and Mr Paul Sunners.

**Group D:** Councillors Doreen Dart (Chair), Claire Ellis,  
Councillors Russell Holland and Fay Howard.

Also in attendance: Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor).

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte (United Reformed Church), Councillor James Robbins, Mr Arun Bedi, Mr David Burbidge, Mr Dinesh Patel and Sarah Foulkes

**12. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

**13. Public Question Time**

No public questions were received during the meeting.

**14. Minutes**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2012, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising – a) Further to Minute 7, the SACRE discussed the survey which was to be sent out to schools on their provision of RE and the teaching of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and were interested to see the level of response on the statutory teaching of RE. In addition to the survey results, it was suggested that the SACRE could see the extent to which RE had priority in each school's improvement plan. b) Further to Minute 9, it was requested that information be sent out to the SACRE Members by the School Improvement Advisor on the work of the Teaching School in Swindon. c) Further to the attendance list, the Clerk to the SACRE advised that Ms Sara Crabb had stepped down from the Teacher Associations Group and a new representative would be sought from the ATL union.

## **15. Religious Education at St Francis C of E Primary School**

The SACRE were welcomed to St Francis C of E Primary School by Steph Mundin and Mark Tidey and received presentations on their work supporting RE.

Mark Tidey advised that he was a diocese employee based at St Francis, and his title was Home School Link Advisor. The purpose of his role was to work with St Francis and other local schools, and to offer whatever help was appropriate for teaching of RE or the provision of Collective Worship. It was particularly important to him to establish a genuine engagement with each school, and to ask where he could contribute. It was recognised that as a representative of the diocese he was often able to respond more personally to questions of faith than a teacher was able to do, and he welcomed all opportunities to support local schools.

Ms Steph Mundin advised that she was the RE Co-ordinator for St Francis Primary School. The role was about being responsible for teaching and planning a quality, broad and balanced RE curriculum from nursery to year six in line with the Agreed Syllabus and the School's RE policy. This included providing resources and materials, monitoring planning teaching and learning, observing lessons, team teaching, providing support to other teachers in particular NQTs or those new to teaching in a church school, ensuring assessment and monitoring of progress in RE was in place, and ensuring that pupils were receiving a balance of learning across attainment targets. It was recognised it also involved liaising with the Governor responsible for RE, collective worship and PSHE co-ordinators, and reporting to senior leaders in the school, and promoting RE to parents through workshops. RE had higher profile in a church school than in other primary schools. In addition, Steph Mundin outlined the particular way in which RE was taught in foundation stage, using Solihull teaching materials.

Resolved – That Mark Tidey and Steph Mundin be thanked for their excellent presentations and for hosting the SACRE meeting at the school.

## **16. National Developments in RE**

The SACRE considered a report from the SACRE Advisor and Head of Commissioning – Economy / Attainment on national development in RE since the last meeting.

It was noted that the RE Council for England and Wales (REC) had been asked by the Government to carry out a review of the RE curriculum. The timetable and content of the first phase of the review were reported to the meeting. The SACRE would be invited to provide comments by 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 on the preliminary report to be issued in November. It was agreed that a small SACRE Working Group be set up to consider the report in detail when issued and recommend to the next SACRE meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December the formal response to the consultation.

It was appreciated that the status of the English Baccalaureate was becoming more important for schools, and it would be up to schools to determine the status given to Religious Education in this context. Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor) advised that under the new Ofsted Framework individual subject areas, except English and Maths, would no longer be assessed.

The SACRE members received copies of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) Newsletter for Autumn 2012 for information.

Resolved - 1) That the update on national developments be noted.

2) That a SACRE Working Group be set up including Lottie Rowe, Mark Cawte, Tracy Mason, Janet French, Paul Sunners, and any additional members who contacted the SACRE Advisor, to review the preliminary report from the RE Council for England and Wales on the RE curriculum review when issued, and to make recommendations to the SACRE at the next meeting on the formal response to the report.

## **17. SACRE Self-Assessment**

The SACRE had indicated at the last meeting that it would wish to carry out a self-assessment of its role.

The Ofsted Self-Assessment Toolkit for SACREs had been published in 2005, and the SACRE had last carried out a review in 2005. Although some of the context in which the SACRE operated had changed, it was agreed that the toolkit was still a good starting point for the SACRE to discuss its role.

The SACRE split into groups to discuss its own work and performance against the judgements of 'developing', 'established', 'advanced and 'exemplar of good practice'. Each of the groups reported back on their views and it was agreed that the SACRE advisor compile the notes from each group and report to the next meeting.

Resolved – That the summary of the SACRE Self-Assessment views be reported to the next meeting.

## **18. Date and Time of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the SACRE was scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> December at 6 pm.

David Howell advised that Gorse Hill Baptist Church were hosting a joint event with Swindon Youth for Christ on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at 7.30 pm to pray for all the schools in Swindon, and talk about the work of organisations and churches working with schools. He invited any member of SACRE who wished to, to attend.

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## Membership Update

### Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

4 December 2012

Author: SACRE Advisor /  
Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

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#### 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To ask the SACRE to note the Membership update and agree any further action required.

#### 2. Recommendations

The SACRE is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider endorsing the appointment of any new representatives for which valid nominations are received by the date of the meeting to the Teachers Association Group (Group C), to fill the current vacancies.

#### 3. Detail

- 3.1 There are currently four vacancies on the Teacher Associations Group on the SACRE (Group C). In accordance with the SACRE constitution, the Group should contain up to eight representatives of teachers associations, which in the Council's opinion ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of Swindon. This should include at least 3 teachers of RE, of which at least one should be a primary school teacher.
- 3.2 The SACRE Advisor has invited teachers who are interested to contact the Clerk. Several expressions of interests have been received and are being checked as to if they are able to represent unions and phases of education, currently under-represented on the SACRE. The Clerk will report at the meeting on valid nominations received for the SACRE to consider.

#### 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options for the SACRE.

#### 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications relating to this report.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 There are no specific legal or human rights implications relating to this report.
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, [katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org), 0117 906 0100

## Membership Update

### Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 4 December 2012

#### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 No other implications have been identified.

#### Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The work of the SACRE seeks to support the Theme 5 of the Community Strategy, for Swindon to be a place where high aspirations are supported by superb education provision for all ages.

#### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report, as it does not relate to a specific policy or strategy change.

#### Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no risk management factors which have been identified in relation to this report.

### **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

### **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 None

### **8. Appendices**

- 8.1 None



## RE Council Review of Religious Education

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

4 December 2012

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Author: SACRE Advisor /  
Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

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### 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To update the SACRE on the RE Council Review of Religious Education and to advise the SACRE of the response to the consultation issued on its behalf.

### 2. Recommendations

The SACRE is recommended to:

- 2.1 To note the Preliminary Report of the RE Curriculum of the RE Council and the response submitted from the SACRE by the SACRE Working Group.

### 3. Detail

- 3.1 The SACRE were advised at the last meeting that the RE Council for England and Wales (REC) had been asked by the Government to carry out a review of the RE curriculum and were due to issue a preliminary report in November and ask for a response.
- 3.2 A Working Group was appointed at the last meeting to consider the draft and submit a response if required prior to the next meeting of the SACRE or bring it back for final comments.
- 3.3 A copy of the Preliminary Report of the RE Curriculum and an Addendum to the report is attached at Appendix 1 for the SACRE's information.
- 3.4 A Working Group of Katy Staples, Mark Cawte and Paul Sunners met on 19<sup>th</sup> November to consider the report. In broad terms the Working Group supported the report, but wished to make a small number of comments in response to the consultation. This response is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.5 As the deadline for submission was invited by 3<sup>rd</sup> December, this response was circulated to all SACRE Members who have provided email addresses to the clerk for comments and submitted on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. In addition, all Members of SACRE are advised that they can make individual comments directly, if they wish to do so.

### 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Any alternative options for the SACRE are set out above.
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, [katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org), 0117 906 0100

# RE Council Review of Religious Education

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

4 December 2012

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## 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications relating to this report.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 There are no specific legal or human rights implications relating to this report.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 No other implications have been identified.

### Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The work of the SACRE seeks to support Theme 5 of the Community Strategy, for “Swindon to be a place where high aspirations are supported by superb education provision for all ages”.

### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report, as it does not relate to a specific policy or strategy change.

### Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no risk management factors which have been identified in relation to this report.

## 6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## 7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

## 8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Preliminary Report of the RE Curriculum from the RE Council.  
8.2 Appendix 2 – Response from Swindon SACRE.



**SUBJECT REVIEW OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
IN ENGLAND**

**PHASE 1**

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT PANEL**

**Draft report for consultation only**

**12 November, 2012**

## **RE Expert Panel Members**

**Lat Blaylock**

**Bill Gent (Chair)**

**Julian Stern**

**Karen Walshe**

## **Acknowledgements**

This report represents the collective findings and recommendations of the RE Expert Panel. The members of this panel would like to acknowledge the contributions made by:

- Dr Janet Orchard, the project manager of the whole REC RE Subject Review, for her constant support, encouragement, advice and back-up;
- Dr Sarah Smalley, REC Executive Officer, who, amongst other things, showed a remarkable gift in minute-taking during the two long, face-to-face meetings of the panel; and
- each of the expert witnesses who submitted detailed notes and comments and/or who provided oral evidence.

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## Introduction

### *The origin of this report*

Under the present coalition government, an extensive review of the National Curriculum is taking place. As changes in curriculum and assessment arrangements for other subjects have implications for religious education (RE), this provides an opportunity to clarify RE's distinctive place within the wider school curriculum. As part of its Strategic Plan, the RE Council (REC) has undertaken to carry out a review of RE, following a similar pattern to that adopted by the National Curriculum Review. There was support from the Department for Education (DfE) in that ministers affirmed that the REC was 'well placed' to carry out such a review.<sup>1</sup>

A scoping exercise was commissioned in preparation for this process. The subsequent report, published on the REC website in June 2012, declared that: 'in the midst of an apparently threatening, divisive and destructive situation, the RE community has a unique opportunity through the leadership of the REC, to build on the considerable achievements of the last two decades'.<sup>2</sup>

The Subject Review of RE in England stemmed from the scoping report and Dr Janet Orchard was appointed manager of a project consisting of two phases. During phase 1, an expert panel of four members would meet to review key documentation and submissions by expert witnesses with two purposes in mind. First, to identify strengths and weaknesses in current RE provision in schools in England; second, to make recommendations for future action in phase 2 of the review and beyond related to four particular foci. These foci were identified by the scoping report and agreed by the REC Board and set the boundaries for the panel's work. They are: aims, curriculum, exemplification of good practice, and qualifications and assessment.

The members of the expert panel, chaired by Dr Bill Gent, began their work of reviewing key documentation and expert witness submissions in July 2012. Their primary tasks were, through a careful and sensitive reading, to present a summary of points raised in the documents and submissions, and to make a judgement on the implications of this evidence for the future of RE. They met twice, once in London in August and once in Birmingham in September 2012. A first draft of the panel's report was presented to the project's steering group at the end of October 2012.

The REC is committed to wide consultation among all of the various stakeholders with a direct interest in RE and beyond. Hence, a second draft of the phase 1 report was considered in early November 2012 by an Extraordinary General Meeting of the REC which represents the views of its 59 member bodies, including professional and faith-based groups. A third draft of the report is now being placed in the public domain for a period of three weeks in November and December 2012 for general consideration and

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Nick Gibb, DfE, to John Keast, Chair of the REC, 25 January 2012.

<sup>2</sup> This sense of urgency was reflected in many of the written submissions made to the expert panel. It is clear that many members of the RE community believe that RE's undoubted gains in recent decades across a wide age range are currently threatened and in jeopardy. As such, this review of RE - in the words of one expert witness - 'is a precious opportunity and I hope that we do not waste it'.

comment. A further revision will then be made to take account of these soundings and this final version of the report will be presented to the REC Board and the steering group for ratification.

### *The report's style, layout and length*

The Expert Panel was asked to produce a report which would have credibility amongst the professional RE community and would be free of technical jargon to ensure its accessibility by a wide public audience. For example, footnotes have been used – mainly to identify key documentation and sources of further information – but sparingly. Acronyms cannot be avoided entirely but they have been explained in full when they appear first.

The panel agreed that the key element of the report is its recommendations of which it has made nine. Seven relate directly to the four specific foci of the review and two further recommendations follow. These form the executive summary to be found at the beginning of the report.

Each of the four main sections of the report, based around the four foci, begins with the recommendations for that section. The text that follows each recommendation provides commentary to support it that falls into three parts: background, main strengths, and main weaknesses.

The expert panel was asked to produce a report of about 10,000 words in length. It has succeeded in doing this but one of the consequences was that it left little room for detailed information about particular points made. Nonetheless, the purpose of the report was always to provide a general overview of the English RE scene, including its 'highs' and 'lows', in order to provide a basis for further, more detailed work later in the review process.

### *Underlying principles of the panel's work*

As they engaged in their deliberations, certain principles informed the panel's work. These have been captured in the following brief statement:

1. The RE Subject Review for England should defend and enhance the place of RE in the curriculum of English schools.
2. The RE Curriculum in schools in England should reflect wider educational aims, including the aims of the new National Curriculum. It should respect the principles of freedom, responsibility and fairness, and show commitment to raising expectations of the quality of RE received by all children.
3. Local determination of the curriculum has been recognised in the statutory arrangements for RE over many years. The Expert Panel has worked on the assumption that any new guidelines for the subject must continue to balance the value to RE of wide national compatibility with that of vesting power in local communities.
4. The Expert Panel is committed to diverse forms of high quality RE; its members recognise that the subject, like religion itself, is contested. Plural traditions of RE in

England have integrity and value, and their practice should be encouraged and developed. Common to these traditions is a widely shared commitment to being educative rather than coercive, each in their own way.

5. At the same time, Religious Educators need to be much clearer about the reasons which make the plural aims of RE legitimate and how these relate to the overall purpose of the subject.
6. RE's place in the curriculum will be strengthened if its role and importance are communicated as widely, effectively and meaningfully as possible to all stakeholders.
7. RE in England compares favourably with equivalent curricula in high performing jurisdictions around the world and the Expert Panel has regarded it a privilege to reflect on some of the best collective wisdom about how children learn in RE and what they should know.
8. The RE Curriculum should embody rigour, high standards and coherence. There are diverse interpretations of high standards and rigour in RE but one key element is the opportunity all children should have to acquire core knowledge and understanding particular to this curriculum area.
9. This requires a well-trained workforce of teachers with continuing professional development to support them and adequate time in which to teach the subject.
10. RE continues to be a statutory requirement for maintained schools and should remain a national benchmark of excellence for any school. Any school aspiring to be a good school should aspire to offer good RE.
11. The Expert Panel seeks to work in a spirit of generosity towards all those who teach and care about RE. Contributions to the RE Subject Review from many perspectives have been wholly welcome and gladly received. It has summarised and synthesised that expertise for the good of RE, based on a careful reading of documentation in relation to the four foci identified.



## Executive summary

Having considered a range of key documentation as well as submissions by a significant number of expert witnesses - a number of whom were met face-to-face - the RE Subject Review Expert Panel agreed that the following nine recommendations should be put before the REC Board for further consideration and action:

1. that clear and cogent aims for RE, applicable across the range of school settings, are proposed, as well as ways of communicating them to different stakeholders;
2. that clear accounts that re-evaluate the core knowledge and understanding in RE, appropriate to pupils in particular age groups and stages, are produced;
3. that guidance on pedagogy and learning methods in RE are developed for teachers and curriculum-shapers, that promote high quality teaching and learning in RE while allowing for diversity;
4. that evaluative principles are developed and published that enable teachers to make sound professional judgements about what constitutes good professional practice, promoting high standards of learning in RE;
5. that strategies are explored through which the collective efforts and wisdom of the individuals and groups which make up the RE community can be brought together and made known effectively for the benefit of the subject and the young people studying it;
6. that new instruments for describing achievement in RE are created that teachers can use working alongside the DfE's new descriptions of achievement in subjects like English, mathematics and science;
7. that maximum influence is sought with the relevant examination Awarding Bodies in order to promote:
  - (a) coherence and progression between 4-14 programmes and public examinations used at 14-19; and
  - (b) the study of religions in religious studies<sup>3</sup> qualifications 14-19, in appropriate relation to studies of, for example, ethics and philosophy;
8. that the 2004 *Non-Statutory National Framework* for RE is reviewed and replaced with an updated and recast document;
9. that increasingly influential links are built and used with the DfE in order to promote RE in all schools, in line with the REC subject review's work and recommendations (above), challenging and encouraging government to act to improve RE.

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<sup>3</sup> At public examination level, RE is referred to as religious studies (RS).

## Focus 1: The Aims of RE

### Recommendation 1

**That clear and cogent aims for RE, applicable across the range of school settings, are proposed, as well as ways of communicating them to different stakeholders.**

### Aims: Background

- 1.1 The nature and purpose of RE are not easy to define in straightforward, unequivocal ways. The reasons for this are many. People's ideas about the role of both 'religion' and 'education' in society have changed over time. Moreover, religion itself is a complex concept, fundamental to the lives of some citizens whilst highly problematic for others, so that the issue of whether religion has a part to play in a nation's public education system at all is contested.
- 1.2 A consistent feature in many of the submissions that the Expert Panel received was a strong perception that, despite the considerable amount written on the nature, purpose and aims of RE in all kinds of documentation, many people still don't 'get it'.<sup>4</sup> That this was often linked to a sense of persistent frustration on the part of members of the RE community was demonstrated well in the document reporting a meeting of key members of the RE community that took place in late 2011: 'A lack of consensus on the rationale and purpose of RE, and a failure to find a simple accessible way of explaining RE to the public, media and government, struck many present as the most serious weakness'.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.3 A strong feeling persists, therefore, that both the purpose of RE as well as its aims need further articulation in ways and forms that people of all backgrounds can better understand and relate to. ('The issues are not in the aims themselves', said one expert witness, 'but in the communication of them'.) Is the RE community itself partly to blame for the confusion that exists? A recent major research project, *Does RE Work?* concluded bluntly that RE has tried to do too much<sup>6</sup>, re-inventing itself to include within its brief additional whole-school priorities – 'community cohesion', for example – and seeking to provide social, moral and values education so that the sense of a substantive core or essence of the subject has been eroded.
- 1.4 There is some concern about the title of the subject itself. At a national level, the term 'religious education' has been enshrined in legislation since 1988 (superseding the term 'religious instruction'). Some secondary school departments in particular have been experimenting with alternative titles which they judge to be more appealing to

<sup>4</sup> See, for example: IPPR (2004) *What is Religious Education for? Getting the National Framework Right*.

<sup>5</sup> St Gabriel's (2011) RE Community Conference 2011, 16.

<sup>6</sup> See: [www.gla.ac.uk/schools/education/research/currentresearchprojects/doesreligiouseducationwork/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/education/research/currentresearchprojects/doesreligiouseducationwork/)

the pupils they teach. These new titles (such as 'Beliefs and Values', 'Philosophy and Ethics' and 'Religion and Belief') reflect the increasing emphasis on the study of philosophy and ethics in secondary school RE in recent times.

- 1.5 The publication of the *NSNF* for RE in 2004 was a milestone in the history of English RE. In particular, its statement on 'the importance of RE'<sup>7</sup> was an attempt to provide coherence for the subject at a national level while respecting the value of the subject's adaptability to local needs and requirements without inappropriate and unhelpful levels of prescription. There have been criticisms of the *NSNF*; some, for example, have suggested that, no matter how 'educational' such guidelines are, there is still the assumption that it is better to be religious than not. Others criticise the *NSNF* for encouraging a single view of RE and undermining the independence of local determination. Nonetheless, the *NSNF* was ground-breaking because it gained the broad agreement across the full range of professional RE associations and faith communities. About 150 local agreed syllabuses have followed it in varying ways.<sup>8</sup>
- 1.6 Although RE is a statutory requirement for all state schools, in schools with a religious character the understanding of the nature and purpose of RE might be promoted in slightly different ways to that in a community school. At worst – as one expert witness pointed out – this can lead to a kind of 'us and them' mentality with the underlying assumption that the only 'proper' RE is that which takes place in schools without a religious character. However, members of the expert panel agree that diversity of provision has considerable advantages; the purpose and aims of RE can be expressed in ways that respect the varied integrities of RE practice in different schools and different contexts.

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<sup>7</sup>*NSNF*, 7.

<sup>8</sup> The expert panel is aware of less than 10 local authorities and SACREs that have chosen not to use the *NSNF* to support the development of their locally agreed syllabus.

## Aims: Main strengths

- 1.7 A tradition of inclusive and multi-faith RE has developed over time in England so that it is held in high esteem internationally. An expert witness with strong international links pointed out that, 'Specialists in religion and education from many countries appreciate the attempts in England, Wales and Scotland to have an *inclusive* form of religious education, which is 'open'. They also appreciate the fact that Britain ... has regarded religion as a legitimate subject for public discussion, including within education'.
- 1.8 The wide acceptance of the 2004 NSNF indicates some broad agreement about the nature of RE in schools. As one expert witness commented: 'Remarkably, it did provide an agreed reference point intended to be relevant not only for LA ASCs [Local Authority Agreed Syllabus Conferences] and SACREs [Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education] but also for those responsible for shaping RE in schools of a religious character'.
- 1.9 Teachers of RE have often made a strong contribution to the delivery of whole-school policies, including community cohesion and respect for all, critical thinking and citizenship. In its long subject report of 2010, Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) identified the contribution of RE to the promotion of community cohesion as a strength of the subject in most of the schools that had been visited.<sup>9</sup>
- 1.10 The existence of a widely based professional 'RE community' consisting of RE practitioners including teachers, advisers and consultants, professional bodies and interested faith community groups. Such groups and individuals represent a diverse group of people and organisations whose common bond is a commitment to supporting and promoting the educational aims of RE.
- 1.11 The legislative requirement that each local authority determines its own agreed syllabus for RE is considered a strength by some expert witnesses. At its best, this has meant that local groups of educational professionals, faith, and community representatives have thought through the purpose and aims of RE together and reached agreements about the best possible curriculum for children and young people in their particular areas. This is in the spirit of current national policies to devolve power over the curriculum to local stakeholders.

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<sup>9</sup> Ofsted (2010) *Transforming religious education*, 47-49.

## Aims: Main Weaknesses

- 1.12 There is still widespread public uncertainty about the nature and purpose of RE. This is evident among a significant number of teachers<sup>10</sup> as well as the wider public. Some expert witnesses judged there to be too much diversity, complexity and variation in articulating the aims of RE. They went on to argue that this became more confusing still in aims statements that failed to distinguish between general aims of schooling, to which RE made a contribution, and particular aims specific to RE.
- 1.13 There is a lack of confidence and subject knowledge<sup>11</sup> among a significant number of teachers and practitioners. In increasing numbers of primary schools Higher Level Teaching Assistants are teaching and leading RE rather than teachers: their capacity to operate as fully functioning teaching professionals in the subject is severely limited. Furthermore, a lack of continuing professional opportunities in RE for all teachers and practitioners limits the scope for them to further develop their practice.
- 1.14 There is evidence of agreement that the development of knowledge and understanding of religion/religions is a core element of RE, and a widespread belief that pupils' knowledge and understanding is increasingly insecure. This point was made very strongly in the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) / Warwick University report on *Materials Used to Teach About World Religions* (ref) and commented on frequently by expert witnesses.
- 1.15 Though the NSNF was a milestone in the development of RE in England and Wales, it now needs to be updated and its usefulness extended in order to take account of the many changes that have taken place since 2004<sup>12</sup>, both within RE and the wider educational scene. Furthermore, its statement about the 'importance of RE' in particular is not yet sufficiently clear or direct to be fully fit for purpose.
- 1.16 The locally determined nature of the RE curriculum is regarded as a weakness by some well-respected commentators. For them, this is a matter of urgency; they believe that the future well-being of RE is dependent upon radical reform of the legislation governing RE. The need to review this issue is heightened by recent radical revisions of local authority control over education. With increasing numbers of schools moving to academy status, thus outside local authority control and the requirement to follow the local agreed syllabus for RE, the future viability of SACREs is under threat, particularly in smaller districts and areas.

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<sup>10</sup> See, for instance: Ofsted (2010) *Transforming religious education*, 51, n147.

<sup>11</sup> As one of the expert witnesses pointed out, this would include 'pedagogical knowledge' – that is, an understanding of why and how I am teaching RE so that pupils make progress.

<sup>12</sup> Including subsequent key projects and documents from Government and its agencies which largely follow the settlement that the framework achieved.

## Focus 2: The RE Curriculum

### Recommendation 2

**That clear accounts that re-evaluate the core knowledge and understanding in RE, appropriate to pupils in particular age groups and stages, are produced.**

### Recommendation 3

**That guidance on pedagogy and learning methods in RE are developed for teachers and curriculum-shapers, that promote high quality teaching and learning in RE while allowing for diversity.**

## Curriculum: Background

- 2.1 As a result of progress made in recent decades, many parents and teachers now think of RE as a 'subject', alongside other subjects of the curriculum. However, questions remain about what *is* and what *ought to be* taught in the RE curriculum. On the one hand, there appears to be a relatively widespread expectation that the key focus of a subject called 'RE' will be on studying 'religion/s', particularly Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain (usually named as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism). On the other, a further relatively well-established expectation is that the RE children receive in school will equip them for living in a plural society made up of people who, to a lesser or greater extent, follow many religions and beliefs. Beyond this, agreement is less certain. Hence the various meanings of 'religious education' and its associated concepts have been the legitimate subject of often intense debate within the RE community and beyond. This was apparent in many of the key documents and submissions received from expert witnesses.
- 2.2 Sometimes, these debates reflect wider concerns about how to structure learning and teaching which affect the curriculum as a whole. For instance, the need for a school curriculum to be organised around traditional 'subjects' has been challenged at the level of principle<sup>13</sup> as anachronistic, and in practice because it leads to needless repetition of certain topics which do not fit neatly into any one subject's schemes of work. Experienced primary school teachers who began their careers using a 'theme'- or 'topic'-based model to plan the curriculum, were then later encouraged to focus on 'subjects'. Later still, they were encouraged to use more 'creative' styles of planning which, in spite of official rhetoric to the contrary, seemed

<sup>13</sup> See: White, J (2004), Wright, A (2004), and material related to the 2008 New Secondary Curriculum.



to some to be a reintroduction of topics and themes, albeit under another name and to be 'delivered' with more 'rigour'.

- 2.3 Within RE, the idea that the principal focus of teachers should be on the RE 'curriculum' has been challenged on a number of levels. Some have pointed to an undue emphasis on subject content resulting in 'curriculum overload'. A number of expert witnesses were of the view that there has been too much emphasis on 'curriculum' at the expense of 'pedagogy'. This begs the questions, of course, as to what both the words 'curriculum' and 'pedagogy' mean and their relationship, there being evidence that there is often a lack of clarity in the use of both of these terms.<sup>14</sup>
- 2.4 There is strong evidence that, particularly since the publication of the *NSNF* in 2004, there has been a greater uniformity across local agreed syllabuses for RE – in their adoption, for instance, of the notion that the dynamic of RE is bound up with the twin processes of 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion which provides a basis for describing pupils' 'levels of attainment' across their school careers. However, there is still substantial variation across local agreed syllabuses with a small number of notable examples which enshrine a very particular or original approach to RE: that, in essence, for example, RE aims at the development of individuals and of society across a range of 'dispositions'.<sup>15</sup> In another example, RE is framed as an exploration of the question, 'what does it mean to be human?'<sup>16</sup>
- 2.5 Even when the assumption that RE is primarily concerned with the study of 'religion/s' is broadly agreed, both the meaning of the concept of 'religion' and the most fruitful way of studying it are hotly contested. Within the English RE community, there has been an on-going debate between those academics who regard 'religions' as 'substantial social facts' and those who regard 'religion' as a flawed, outmoded concept. Those of the former view regard the concept of 'religion' as helpful in discussing such things as religious truth claims. Those of the latter view are wary of the term in that they think that it encourages people to think of 'religions' as fixed entities disregarding real life evidence that 'religions' are changing, internally diverse and have blurred boundaries.<sup>17</sup>
- 2.6 It follows from the identification of the principal religions to be included in RE (see 2.1 above), that there will be some dissatisfied by apparent exclusion. Members of religious communities that are globally significant, but have small numbers of members in the UK would like to see study of their faith traditions included in the curriculum. Atheists and agnostics – of whom those in the British Humanist Association (BHA) are the most visibly well-organised – draw attention to the fact that religious practice in the UK is a minority occupation, with many or most living as

<sup>14</sup> One expert witness suggested that the title of Michael Grimmitt's well-known book, *Pedagogies of Religious Education* (Great Wakering: McCrimmons, 2000), was really about 'methods' rather than 'pedagogies'.

<sup>15</sup> See the 2007 Birmingham agreed syllabus: [www.faithmakesadifference.co.uk](http://www.faithmakesadifference.co.uk)

<sup>16</sup> See the 2011 Lancashire agreed syllabus: [www.lancsnagl.ac.uk/curriculum/re/index.php?category\\_id=136](http://www.lancsnagl.ac.uk/curriculum/re/index.php?category_id=136)

<sup>17</sup> See: Wright (2008) & Jackson, R (2008).

practically non-religious, and urge the more focused study of, for example, non-religious ways of living and arguments for atheism in the classroom.

- 2.7 In terms of the historical and social phenomenon of 'religion', the once common Western idea that religion will gradually 'die out' has been increasingly challenged by research into what has been called 'the persistence of faith'.<sup>18</sup> In its place, religion is increasingly seen as a key global phenomenon which is expressed in many and varied ways. A number of key documents<sup>19</sup> and expert witnesses expressed concern that the concept of religion as used in RE has not kept pace with such developments.
- 2.8 In addition to the challenges to any simple notion of a straightforward RE 'curriculum' already highlighted, contemporary changes (or emerging changes) in the national educational field need to be taken into account: the insistence of the DfE 2010-2012 that schools should have greater freedom to innovate and to devise their own curricula at school and community level, for instance. Expert witnesses commented that not only may a subject such as RE be left to wither in some schools, but also, the very idea of organising the curriculum into subjects will be set aside by others. So RE in the future will have to rely less on being a mandatory subject for all pupils by legislation, and much more on the *intrinsic worth of the learning opportunities it offers*. For example, academies will need to be convinced of the merit of the locally agreed syllabus if they are to choose to use it. The RE subject review should take these radical insights seriously.

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<sup>18</sup> See: Sachs, J (1990) *The Persistence of Faith* (London: Continuum).

<sup>19</sup> See, for instance: Ofsted (2007) *Making Sense of Religion*, 7.



## Curriculum: Main strengths

- 2.9 The 2004 *NSNF* provides an outline of the RE curriculum in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills to which most RE professionals could consent and from which almost all local agreed syllabus conferences have drawn in devising their own agreed syllabuses. Really weak agreed syllabuses appear less common, post-*NSNF*, than they were before.
- 2.10 Though the continuing usefulness of the terms ‘learning about’ and ‘learning from’ religions has been challenged<sup>20</sup>, they have nevertheless become embedded in the thinking of many primary and secondary teachers who, as a result, understand that RE consists of more than just ‘content’. This recognition of the need for balance is particularly significant in the context of the current national emphasis on the need for the identification of ‘bodies of core knowledge’ within subjects.
- 2.11 Evidence suggests that, since Ofsted began inspecting RE in 1994, more and better RE is being taught in more primary schools. Provision remains patchy, but inspection reports suggest a decline in the once common total neglect of the subject in many schools, and this improvement may have been helped by the five-yearly cycle of agreed syllabus review.
- 2.12 One way the strength of the RE teaching force has been developed and shown is through the 2008-2010 RE contribution to the New Secondary Curriculum through which 1016 secondary schools, involving over 1500 teachers, received professional development from 25 regional RE subject advisers.

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<sup>20</sup> See, for example: Ofsted (2007), 38

## Curriculum: Main Weaknesses

- 2.13 The lack of curriculum time made available to RE in many schools combined with the use of 'creative curriculum planning'. In some primary schools, for instance, teaching assistants<sup>21</sup> (or Higher Level Teaching Assistants) have been used to teach RE, sometimes in PPA time<sup>22</sup>, lowering the status and the probable impact of RE in the school (REC 2007, p. ?). Many teachers have identified a lack of understanding of, and support for, RE among senior school leaders and policy-makers as a significant cause of weakness in RE provision.
- 2.14 Within the secondary phase, the recent decision of the DfE not to include RE as one of the humanities subjects of the 'English Baccalaureate' ('EBacc') has compromised the future of RE in secondary schooling. A series of National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) surveys of English secondary school RE departments<sup>23</sup> revealed widespread unsettlement, reporting a general feeling that RE had been unfairly 'downgraded' within the school curriculum as a result. The October 2012 Ipsos Mori report on *The Effects of the English Baccalaureate* reported that, 'Almost all case study schools questioned the exclusion of RE as an EBacc subject'.<sup>24</sup>
- 2.15 The limited opportunities for teachers and other practitioners to increase their professional knowledge, understanding and expertise through RE-specific initial and continuing professional development. Many local authorities and SACREs no longer make any provision for continuing professional development in RE, due to reduced resources and/or a lack of subject-based advisory support.
- 2.16 The frequent misrepresentation of religion in both teaching and the literature produced to support RE in schools.<sup>25</sup> There is often concern with 'coverage of religions', noted one expert witness, 'rather than a commitment to understanding and impact'. Another pointed to the tendency to 'sanitise' religions leading to an avoidance of diversity and controversy.

<sup>21</sup> REC (2007) *Religious Education Teaching and Training in England: current provision and future improvement*, p35, identified a need for training for teaching assistants in RE.

<sup>22</sup> The Workload Agreement guarantees teachers in maintained schools in England and Wales ten per cent of their timetabled teaching to be set aside as preparation, planning and assessment (PPA) time during the school day.

<sup>23</sup> See NATRE website: [www.natre.org.uk](http://www.natre.org.uk).

<sup>24</sup> DfE (September 2012) *The effects of the English Baccalaureate*, 19.

<sup>25</sup> See, in particular: DCSF/Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit (2010) *Materials used to Teach about World Religions in Schools in England*.

## Focus 3: Exemplification of good RE

### Recommendation 4

**That evaluative principles are developed and published that enable teachers to make sound professional judgements about what constitutes good professional practice, promoting high standards of learning in RE.**

### Recommendation 5

**That strategies are explored through which the collective efforts and wisdom of the individuals and groups which make up the RE community can be brought together and made known effectively for the benefit of the subject and the young people studying it.**

## Exemplification: Background

- 3.1 Good quality RE grows where best practice is widely known and understood. The term 'exemplification of good practice' is far-reaching, however, and the panel therefore took a broad view of what this category required it to address. With more time, the panel would have attempted to define the field more tightly.
- 3.2 Primary teachers have often looked to local SACREs and agreed syllabuses as well as commercially-published resources for their classroom approaches; notions of good practice have often been drawn from practice in other subjects. At the same time, poor subject knowledge and understanding and low confidence have often undermined the quality of primary RE practice.
- 3.3 Secondary teachers, in those schools in which teachers with other specialisms are in a majority, can be more influenced than they realise by the quest for parity with history and geography at both Key Stages 3 (11-14) and 4 (14-16). Advantages and disadvantages stem from these comparisons. Secondary schools have generally been less concerned than primary schools to implement their local agreed syllabus. In the case of new-style academies, the link with local arrangements for RE (including resources) is currently loosely defined.
- 3.4 In the last eight years, guidance produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA)<sup>26</sup> has been widely used, though this has improved good practice less than would have been wished. The marginal position of RE within the curriculum and small amounts of curriculum time account for much of the weakness of teaching and learning which HMI observe in RE.

<sup>26</sup> Such as the New Secondary Curriculum Initiative and work on Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) in Foundation Subjects to define and exemplify levels.

- 3.5 There are many national projects which provide high-quality exemplification, some originating in research, some funded and supported by RE's major donors, funders and agencies. Various REC member bodies have also produced exemplification material, such as the Islamic Council of Britain's package for learning about Islam, the BHA's 'Humanism for Schools' website, and the Jewish Way of Life exhibition. In general, these are less well known than they deserve and probably lack widespread impact, even where they would meet needs widely.
- 3.6 An increasing amount of material is available digitally via the internet and, in the context of increased globalisation, from a wide range of international sources. However, such material is unregulated and raises issues – particularly for those lacking subject knowledge or confidence – about resource selection, balance and quality. Furthermore, best practice would suggest that such material has to be tailored to the particular situation in which it is going to be applied; an exercise that requires professional judgement, flair and expertise.
- 3.7 RE has relied on agencies of government for exemplification of good practice. key examples include HMI, QCD, the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) and the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTa). Local agencies – SACREs being the key example – have also often made a contribution to exemplification. Following the closure of some of these agencies<sup>27</sup> and in view of the current austerities which affect many (though not all) SACREs, the RE community must look to other sources for the support of exemplification of good practice.
- 3.8 One particularly significant factor has been the reduction in the number and availability of 'experts' (including specialist RE advisers, advisory teachers and advanced skills teachers) to support teachers and schools. Where they continue to exist, local subject-specific groups of teachers have been a lifeline for many with meetings often focused on sharing examples of good practice. Some faith communities, such as Roman Catholic and Anglican dioceses, have continued to offer support to their own networks, sometimes beyond. However, many teachers of RE report feeling isolated, and do not feel well placed to see how exemplification of good practice can help them practically.
- 3.9 Some 'pull factors' have been having a good impact, but usually only on schools numbered in their hundreds at best.<sup>28</sup> These include quality marks and awards (such as the RE Quality Mark<sup>29</sup> and the Hockerill/NATRE prize for Innovation in RE Teaching<sup>30</sup>); competitions (such as those associated with 'Spirited Arts'<sup>31</sup>); and

<sup>27</sup> BECTa, for example, was closed down on 31 March 2011.

<sup>28</sup> The evaluation report on the RESilience Project, for example, noted that, 'The number of English schools that chose to participate was disappointing. This was due in part to external factors but the final number fell far short of the revised aspirational target of 400'. *An Evaluation of Resilience/At Gyfnerthu 2009-2011*, 25.

<sup>29</sup> A recently introduced award aimed at 'recognising outstanding learning in religious education'. See: [www.reqm.org](http://www.reqm.org)

<sup>30</sup> Now in its third year. See: [www.hockerillfoundation.org.uk/Prize.aspx](http://www.hockerillfoundation.org.uk/Prize.aspx)

projects and initiatives (such as the Celebrating RE Month held in March 2011<sup>32</sup> and developing students as ‘ambassadors of faith and belief’<sup>33</sup>). These initiatives, which require opting into, often feature schools who already exhibit good practice in RE.

- 3.10 Many schools and teachers, lacking trust in their own ability to be curriculum innovators and evaluators, turn to commercially published schemes of planning and resources. While some of these provide professional guidance ‘on tap’, others are insufficiently coherent to please faith community groups and insufficiently creative to please pupils.
- 3.11 Published research projects into RE-specific learning methods and pedagogy have been influential. These methods, based on enquiry, ethnography, interpretation, religious literacy, experiential approaches, conceptual development and the quest for human meaning, are all used in some classrooms; at best, each is effective largely in relation to its own version of RE’s aims. Many teachers make eclectic use of these learning methods, often driven by the desire to make RE lively or relevant. The quest for ‘relevance’ in RE is sometimes pursued superficially, however: featuring a story of a Muslim boxer or a Christian pop star may in itself do little, if anything, to improve the quality of learning.

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<sup>31</sup>Including ‘Art in Heaven’, an annual art competition which, since 2004, has involved 250,000 pupils. See: [www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts/](http://www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts/)

<sup>32</sup> See: [www.religiouseducationcouncil.org/content/blogcategory/51/81/](http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org/content/blogcategory/51/81/)

<sup>33</sup> See, for example: <http://www.save-glasbury.org/aims.php>

## Exemplification: Main strengths

- 3.12 There has never been a 'golden age' for RE, and it is a reasonable conjecture that there is a much stronger base of practice at a sound standard than ever before in both primary and secondary school RE. In a significant number of schools – primary, secondary and special – RE is identified by HMI as a subject which makes an important contribution to whole school priorities.
- 3.13 The capacity - despite a sense of being marginalised by central government decisions and a persistent belief that the subject is under-funded relative to other subjects - for RE-related groups, locally and nationally, to organise innovative and exciting projects and initiatives which both promote and bring together a wide range of exemplary practice and material.
- 3.14 The number and range of professional associations and other organisations which have exemplified their vision of RE in accessible ways through resources from which schools and teachers can benefit. While sometimes these are for sale, others are heavily subsidised and some are freely available.
- 3.15 Though there is widespread concern about the diminishing amount of initial and continuing professional development opportunities available to teachers, where good quality subject-specific training does exist it is valued highly and can have an impact. A significant number (though not enough) of teachers benefit annually from this sort of provision from SACREs, professional associations and commercial providers.
- 3.16 Best practice in RE is simultaneously alert both to pupils' own interests and questions and to the academic disciplines of theology and religious studies (in some cases, biblical studies or philosophy). Linking these two poles through learning about spirituality, ethics and religions enables learners in RE to get a strong sense of how the subject encourages them to think deeply about their own questions of identity, meaning and value and of what it means to be human.

## Exemplification: Main Weaknesses

- 3.17 Even after 10-15 years of solid progress, there are still too many schools which do not take RE seriously; it may still be treated in tokenistic ways by school leaders who are unaware of (or unreceptive to) the potential of the subject. Too many schools continue to deliver RE from a sense of legal duty rather than an appreciation of its value. Such schools have never seen best practice exemplified in ways that might inspire them to seek to replicate it in their own setting.
- 3.18 Though researchers have contributed to the exemplification of good teaching and learning in RE, primary and secondary teachers have not always known about this and/or have had difficulty persuading others of its value. The circle of well-informed and practically skilled users of RE learning methods is small.
- 3.19 Clear criteria by which to judge what makes RE practice or resources 'good' or 'outstanding' are not readily available either to many teachers of RE or other stakeholders.
- 3.20 The time allocated to beginning primary teachers during initial teacher education is too limited – in many cases this is less than five hours tuition or even self-study to prepare primary graduates for teaching RE. The move to locate initial teacher education in schools (in which there can be no guarantee that beginning teachers will see good practice in RE exemplified) is worrying.
- 3.21 Despite good take-up of those CPD opportunities which are available, overall the amount of subject-specialist professional development available to subject leaders and specialist RE teachers is inadequate.



## Focus 4: Assessment (including Qualifications)<sup>34</sup>

### Recommendation 6

**That new instruments for describing achievement in RE are created that teachers can use working alongside the DfE's new descriptions of achievement in subjects like English, mathematics and science.**

### Recommendation 7

**That maximum influence is sought with the relevant examination Awarding Bodies in order to promote:**

- (a) coherence and progression between 4-14 programmes and public examinations used at 14-19; and**
- (b) the study of religions in religious studies<sup>1</sup> qualifications 14-19, in appropriate relation to studies of, for example, ethics and philosophy.**

## Assessment: Background

- 4.1 There has been substantial work on assessment in RE in recent years, to which many expert witnesses have drawn attention. The most recent reference point is the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC) assessment working group. The work of the HMI and of QCDA's Assessing Pupil Progress in RE work is also pertinent. Though there is clearly 'unfinished business' in the area of assessment and RE, there is evidence that, with skilful and knowledgeable handling, the use of levels can promote progress in RE but that, generally, too few teachers and schools have the confidence or expertise to use assessment techniques well. From the pool of schools that has been visited in recent years, HMI judges assessment in RE overall to be relatively weak in relation to other subjects<sup>35</sup>. There is also divided opinion over the usefulness of the 'learning about' and 'learning from' dichotomy as a means of carrying out assessment. At best, it has been suggested, it gives people a good sense of the subtle nature of RE and 'learning from religion' provides a strong starting point for higher order thinking in RE, including skills of critical and personal evaluation. At worst, however, it leads to a narrow interpretation of each element so that "learning about" becomes synonymous with 'facts' and

<sup>34</sup> The title of the fourth focus as given to the Expert Panel was 'qualifications and assessment of RE'. Following discussion, however, panel members decided that it was helpful to reword this as 'assessment (including qualifications)' and to interpret 'qualifications' as applying predominantly to the GCSE and GCE public examinations in religious studies (RS) available to pupils at school.

<sup>35</sup> See the two long Ofsted reports (2007, 2010) on RE in schools visited.



‘learning from’ with ‘feelings’. Many expert witnesses stated that some teachers are confused about what the terms actually mean<sup>36</sup>.

- 4.2 A review of qualifications in RE/RS<sup>37</sup> also presents a mixed picture. On the one hand, there has been a spectacular increase in the number of students taking RE/RS public examinations in recent years<sup>38</sup>, both at GCSE and GCE levels, with solid rates of achievement being recorded. Evidence suggests that the worth of RE/RS examinations has risen in the esteem of students, many of them seeing the kinds of issues-based RE/RS examinations that have developed as being helpful for living in the modern, plural world. The increased popularity of RE/RS examinations has also meant that they have become a significant commercial factor for the examination Awarding Bodies: RE/RS has, in short, attained a strong market position. On the other hand, there are currently significant and fast-moving changes taking place in the national examination scene, some expert witnesses voicing concerns that there is a danger the RE community will not be able to respond quickly enough so as to influence decisions that will impact on the future of RE/RS as an examination subject.
- 4.3 There is also evidence, however, that the rapid growth in the number of candidates for RE/RS public examinations has come at a cost. For example, concerns have been expressed by some expert witnesses that: the GCSE short courses lack rigour and challenge; the full GCSE courses are too content-based so that they encourage ‘teaching to the exam’; and that the popularity with students of A level philosophy and ethics-type RE/RS courses has led to a belief that ‘anything goes’ (in terms of argument) and that ‘philosophy’ and ‘philosophy of religion’ (which usually means Western philosophy) have become conflated so that both become distorted. There is also a much-repeated concern that, all through the school years – but particularly in Key Stages 4 and 5 when examinations predominate – pupils exhibit a diminishing understanding of the nature of religion in general as well as of the basic theological positions of particular religious traditions and the questions that they raise. In the words of one expert witness: ‘The focus on so-called ‘philosophy and ethics’ has reduced religions at Key Stage 4 to providers of proof texts, learnt by heart, to illustrate religious attitudes to “issues”’.
- 4.4 If the above factors are, to a lesser or greater extent, within the control of RE/RS and examination professionals, the same cannot be said for changes that emanate from decisions made at government level and which can leave educational professionals feeling helpless, frustrated and often angry. Such has been the case with the decision not to include RE/RS as one of the humanities subjects which combine with others to form the measure of school examination performance termed the ‘EBacc’.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example: Teece, G (2010).

<sup>37</sup> The term RE/RS has been used in this section as a reminder that, at public examination level, RE is termed ‘religious studies’ (RS).

<sup>38</sup> Over 450,000 students have been certificated at GCSE each year in the last six years. In the last 15 years, over 25,000 students have sat the AS level in Religious Studies.

Recent surveys<sup>39</sup> have demonstrated that this one move has done much to undermine the status and staffing of RE in a significant number of English secondary schools. It is, many have claimed, a cruel example of damaging RE 'by default'; that is, educational decisions not specifically related to RE nevertheless having a negative impact on RE, thereby undermining its position in schools. Some expert witnesses also expressed concern at RS not being listed as a 'facilitating subject' by the Russell Group of universities, saying that this has fuelled negative perceptions of RE amongst some pupils and members of the wider public.

- 4.5 The pattern of recent years through which students have gained teaching qualifications through a course in initial teacher education is also currently undergoing fundamental change with the number of post-graduate students being accepted for RE-related courses being reduced (resulting in some long-established university post-graduate certificate of education [PGCE] RE courses folding) and a clear national government-led preference for initial teacher education taking place 'on site' in schools themselves. Those currently involved in initial teacher education work, the quality of whose work is regularly monitored, have voiced concerns about there being no apparent safeguards to ensure that the school RE that beginning teachers will experience will be of an appropriately high standard. Taking a wider perspective, questions are continually asked about how school and university courses prepare future teachers to engage professionally in informed and engaging RE teaching, whether at primary or secondary level.

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<sup>39</sup> Particularly the four surveys, each of which attracted a significantly high number of responses from English secondary schools, which were conducted by NATRE 2010-2012.

## Assessment: Main strengths

- 4.6 The quality and wide use of the RE eight-level scale from the Framework is not without problems, but is perceived to be a strength of the subject by many teachers and syllabus-makers. By offering a common platform with subjects such as history and geography, the eight-level scale has led to greater coherence and rigour in the ways that teachers describe achievement and progression in RE for 5-14s.<sup>40</sup> It has also been suggested that self-assessment and peer-assessment has become more popular in RE, giving pupils greater agency and ownership.
- 4.7 It is a strength that RE has for over a decade shared parity of language and structures for describing assessment with, for example, history, geography and art. This has had a benefit for the strength of the subject's assessment work and for the status of RE in the eyes of teachers, parents and pupils.
- 4.8 The spectacular increase in recent years in the number of students taking examination courses at both GCSE and GCE levels, the short course GCSE being particularly strategic in helping schools to fulfil the legislative requirement for all students to take RE (unless withdrawn by parents or carers) at Key Stage 4.
- 4.9 The raised status of RE amongst 14-18 pupils, particularly with the popularity of issues-based/philosophy and ethics-type GCSE and GCE courses.

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<sup>40</sup> One example of the impact of the scale is that over 2,600 teachers have benefitted from continuing professional development courses on assessing RE organised by RE Today.

## Assessment: Main Weaknesses

- 4.10 The general standard of assessment in RE is relatively weak in relation to other subjects. Contributory factors include including lack of teacher confidence, decreasing opportunities for initial and continuing professional development, lack of curriculum time, the unrealistic amount of assessment required of some teachers, and lack of clarity about the aims of RE.
- 4.11 The debilitating impact of RE not being included as one of the humanities subjects of the EBacc, evidence suggesting that it is making some schools question the value of running RS short/full GCSE courses or even to eliminate such courses entirely. In such schools, the negative impact on the perception of RE's value and on the morale of teachers can be marked.
- 4.12 There is widespread concern that the popularity of philosophy and ethics examination courses post-14, at the expense of a study of world religions or religious texts, has led to a shallower understanding of the nature of religion/s. This, in turn, will impact on the knowledge and understanding of future entrants into the teaching profession.
- 4.13 Since 1997, the GCSE short course in religious studies has been the most popular of all short courses, meeting a real need to certificate the core learning in legislatively required RE. If it were to continue, reform is needed because of a perceived lack of rigour<sup>41</sup> (a perception that is also widely applied to the full GCSE course). There is a need to clarify the relationship of the short course with other qualifications (such as, presently, the full RS GCSE course, or any successor qualification). But, if the short course in RS were to be abolished, then another way of accrediting the learning entitlement of the RE required by legislation will be needed. The accreditation of learning at 16 or in Key Stage 4 (14-16) is currently a weakness in RE provision.

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<sup>41</sup> See, for instance: Ofsted (2010), 5.

## Two Further Recommendations

### Recommendation 8

**That the 2004 *Non-Statutory National Framework* for RE is reviewed and replaced with an updated and recast document.**

### Recommendation 9

**That increasingly influential links are built and used with the DfE in order to promote RE in all schools, in line with the REC subject review's work and recommendations (above), challenging and encouraging government to act to improve RE.**

### Note

Each of recommendations 1 to 7 is linked to one of the four foci of this report (aims, curriculum, exemplification of good practice, and assessment including qualifications). This is not the case with the final two recommendations which are more overarching in nature.

Recommendation 8 will draw from the outcomes of the work envisaged in the preceding recommendations. Recommendation 9 provides the backdrop to the RE Review as a whole and echoes one of the key aims of the REC.

## A Final Word

There are many traditional adages that have, at their core, the truism that nothing that is really worthwhile is easy. Members of the expert panel have certainly discovered this anew over the three months of its work.

It was reassuring to know, however, that their report would be a beginning rather than an end: a starting point for further reflection and discussion which would lead to a refinement of both its findings and recommendations; a platform on which to base further action.

I wish to pay tribute both to my colleagues on the Expert Panel for the expertise, time and energy which they have brought to this task but also to the many other members of the RE community who have also contributed so willingly to the process culminating in this report and its later refinements.

Bill Gent

Chair of RE Expert Panel

November 2012

## Annex 1: Expert Witnesses Consulted

*Written submissions were received from the following:*

Jo Backus  
Dr Robert Bowie  
Jane Brooke  
Alan Brown  
Roger Butler  
Mike Castelli  
Professor Trevor Cooling  
Andrew Copson  
Dr Nigel Fancourt  
Professor Brian Gates  
Professor Michael Hand  
Patricia Hannan  
Dr Mary Hayward  
Daniel Hugill  
Dilwyn Hunt  
Professor Bob Jackson  
John Keast OBE  
Anne Krisman  
Juliet Lyal  
Carrie Mercier  
Dr Joyce Miller  
Dr Bill Moore  
Mary Myatt  
Dr Kevin O'Grady  
Dr John Rudge  
Joy Schmack  
Dr Anna Strhan  
Sandra Teacher  
Dr Geoff Teece  
Peter Ward  
Michael Wilcockson  
Dr Barbara Wintersgill

*The following provided written submissions and met with Expert Panel members:*

Professor Vivienne Baumfield  
Alan Brine HMI  
Dr Mark Chater  
Rev Sior Coleman  
Julia Conway-Diamond  
Professor Denise Cush  
Dr Marius Felderhof  
Dave Francis  
Guy Hordern  
Ed Pawson  
Deborah Weston  
Professor John White

## Annex 2: Key Documents Consulted

As the first part of their work, members of the Expert Panel agreed to read and take account of the following key documents. Additional documents were referred to by individual panel members.

### **DfE-related**

National Curriculum Expert Panel Report (Dec 2011)

Text of address of Minister for Schools at REC AGM (May 2012)

Government response to Expert Panel Report (June 2012)

On-going communications between DfE, Expert Panel Members & RE organisations

### **REC-related**

Scoping Exercise Report (Feb 2012)

### **RE-focused (excluding journal/magazine articles)**

Baumfield, V (2011) 'Making RE Work: a thoughtful future for the subject' (Burn Hall Lecture)

Castelli, M (2012), 'What makes a good preparation to teach RE, and how important is subject knowledge?' (Discussion plan, March 2012 ITER summit)

Chater, M 'What's Worth Fighting For?' (RE online/Unlocking RE website, March 2011)

Cush D (2003) Notes on 'Religiate school leavers aged 16+'

Cush, D & Robinson, C (2012) *Developments in Religious Studies: Towards a Dialogue with Religious Education* (Talk at AULRE Conference, July 2012)

QCA/DES (2004) *Religious education: The non-statutory national framework*

DCSF (2010) *Religious Education in English Schools: non-statutory guidance*

DCSF/Warwick University (2010) Conclusions and recommendations to *Materials Used to Teach About World Religions in Schools in England*

Felderhof, M C & Whitehouse, S, 'The 2007 Birmingham Agreed Syllabus: Educating pupils and the community' in Grimmitt, M (2010) *Religious Education and Social and Community Cohesion* (Great Woking: McCrimmons) + DVD to support 2007 agreed syllabus.

IPPR Report: *What is Religious Education For? Getting the National Framework Right* (2004)

ITE Summit (2012) *How will we prepare the next generation of RE teachers?*

Jackson, R (2011) *Learning about Religions & Non-religious Worldviews: European Research Findings & ongoing Policy Development in the Council of Europe* (ISREV Conference paper)

Jackson, R (2009/12) *Studying Religions: The Interpretive Approach in Brief* (European Wergeland Centre, Oslo)

Keast, J (2007) 'Does RE Matter?' (RE online/Unlocking RE website)

Mayled, J (2010) 'Religious Studies Examinations' (RE online/Unlocking RE website)



NATRE (April 2011) *Teacher Survey re impact of EBacc*

NATRE (June 2011) *Second Teacher Survey*

Ofsted (1997) *Making Sense of Religion*

Ofsted (2010) *Transforming Religious Education*

QCA (2004) *Non-Statutory National Framework for RE*

REC (2007) *RE Teaching & Training in England: current provision & future improvement*

RE Today Services (2012) Report on Westhill Endowment Trust Seminar Series, 2011-12

RE Today Services (date) powerpoint sequence on 'RE: Why do we have to do this?'

Rudge, J (2012) 'What is – and should be – happening to GCSE & A level RS as routes to University?' (Talk plan, March 2012 ITE summit)

St Gabriel's (2011) Proceedings of RE Community Conference, Wokefield Park, Reading, October 2011

Strachan, A (2011) 'The Future of RE: Looking backwards to look forwards' (RE online/Unlocking RE website)

Teece, G (2012) *Learning about religion & Learning from religion* + appendix (Paper prepared for the department of Education of the Swiss Canton of Zurich)

### **RE-focused (journal/magazine articles)**

Blaylock, L (2009) '“Learning from Religion”: a very short history', *REsource*, 31:2, 10-13

Brown, (2012), review of *Debates in Religious Education*, *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 32:3, 368-370

Chater, M (2011) 'The Gove who kicked the hornets' nest', *REsource*, 33:3, 24-25

Habermas, J (2006) 'Religion in the Public Sphere', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 14:1, 1-25

Jackson, R (2008) 'Contextual religious education & the interpretive approach', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 30:1, 13-24

Keast, J (2011) 'Political change & the future for RE: looking into the glass darkly', *REsource* 33:2, 4-5

Lundie, D (2010) 'Does RE Work?', *REToday* 28:1, 38-39

Teece, G (2009) 'Religion as Human Transformation', *REsource*, 31:3, 4-7

Teece, G (2010) 'Is it learning about and from religions, religions or religious education? And is it any wonder some teachers don't get it?', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 32:2, 93-103

White, J (2004) 'Should religious education be a compulsory school subject?', *British Journal of Religious Education* 26:2, 151-164

Wright, A (2004) 'The justification of compulsory religious education: a response to Professor White', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 26:2, 165-174

Wright, A (2008) 'Contextual religious education & the actuality of religions', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 30:1, 3-12

## Annex 3: Pen Portraits of RE Expert Panel Members

### Lat Blaylock

Mr Lat Blaylock is the Editor of *RE Today* magazine, and a national RE adviser in the UK. He trains about 1500 primary teachers of RE and about 1500 secondary RE teachers every year through his professional development courses on topics including RE for infants, spiritual development 4-19, assessing primary RE and GCSE learning. He has built up a national reputation for practicality and inspiration. Before joining the RE Today advisory team, he was a classroom teacher of RE for 11 years in a large comprehensive school in multi-faith Leicester. As Head of Humanities, he developed interests in history, geography, social science and curriculum partnerships. His MA from the University of Warwick studied the implementation of local agreed syllabuses.

He has published numerous RE resources, including making four series of RE broadcasts for the BBC. 'Representing Religions' explores the teaching of six religions through multi-authored chapters by teachers who are also members of six different faiths. He has written four packages of visual learning materials, called 'Picturing Jesus' which use the global art of the contemporary Christian communities for RE. He has been a consultant on RE to the BBC, the Bible Society, the Inter Faith Network, Christian Aid, many local authorities and some Academy networks.

His long-term work on assessing RE led to his appointment as a partner in the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agencies 'Assessing Pupil Progress' project, from which new RE assessment materials for RE were published by Michael Gove's Department in 2010. He is the initiator of 'Spirited Arts', a National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) strategy for creativity in RE in the UK, which is also used across Europe and in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

### Bill Gent

Dr Bill Gent began his 15-year career as a schoolteacher in Birmingham, specialising in religious education. Early on developing an interest in the nature and problematic role of collective worship in schools, he wrote and spoke widely on this, building up a national reputation as an engaging and entertaining communicator. Following teaching, he moved on to advisory and inspection work where he worked with primary, secondary and special schools across the London Borough of Redbridge and beyond. He was involved in the writing and revising of a number of agreed syllabuses and, with his wife, wrote the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 RE books in the popular Scholastic Curriculum Bank series. He also developed a particular interest and expertise in working with educational and faith groups in producing clear, agreed and authoritative texts.

His interest in the composition and educational life of religious communities led him to take an educational doctorate with the University of Warwick. His thesis explored the nature of supplementary schooling within the Muslim community, with a particular focus on Qur'ānic memorisation and recitation. He has published a number of articles and book chapters in this field and is currently working with a group of European scholars looking at how Muslim pupils move between different educational traditions in a range of settings. He is an Associate Fellow of the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit based at the University of Warwick.

From 2006, he has edited *REsource*, the journal of the National Association of Teachers of RE for the quality of which work he was awarded the prestigious Shap Award in 2012.

## Julian Stern

Professor Julian Stern was educated at the Royal Academy of Music, London Institute of Education, and the universities of Oxford and Leicester. He is currently Professor of Education and Religion, and Dean of Education and Theology, at York St John University. He taught in UK schools for 14 years, and has worked in universities for 20 years (initially alongside school work), at the London Institute of Education, the Open University, Brunel University (as Deputy Director of the BFSS National RE Centre), the University of Hull (as Reader and Dean of the Institute for Learning), and now York St John University.

Julian has written eleven books, including *Teaching Religious Education* (2006), *Schools and Religions: Imagining the Real* (2007) and *The Spirit of the School* (2009), alongside general books for teachers and over 30 articles for journals as diverse as the *British Journal of Religious Education*, *Support for Learning*, the *Journal of Advanced Clinical Nursing*, and the *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*. He has worked in initial and in-service teacher education for both primary and secondary teachers, and has been involved in creating digital training materials and television programmes. He has been a consultant and researcher for primary, special and secondary schools, and universities across the UK and in Germany, Sweden, Hong Kong, Australia, and the USA. He is currently researching religious education, spirituality, dialogue, community, learning, loneliness, and the influence of research.

Professor Stern is General Secretary of ISREV, the International Seminar on Religious Education and Values (the major international research body in religious education with 243 senior researchers across 36 countries) and is on the editorial boards of the *British Journal of Religious Education*, the *Religious Education Journal of Australia*, and the *Journal of Spirituality Studies*.

## Karen Walshe

Dr Karen Walshe is Senior Lecturer in Religious Education at the Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter, where she is Subject Leader for Secondary Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) RE and Programme Director for the Secondary PGCE Programme. Having taught and led RE in secondary schools in Devon and Cornwall for ten years, she moved to the University of Exeter in 1989 to work as research assistant on the Biblos, Parables, and Teaching about Jesus research projects. She was awarded her PhD in 2009 for her research into young people's perceptions of Jesus in RE.

Karen has published a wide range of RE resources as well as professional and academic papers in the field of RE. She is currently working on a collaborative research project, funded by the Farmington Institute in Oxford, examining teachers' and trainee teachers' understanding of 'understanding' in RE.

Karen is Deputy General Secretary of the International Seminar on Religious Education and Values (ISREV) and a member of the Devon Standing Advisory Council for RE (SACRE). She also has extensive experience as an external examiner for secondary PGCE RE and Graduate Training Programme course.

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## Addendum: Examples of issues raised during two preliminary REC consultation meetings (31.10.12 & 7.11.12)

1. Reference to core skills and understanding (eg Recommendation 2) should also include reference to skills.
2. An overarching statement of the purpose and aims of RE (see Recommendation 1) may be neither possible nor desirable. It may be best for the review to focus on aims and purposes for RE in non-denominational schools as a resource that might be accessed/useful for faith-based schools if they chose to draw upon it.
3. The term 'religion and belief', used in many recent RE documents, is more inclusive than reference to 'religion' alone. The subject area is Religion and Belief', RE being the mechanism through which these are studied.
4. Principle 3 assumes that the current system of local determination of RE will continue. Some believe that this is detrimental to RE and standards achieved by pupils.
5. More evidence needs to be included of current views and perceptions held within the faith-based sector of schooling
6. Too much emphasis has been placed on the 2004 *Non-Statutory Framework* for RE at the expense of later initiatives and documentation (eg relating to the new primary curriculum and secondary curriculum) which marked further development.
7. The report sometimes implies confusion over aims whereas the issue is really diversity.
8. Work on Recommendation 1 needs to identify the different groups with whom we are communicating (eg governors, teachers, parents, faith groups, business, the public). It might be useful to think about what makes a child religiously literate and its value for life and employment.
9. Recommendation 9 relates to what has been central in the work of the RE Council. But we also have to recognise that we are living in a changed environment and there are other routes which might become more urgent and effective.
10. The idea of 'entitlement' to RE is missing (eg in Principle 10).
11. In Principle 3, how does 'authoritative' sit with recognition of diversity?
12. Is RE a discipline? Engaging with the nature of the subject is what RE is about.
13. There does need to be some kind of document that acts as a central reference point, but the nature of this document will need careful consideration.
14. What about the significance of RE's contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (particularly as this remains a focus of Ofsted inspections)? Should there have been an additional recommendation linked to this?
15. In phase 2, the review needs to have one expert/writing group rather than separate task forces working in discrete ways to produce something coherent.
16. Recommendation 7 could be widened further to include actual and potential providers. The RE community could also forge links with those not currently offering qualifications – like universities – and also become involved in vocational qualifications.
17. The whole area of legislation relating to RE is missing from the report; should it be?

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**Swindon SACRE REC RE Review working party - 19/11/12**

**Those present:**

Mark Cawte – Methodist representative and Vice Chair of Swindon SACRE

Paul Sunners –National Association of Head Teachers

Katy Staples – Adviser to Swindon SACRE

**Apologies:** Lottie Rowe, Janet French, Tracy Mason.

**Summary**

The group felt this was a well constructed and logical review which displayed an accurate understanding of the context of RE in England at this time.

We felt the four foci and the 9 recommendations were very clear and pertinent

The group felt the report was well worded and in places was very heartening.

Many of our concerns were raised in the Addendum

All of which was most reassuring for the future health of RE.

**Focus 1 - The Aims of RE**

The group strongly concurred with the reviews' finding about the need for greater articulation and communication about the aims of RE and support Recommendation 1.

**Focus 2 - The RE Curriculum**

It was felt this also was an accurate understanding and supported the recommendations, although the group felt it was important that an allowing for diversity of pedagogy and learning methods (Recommendation 3) was vital and any over prescriptive "one way" of teaching RE should be resisted strongly.

**Focus 3 - Exemplification of good RE**

Again the group was supportive of this focus and we were pleased to see the emphasis being about promoting high standards of RE.

Paragraph 3.11 - Thhe group was rather concerned that eclectic learning methods were being typified as negative instead of potentially rich and skilful in meeting pupil's needs. They found the example of the boxer and pop star as a substitution for relevance over quality of learning, entertaining but overplayed.

The group were supportive of recommendation 4 but were unsure as to what recommendation 5 would look like in practice.

#### **Focus 4 - Assessment (including Qualifications)**

The group concurred with the review's findings – particularly the critique of learning at KS4 and the shift towards Philosophy and Ethics at both KS4 and 5 at the expense of the thorough exploration of religion(s)

Both recommendations 6 and 7 .rely on the government clearly communicating its descriptors for English, Mathematics and Science and on there being a landscape of credible public examinations for the subjects not included in the EBacc

#### **Two further recommendations - 8 and 9**

The group also supported these recommendations

It was expressed that the NS Framework included some confusing definitions and over ambiguous difficult grade descriptors for assessment that have needed reviewing for some time.

In particular it was reported that many non-specialist staff struggle to accurately place learning within the 6 strands and will often conflate Practices and Ways of Life with Expression of Meaning when exploring places of worship – for example

However it has given RE a common language and shared expectations.

#### **Concluding remarks**

Swindon SACRE is very grateful to the work of the Review group and would encourage you in your work and we support your findings and the direction in which you are heading.



## **SACRE Self-Evaluation and Development Plan**

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**4 December 2012**

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Author: SACRE Advisor /  
Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

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### **1. Purpose and Reasons**

- 1.1 To ask the SACRE to consider the summary of its self-evaluation and responses received to date on the Survey of teachers, and discuss the SACRE Draft Development Plan 2012/14.

### **2. Recommendations**

The SACRE is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider the outcome of the self-evaluation exercise undertaken at the last meeting and make any amendments to the judgements made, as appropriate.
- 2.2 Consider the responses received to date on the survey of Schools on teaching of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- 2.3 Consider and agree a new Development Plan for the SACRE for 2012/14.
- 2.4 Consider nominating a representative to attend the South West SACRE Conference on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

### **3. Detail**

SACRE Self-Evaluation

- 3.1 At the last meeting the SACRE undertook a self-evaluation exercise using the Ofsted Self-Assessment Toolkit. A summary is set out at Appendix '1'. Where appropriate comments have been added by the SACRE Advisor. The SACRE is invited to discuss and amend any of the judgements made. A copy of the Self-Assessment Toolkit will be available for reference at the meeting.

Survey of Schools

- 3.2 Since the last meeting, the SACRE Advisor has issued a questionnaire to Swindon Schools on the teaching of RE in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. During the period of the survey, 25 responses were received, 16 from primary schools and 9 from secondary schools. The SACRE Advisor will present a summary of the survey results at the meeting for discussion.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, [katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org), 0117 906 0100

# **SACRE Self-Evaluation and Development Plan**

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**4 December 2012**

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## Draft Development Plan 2012/14

- 3.3 The SACRE Advisor, in consultation with the Vice-Chair, has drawn up a new Development Plan for the SACRE for 2012/14. This will supersede the 2010/12 Development Plan currently in place. The Draft Development Plan is attached at Appendix '2', for the SACRE to consider and amend in the light of the self-evaluation and the school survey results.

## South West SACRE Conference

- 3.4 A South West SACRE Conference is being held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at Dillington House in Somerset. The cost of places is £70 + VAT. The conference this year will include a key note speaker, the Chair of the RE Council' Subject Review Committee, Dr Bill Gent.
- 3.5 Given the current context of RE, and the importance of the RE Subject Review for the SACRE's work this year, it is suggested that a representative of the SACRE be nominated to attend the conference, to be funded from the SACRE Budget. This nominee should also be able to use the new information to the benefit of Swindon Schools.

## **4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The SACRE can set its own Development Plan, in line with its statutory responsibilities.

## **5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 A £5k annual budget is provided to support the SACRE's work, which includes funding for support from the SACRE Advisor. Any activities identified as a result of this report, will be funded from this budget.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 The report has no specific legal or human rights implications.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 No other implications have been identified.

### Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The work of the SACRE seeks to support Theme 5 of the Community Strategy, "for Swindon to be a place where high aspirations are supported by superb education provision for all ages".

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, [katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org), 0117 906 0100

# **SACRE Self-Evaluation and Development Plan**

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**4 December 2012**

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## Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report, as it does not relate to a specific policy or strategy change.

## Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no risk management factors which have been identified in relation to this report.

## **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 None

## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 - Summary of SACRE Self-Assessment.  
8.2 Appendix 2 – Draft SACRE Development Plan 2012/14

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## Report from SACRE Self Evaluation Activity 25/9/12

Key: **D**= Developing; **E**= Established; **A**= Advanced; **EG**= Exemplar of good practices

### 1. Standards and quality of provision of RE

- a) *Compliance and time allocation for RE* **D**  
Little knowledge of levels of compliance and the time schools are allocating for RE. (SACRE Advisor comment: We need to aim to for 'more carrots than sticks'.)
- b) *Public examination entries in RE* **E**  
Informed about the number of pupils in the LA entered for GCSE AS and A2 and an analysis of performance (SACRE Advisor comment: Do we need to encourage more schools to enter pupils for public examinations? How will RE falling outside the EBacc affect this?)
- c) *Standards and achievement – end of key stage 1, 2 and 3 GCSE, AS and A2 level* **D**  
Limited knowledge and no clear strategies
- d) *Quality of teaching* **E/EG**  
The SACRE receives regular presentations from teachers about good practice in teaching and learning in RE – the SACRE works with the LA to provide guidance to schools about effective guidance to schools about RE including rigorous subject self-evaluation.
- e) *Quality of leadership and management* **E**  
Patchy intelligence, but limited funds to obtain more. Self-evaluation tools are offered on CPD and 'How to be a good subject leader' is a regular topic at cluster meetings.
- f) *Recruitment and retention. Level of specialist provision* **D**  
Little knowledge of data and issues to do with recruitment and retention (SACRE Advisor comment: Patchy intelligence, but limited funds to obtain more)
- g) *Resources* **E**  
Some information about issues related to resources for RE – limited opportunity to discover areas for concern and address them

### 2. Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders.

- a) *SACRE meetings* **A**  
SACRE members do contribute to the development of the agenda.- meetings are lively, teachers and faith representatives regularly attend – meetings are held in schools and sometimes in places of worship.
- b) *Membership and training* **A**  
Membership reflects the diversity of Swindon and some opportunities for SACRE members to participate in training activities. (SACRE Advisor comment: this is a matter of funding and take up).
- c) *Improvement/development planning* **A**  
SACRE has a well-developed action plan with clear objectives and success criteria  
SACRE represented at national events – NASACRE
- d) *Professional and financial support* **E**

SACRE has some access to specialist support – but a modest budget which only allows the funding of some initiatives

e) *Information and advice* **D**

SACRE receives limited information about public examination data – asks questions but does not challenge

(SACRE Advisor comment: the local authority provides a range of information about examinations, but this has been summarised for SACRE in previous years to focus on that which is most important, due to time and capacity. There is a question as to how far the SACRE can in future challenge when the performance is in academies, and therefore outside of the LA's remit)

f) *Partnership with other stakeholders* **E/A**

SACRE has the opportunities to hear the views and experiences of pupils

**3. The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus**

a) *Review of the agreed syllabus* **A**

Clear system for review with appropriate budget and a strong sense of ownership.

b) *Using the National Framework* **A**

This is used but does not reflect local circumstances.

c) *Developing the revised agreed syllabus* **A**

Well attended consultation meetings

d) *Consultation/ launch/ implementation* **E/A**

Good launch – strong media coverage – effective training

e) *Additional guidance , monitoring and evaluating the agreed syllabus* **D**

Shortage of financial and human resources – effect support

**4. Collective worship**

a) *Practice and Provision for Collective worship* **A**

SACRE offers high quality advice and support on collective worship

b) *Monitoring the provision and tackling issues of non-compliance* **E**

Limited hands off experience of collective worship in schools

**5 Contribution of SACRE to the social and community cohesion agenda**

a) *Representative nature of SACRE* **A**

Strong – good representation

b) *Knowledge and understanding of the local religious , cultural and ethnic community* **E/A**

SACRE is very aware of local diversity and informs itself of the distinctive needs and opportunities created by this diversity.

Comment was made that in meetings there needs to be opportunities created so that quieter members can have space to speak up or are asked directly – to ensure that one or two people do not dominate.

c) *Understanding the intrinsic contribution which RE can make to social and racial harmony.* **A**

SACRE produces guidance to schools about diversity

## **Draft Swindon SACRE Development Plan 2012 – 14**

### **Context**

This plan reflects the current context that Swindon SACRE finds itself in: –

- a) affected by national education curriculum decisions (EBACC and 2015 plans for major public examination changes at KS4)
- b) local responses to the Academies Act 2010 which has meant that the majority of Secondary Schools are no longer under Swindon local authority control , some primary schools have become Academies too and therefore SACRE’s remit as funded by Swindon LA towards them is unclear
- c) SACREs role in challenging Swindon LA about RE is reduced and the powers SACRE has in ensuring standards and entitlement in RE and Collective Worship in Academies are uncertain.
- d) this development plan has been written in the light of Swindon SACRE having undertaken a self-evaluation of its current effectiveness.

## Key Priorities

1. To raise the standards and quality of the teaching and learning in Religious Education within Swindon
2. To ensure that Swindon SACRE is effectively managed and has good partnerships with the LA and other key stakeholders
3. To ensure the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus
4. To effectively fulfil SACREs responsibility for the provision and practice of Collective worship.
5. To ensure that SACRE seeks to contribute to the wider social and community cohesion agenda.

Priority	Action	Person(s) responsible	Review date	Cost
1a) Raising the standards of Teaching and Learning in RE	Survey schools to identify needs and compliance	Katy Staples	January 2013	£200
1b) Raising the standards of Teaching and Learning in RE	Analyse Swindon public examination results in RE to identify trends and training needs	Paddy Bradley	Spring 2013	
1c) Offer CPD to RE teachers to encourage raised standards of teaching and learning in RE	SACRE Adviser to lead 3 Primary Cluster meetings and attend 2 Secondary Academy RE Teaching and Learning Hubs to offer best practice in RE. Signpost other good CPD in the region	Katy Staples	June 2013	£1,250
2a) To ensure effectiveness of the management of SACRE and its relationship with Swindon LA	Bi-annual meetings with the Swindon link officer to evaluate effectiveness	Sarah Foulkes, Chair, Vice-Chair, Katy Staples	2 meetings	£250



b) To establish relationships with Academy providers within the Swindon area.	Write to seek a commitment to local RE from local Academy providers and support and guidance from SACRE.	Chair, Vice-Chair, Katy Staples	April 2013	£500
3 a) To continue to ensure the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus	To ensure that teachers understand and can access and share good practice for the locally agreed syllabus – through cluster/network meetings	Katy Staples	June 2012	
b) To develop and strengthen the local element of the locally agreed syllabus	i) To compile an effective directory of local people and places of faith useful to support RE in schools ii) To write local materials about a Swindon specific issues / examples of faith	Volunteers from SACRE, Local teachers, Katy Staples	January 2014	£ 1,000
4a). Provide guidance for and encourage schools to raise the quality of Collective Worship to enhance pupil's spiritual , moral, social and cultural development	Promote the recently written guidance on Collective worship - signpost good training to enhance the quality of Collective Worship in Swindon Schools	Katy Staples, Sarah Foulkes, All members of SACRE	September 2013	
4b) To ensure local people of faith can play a part in leading and encouraging good collective worship within their local communities	Provide training for SACRE members and local people of faith to be able to lead/visit and observe collective worship in schools	Sarah Lane-Cawte, David Burbidge, Mark Cawte	January 2014	£200

5) To ensure the contribution of SACRE to the social and community cohesion agenda	Make sure that all voices of SACRE members have an opportunity to be heard – by the style of debate and the tone of encouragement	Chair, Vice-Chair, All Members	On going (January 2014)	
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## National Developments in Religious Education (RE)

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 4 December 2012

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`Author: SACRE Advisor /  
Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

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### 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To update the SACRE on national developments in relation to Religious Education.
- 1.2 The SACRE has a duty to help schools fulfil their statutory obligations with regard to religious education and to do so needs to keep up to date on the latest national developments in RE.

### 2. Recommendations

The SACRE is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the update on national developments and to consider any response which might be required by the SACRE in relation to these developments.

### 3. Detail

Collective Worship and Circular 1/94

- 3.1 In October, the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) and the Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC) issued a joint statement on Circular 1/94, with respect to what it says about collective worship. A copy of their statement is attached at Appendix '1'. They have indicated that they believe the Government stance has changed, and the requirement of Circular 1/94 for schools to have collective worship in assemblies which is primarily Christian based will no longer be enforced, with schools able to reflect their local circumstances when forming their policy on Collective Worship.
- 3.2 However, it should be noted that this is the view of NASACRE and AREIC, but the Department for Education (DfE) is still showing Circular 1/94 as current on its website, and the formal legal position of the Guidance has not changed.
- 3.3 The SACRE is asked to note this potential shift in emphasis. The advice to local schools remains that they should follow the Collective Worship Guidance for Swindon which was published at the last meeting.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, [katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org), 0117 906 0100

# National Developments in Religious Education (RE)

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 4 December 2012

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## The APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group) on RE

- 3.4 The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Religious Education is conducting an inquiry on the supply of and support for religious education teachers. They have stated that this should be seen as an opportunity for all individuals and organisations concerned with RE to contribute to a major national project in the interests of the subject. They would like to consult widely with all key RE organisations and stakeholders asking some specific questions below. In addition they want to invite any individual or group (e.g. a school) to present information that they feel will strengthen this inquiry. If someone belongs to an organisation that has already responded to the formal consultation, they have also asked for an individual response. It has been indicated that this evidence could take a number of forms:
- Statistical data e.g. a SACRE might provide information about the number of secondary schools in the area with no RE specialist teachers
  - Research findings e.g. from academic research or a local survey
  - Case studies e.g. from an RE department
  - Personal experience e.g. from parents or students.
- 3.5 In addition, the Group is holding two oral evidence sessions in the House of Commons on the 28<sup>th</sup> November (5pm – 7pm), and 16<sup>th</sup> January (5pm – 7pm).
- 3.6 As requested at a previous meeting, Councillor Dart wrote to both the MPs to ask them to support the work of this Group. Both have written in response to these letters. Robert Buckland MP has confirmed that he is already a member of the Group, and Justin Tomlinson MP has confirmed that he supports its work. Copies of the letters will be available at the meeting for information.

## **4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 There are no alternative options for the SACRE.

## **5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications relating to this report.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 There are no specific legal or human rights implications relating to this report.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 No other implications have been identified.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, [katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org), 0117 906 0100

# National Developments in Religious Education (RE)

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 4 December 2012

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## Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The work of the SACRE supports Theme 5 of the Community Strategy, for Swindon to be a place where high aspirations are supported by superb education provision for all ages.

## Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report, as it does not relate to a specific policy or strategy change.

## Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no risk management factors which have been identified in relation to this report.

## **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 None

## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – NASACRE / AREIAC joint statement on Circular 1/94 and Collective Worship.

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**NASACRE and AREIAC's joint statement on Circular 1/94 and collective worship**

**October 2012**

Since March of this year NASACRE and AREIAC have been in contact with the Department for Education regarding the status of Circular 1/94 with respect to what this Circular says about collective worship. In the course of this correspondence it has been made clear that 1/94 has no legal or semi legal status, nor does the Circular have a quasi-legal status. It does not represent the Government's official advice on collective worship which schools are in some sense obliged to follow. Officials state that in this area local determination is a key strength and for this reason all schools and Academies can choose whether or not to use Circular

The view of NASACRE and AREIAC is that collective worship can and should be an inclusive experience which, when done well, can make a valuable and highly positive contribution to life in general in all schools. All schools and Academies should be meeting the legal requirements for collective worship. However, we are aware that in attempting to do so many institutions experience difficulties which stem from statements which appear in Circular 1/94. The Circular is thus often a barrier to good collective worship. For this reason NASACRE and AREIAC advise that schools and Academies should not use Circular 1/94 but that their provision for collective worship should be guided by the legal requirements as set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and confirmed in the 1996 Education Act.

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## Update on Network Meetings

### Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

4 December 2012

Author: SACRE Advisor /  
Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

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#### 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To update the SACRE on the Network Meetings for RE Teachers and Co-ordinators in Swindon.
- 1.2 The SACRE has a duty to help schools fulfil their statutory obligations with regard to religious education.

#### 2. Recommendations

The SACRE is recommended to:

- 2.1 To note the report.
- 2.2 To consider any actions arising for the SACRE from the Network Meetings.
- 2.3 To consider any issues that the SACRE would wish to highlight to the next meeting of the Secondary Teaching and Learning Group for RE.

#### 3. Detail

- 3.1 The notes of the last meeting of the Humanities Teaching and Learning Group for RE are attached at Appendix '1'. Any members of the SACRE who attended are invited to report back to the SACRE on any issues of note. The SACRE is asked if it wishes to highlight any particular issues to the next meeting of the Teaching and Learning Group.
- 3.2 A primary network meeting took place on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at Goddard Park School. This was attended by 12 people from different schools, and focused on the topic of 'How to be a Subject Leader'.

#### 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options for the SACRE.

#### 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications relating to this report.
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, [katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org), 0117 906 0100

## Update on Network Meetings

### Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

4 December 2012

#### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 There are no specific legal or human rights implications relating to this report.

#### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 No other implications have been identified.

#### Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The work of the SACRE seeks to support the Theme 5 of the Community Strategy, for Swindon to be a place where high aspirations are supported by superb education provision for all ages.

#### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report, as it does not relate to a specific policy or strategy change.

#### Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no risk management factors which have been identified in relation to this report.

### **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

### **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 None

### **8. Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Notes of the last meeting of the Humanities Teaching and Learning Group for RE.

**HUMANITIES**  
**Teaching and Learning Group**

**RE MEETING**

**26<sup>th</sup> September 2012 4.00pm- 5.00pm**

**Thanks to those that attended:**

Lydiard Park, Nova Hreod , The Commonweal , St Josephs, St Lukes

**Suggested outcomes of meetings**

- Sharing ideas
- A support network
- Keep up to date with current issues
- Development of RE in our schools

**Minutes**

Topic : Sharing ideas and resources

1. ***RE Updates-*** We looked at hand outs- from Religious Education Council newsletter and National updates for RE and the New Ofsted framework.
2. ***How are we going to use the meetings this year?*** We are pleased that Katy will be able to run our meetings this year to help inspire us. The next two meetings are:

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January- Assessment and progression in RE**

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April- Ethics and RE.**

3. ***Sharing ideas- we had some great ideas shared including:***  
  
-levels sheets, literacy in RE, Problem solving activities, outline sheets, assessment ideas. It was a good opportunity to share ideas. Thanks to everyone!

**AOB**

**Katy emailed us about the SACRE conference in January (see attached)**

**Lottie also sent a reminder about looking for a new SACRE member (see below)**

SACRE members meet about 4 times a year and it is a great way to stay aware of national updates in RE, as well as what goes on locally. It aims to raise the profile of RE in the town and raise teachers game in terms of the quality of RE being delivered. On SACRE teacher members represent their unions. We are looking specifically for members from NUT and ATL, but other teaching union members are also welcome to express interest. If anyone is interested please get in touch with Sarah Lawrence at [SLawrence@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:SLawrence@swindon.gov.uk)

**Things for us to do/consider:**

**We discussed the idea that we would like to compose a fiction reading list for KS4 pupils over the next year. So be thinking about books that could be relevant and we can discuss at our next meeting.**

If anyone would like a copy of the hand outs from the meeting let me know and I will pop them in the post to you.

# ANNUAL SACRE CONFERENCE FOR TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2013

Book early  
to avoid  
disappointment!

## *challenging RE :* critical thinking

- Who?** all **RE Co-ordinators** and **Heads of Religious Studies** in Bristol City and South Gloucestershire  
(Academies, Free Schools, other LA Schools and Independent Schools)
- What?** teaching ideas, workshops for targeted age-ranges, Q&As, the latest news
- When?** friday 25th january 2013, 9.00 for 9.30 am – 3.00 pm
- Where?** engineers' house, bristol, BS8 3NB  
– excellent reputation, hot lunch included
- How much?** one **FREE place per Local Authority School** (otherwise £95 per place)  
– book by 7th december, contact liz waslin ([liz.waslin@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:liz.waslin@bristoldiocese.org))

### **GUEST SPEAKER DILWYN HUNT** **BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!**

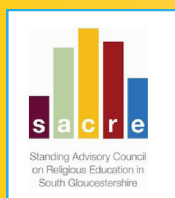
Dilwyn was, until recently, the RE Adviser in Dudley and now works as an Independent Consultant. He has published books on the theory of RE as well as RE text books introducing children to philosophy and religion. He is currently working on new materials.

Dilwyn is a member of the Executive of the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC).

friday 25 january 2013  
9.00 for 9.30 am – 3.00 pm  
hot lunch included

engineers' house  
the promenade  
clifton down  
bristol  
bs8 3nb

bookings: Liz Waslin  
[liz.waslin@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:liz.waslin@bristoldiocese.org)



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