

NASACRE Statement on RE Resources

A statement from NASACRE

Introduction

It has been brought to our attention that a number of SACREs have received mailings from commercial providers of RE resources which make the claim that their products can help schools deliver the relevant locally agreed syllabus by mapping the syllabus to their specific product for primary schools.

Other products and services relating to RE are also advertised in various schools. Some of these have been designed for use in the voluntary aided sector or within faith based education or religious groups and may not be appropriate within community school settings.

In response to concerns from member SACREs, NASACRE would offer the following advice.

The role of SACREs in advising schools on curriculum products

The Education Act 1996 paragraph 391 (2) states that a SACRE's advice should:

- include, in particular, methods of teaching, the **choice of materials** and the provision of training for teachers.

Hence, SACREs have a right to look at materials and pass comment on them with regards to their suitability for enabling maintained community and controlled schools to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. If any SACRE believes that such a product is inappropriate, or does not help and may in fact even hinder, the delivery of the locally agreed syllabus, it should advise schools that this is the case.

Naturally, a SACRE will look to its professional adviser to inform any guidance that the SACRE may send to schools. What is important though, is not only the quality of any individual product *per se* but whether the use of that product can be shown to enable schools to meet the requirements of the syllabus. Naturally, any generic curriculum product would need to be tailored to the needs of the school and the curriculum offer over all as well as meet the requirements of the syllabus.

Conclusion

NASACRE is not stating that some of these products will not meet the requirements of specific syllabuses or indeed comply with the current legislation governing RE in community schools. But it is advising that SACREs look at them in detail to ensure whether or not they do meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and comply with that current statutory legislation. SACREs may then wish to advise schools accordingly about whether or not any such product is relevant for use in their Local Authority.

In light of the work of the Expert Advisory Group (EAG) for RE, it is expected that more companies will start producing packages to sell to schools to support RE. SACREs have a statutory role in commenting on these products when published as it is the SACREs duty to ensure that maintained community and controlled schools are delivering the legal requirement set out in the locally agreed syllabus.