



To: Headteachers/Principals and Chairs of Governing Boards of all schools and academies in Swindon

Worrying data about Religious Education in Swindon

Last year's examination data for entries for public examinations in Religious Education reveal that Swindon has the lowest numbers of entries for GCSE Religious Studies nationally at only 17%.

Naturally, Swindon SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) is most concerned about this and seeks to ask questions about the opportunities offered to pupils in Swindon schools and academies at both primary and secondary level. To this end we would be very grateful if a member of your staff could answer the questions on this survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CDJND63>

Swindon SACRE would like to draw attention to the fact that every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for **all** registered pupils at the school except for those withdrawn by their parents.

SACRE also wishes to remind all headteachers, principals and members of governing bodies of the following, in relation to academies:

"In accordance with their funding agreement, where an Academy has not been designated with a religious character the Academy must ensure that the religious education is given to all pupils with a curriculum that reflects that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main Christian, while taking into account the teaching and practices of the other religions present in Great Britain." (Please see the attached leaflet).

In Swindon, we hope that all schools and academies will seek to be part of the community of shared practice, and so improve the quality of Religious Education for all schools in the area. To support this, SACRE arranges and supports RE Network meetings to share good practice and improve standards of teaching and learning in the subject.

In relation to Key Stage 4, it is recommended by NATRE (National Association of Teachers of RE) that a period of 120-140 learning hours is to be allocated for the appropriate time needed to follow a GCSE course and, thereby, be equipped to live well with religious difference in modern Britain.

New Religious Education Agreed Syllabus for Swindon

There is a legal requirement that every SACRE must review its Agreed Syllabus every 5 years. Swindon SACRE has decided that it is time for a New Agreed Syllabus for RE. We have agreed to adopt a new Agreed Syllabus written by RE Today services (nationally acclaimed providers of Religious Education materials and guidance).

It is expected that schools will be teaching this from September 2017 with 2016-17 being a trial embedding year.

SACRE is providing all schools and academies with an Agreed Syllabus (gratis) and the opportunity to buy complete detailed schemes of work to support the syllabus written by RE Today services at £180 for Primary schools and £80 for Secondary Schools/Academies.

KEEP THE DATE - the launch event, providing focused CPD relating to the Agreed Syllabus will be held on November 8th 2016 at Tadpole Farm CE Primary Academy. Please follow the link below for further details and to register.

<http://www.bristol.anglican.org/event/launch-of-swindon-re-agreed-syllabus-conference/>

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Lane Cawte
Chair of Swindon SACRE