

Swindon Borough Council

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Tuesday, 13 December 2005

Function Room, Civic Offices, Swindon
(Anticipated meeting room)

At 6.00 p.m.

Councillors (Group A)	Church of England (Group B)	Teacher Organisations (Group C)	Other Faiths (Group D)	Co-opted Representatives
Raymond Fisher	Mrs Catherine Coster	Mr Andrew Fleet	Reverend David Howell, Swindon Evangelical Alliance	Dr Marilyn Tew
Dale Heenan	Mrs Ann Ormston	Ms Norma McKemey		
Steve Wakefield	Mrs Penny Summers	Mrs Jan Criddle	Mr Jaswant Singh Grewal, Sikh Community	
Roderick Bluh (Deputy) (Conservative)	The Venerable Alan Hawker	Mrs Tracy Mason	Reverend Paul Knight, Baptist	
Maurice Fanning	Mr. Paul Noble	Mr David Easter	Mr M S Khan, Muslim Community	
Fay Howard (Labour)		Ms. Sarah Lashmar	Mr Dinesh Patel, Hindu Community	
		Mrs Emma McCarthy	Father Liam Slattery, Catholic Diocese	
		Mr Jonathan Young	Mrs Wendy Tucker, Methodist Church	
			Mrs Helen Hancox, United Reformed Church (subject to confirmation)	

Committee Officer: Sarah Lawrence (Telephone 01793 463603)

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AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2005.

5. SACRE Membership Update (DLDS-R) (Pages 5 - 6)

6. SACRE Self-Assessment and Development Plan (SACRE Advisor)
(Pages 7 - 28)

7. Self-Evaluation Toolkit for RE (SACRE Advisor) (Pages 29 - 30)

8. NASACRE Conference (SACRE Advisor) (Pages 31 - 32)

9. Agreed Syllabus Implementation Update (SACRE Advisor) (Pages 33 - 34)

10. Annual Report of the SACRE (SACRE Advisor) (Pages 35 - 46)

11. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SACRE is scheduled for 7 March 2006 at 6 pm.

Date of Despatch: 05 December 2005

Key: Officers:

GDC – Group Director: Children

GDR – Group Director: Resources

DLDS-R – 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, 13 SEPTEMBER 2005

PRESENT:-

Group A: Councillors	Councillors Fay Howard and Dale Heenan
Group B: Church of England	Mrs Catherine Coster, Mrs Penny Summers and The Venerable Alan Hawker (Chair)
Group C: Teacher Organisations	Mr Andrew Fleet, Ms Norma McKemey, Mrs Tracy Mason and Mr Jonathan Young
Group D: Other Faiths	Mr Jaswant Singh Grewal (Sikh Community) and Reverend Paul Knight (Baptist)
Co-opted Members:	Dr Marilyn Tew

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: - Mrs Helen Hancox

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Ann Ormston, Mr. Paul Noble, Mrs Emma McCarthy, Mrs Helen Thomas and Mrs Wendy Tucker.

9. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year 2005/06

Resolved – (1) That The Venerable Alan Hawker be Chair of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the Municipal Year, 2005/06.

(2) That Mr. Andrew Fleet be Vice-Chair of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the Municipal Year, 2005/06.

(The Venerable Alan Hawker took the Chair.)

10. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

11. 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.

12. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 8th March and 21st June 2005, be confirmed and signed.

13. The Work and Worship of the Gurdwara

Dr. Popli welcomed the SACRE to the Gurdwara and outlined a brief history of the Sikh religion, including an explanation of the role of the 9 Guru's and the incorporation of their teachings into the Sikh Holy Book which is treated as a living Guru. He outlined the main teachings by which Sikh's live their lives and gave a brief presentation on the history of Sikhism and on the main events that have helped to shape the religion.

He also briefly outlined the role of religion and that men and women were treated as equals. Whilst there is no special time for religious observance the community tended to meet on Sundays and on Religious festivals.

Mr. Jaswant Singh Grewal gave a brief presentation on the Gurdwara and how the community were involved in fund raising to build it. He also explained that the building itself acted not only as a temple, but also a practical building for the community, which included a kitchen and dining hall for community meals.

Dr. Popli and Mr Grewal then answered questions from Members of the SACRE arising from their presentations.

The Members of the SACRE were given a tour of the building including the temple and were shown how a service was undertaken.

The Chair on behalf of the SACRE thanked Dr. Popli and Mr. Grewal for their presentations and for the tour of the Gurdwara.

14. Ofsted Reports

The SACRE received a report dated 31st August 2005, setting out the latest Ofsted Reports in respect of Westlea Primary School and Eastrop Infants School.

It also received a report on the latest inspection regime and heard that in the future there would not be separate subject reports, and that the reports would not be in the public domain.

Resolved – (1) That the Ofsted Reports in respect of Westlea Primary School and Eastrop Infants school be noted.

(2) That the SACRE Advisor be requested to write to the schools on behalf of the SACRE to offer support and congratulations.

(3) That the changes in future OFSTED reports be noted and that a briefing note setting out options for future tools for evaluation of religious education and teaching be submitted to a future meeting of the SACRE.

15. SACRE Self-Evaluation and Development Plan

The SACRE received a report of the Director of Law and Corporate Governance dated 1st September 2005, setting out the QCA SACRE self-evaluation tool and its use as a tool to assess the performance of the SACRE and in determining a SACRE development plan.

Resolved – That this item be deferred to the next meeting of the SACRE.

16. Nomination to Children's Overview Committee

The Director of Law and Corporate Governance submitted a report dated 1st September 2005, concerning the appointment of a representative of SACRE serving on the Children's Overview Committee.

Resolved - That Mrs Penny Summers be nominated to serve as a representative of this SACRE on the Children's Overview Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year, 2005/06.

17. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SACRE would take at 6.pm on 13th December 2005.

18. Vote of Thanks

That this SACRE's appreciation and thanks for the use of the Guadwara and the hospitality given to its members be recorded.

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To: Members of the Standing
Advisory Council on Religious
Education

Date: 13th December 2005

By: Director of Law and
Democratic Services

Parish/Ward: ALL

SACRE Membership Update

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To ask the SACRE to confirm the appointment of a new member to a vacancy on the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), and to review its current membership vacancies.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the SACRE thank Mrs Helen Thomas for her work on the SACRE over many years;
- 2.2 That Mrs Helen Hancox be appointed to the SACRE as a member of Group D (Other Faiths) representing the United Reformed Church (URC), to serve the remainder of the term of office of the URC representative up until September 2007, unless reappointed at that point for a further term by Full Council; and
- 2.3 That the SACRE considers whether it is appropriate to seek replacement Members for two SACRE Members who have been unable to attend the SACRE on more than three consecutive occasions without apologies.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

4 Risk Implications - Social, Environmental, Staffing and Legal/Human Rights and all other risks

- 4.1 *Social, Environmental, Staffing, Legal, Human Rights or Other Risk Implications* – There are no direct implications of this report.
- 4.2 *Links to Corporate Plan* – The work of the Standing Advisory Council contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan objective of becoming 'A Learning and Creative Place', in particular its aim of achieving excellence through partnership.

5 Detail

- 5.1 Since the last meeting of the SACRE, Mrs Helen Thomas has stepped down as the United Reform Church representative on Group 'D' (Other Faiths) of the SACRE, having served the SACRE for a number of years. The United Reformed Church South West Synod (North East Wilts District) has formally nominated Mrs Helen Hancox to be appointed in her place. It is recommended that the SACRE appoint Mrs Helen Hancox to the SACRE at this meeting.
- 5.2 The paragraph 3.2.6 of the SACRE constitution states that '*Any individual representative member shall cease to hold membership if failing to attend three consecutive meeting of the SACRE, or representative group, but may be reappointed*'.
- 5.3 Three members of the Teachers Group have not attended for more than three meetings, although one has sent apologies and been unable to attend for specific reasons. The SACRE is asked to consider whether alternative representatives should be sought for two of the places. The SACRE Advisor and Committee Officer are seeking to contact the SACRE Members concerned as to whether they wish to continue to be members of the SACRE, and will report verbally to the meeting.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 None

7 Date

- 7.1 30th November 2005.

THE FOLLOWING UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN RELIED ON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT: None.

The Lead Cabinet Member for the subject matter of this report is Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

The Director of Law and Democratic Services, Director of Finance and Director of Quality and Standards have been consulted on this report.

Further information regarding this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on Direct Dial No. 463603 or Email: slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

To: Members of the Standing
Advisory Council on Religious
Education

Date: 13th December 2005

By: Director of Law and
Democratic Services

Parish/Ward: All

SACRE Self-Evaluation and Development Plan

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To receive the QCA SACRE self-evaluation tool and use it to assess the performance of the SACRE and determine a SACRE development plan.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) use the self-evaluation documentation to assess the effectiveness of the SACRE; and
- 2.2 That the SACRE agree a Development Plan for the academic year 2005-06.

3 Financial and Procurement Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications relating to this report. The SACRE is allocated an annual budget of £5,000 to support its work.

4 Social, Environmental, Staffing, Legal/Human Rights, Risk and Other Implications

- 4.5 There are no specific social, environmental, staffing, legal or human rights, risk or other implications arising from this report.

5 Detail

- 5.1 The QCA Self-Evaluation Document, attached at Appendix 1', began to be discussed at the SACRE meeting in June, and the SACRE made an initial assessment of the SACRE's performance in respect of its effectiveness of its monitoring in relation to the first criteria: 'Standards and Quality of Provision of RE', and graded itself in the way that it carried out its roles, and gave reasons for those judgements. A copy of the relevant minute from that meeting is attached at Appendix '2'.

- 5.2 A report on this issue was deferred from the last meeting of the SACRE in September 2005.
- 5.3 The SACRE is asked at this meeting to make an assessment of its own performance in respect of the remaining three areas -
- Management of SACRE and partnership with the LEA and other stakeholders
 - The Effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus
 - Contribution of SACRE to the local and racial harmony agenda.
- 5.4 It is suggested that the SACRE Members consider and discuss these issues and agree what is distinctive about the Swindon SACRE, its key strengths and areas for development. As a result of this discussion, the SACRE is asked to agree a development plan for the academic year 2005/06.
- 5.5 The SACRE has a budget of £5,000 for 2005/2006. The SACRE Advisor will report verbally to the meeting on the level of expenditure to date. The SACRE is asked to consider how the remainder of the budget should be used to support the development plan.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1 - QCA SACRE Self-Evaluation Tool.
- 6.2 Appendix 2 – SACRE Minute 6, 21 June 2005.

7 Date

- 7.1 30 November 2005

The Lead Cabinet Member for the service area subject to this report is Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

The Director of Finance, Director of Law and Democratic Services, and Director of Quality and Standards have been consulted on this report.

Further information regarding this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on Direct Dial No. 463603 or Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk

SACREs and SELF-EVALUATION: A GUIDE

Introduction

SACREs have an important role in the development of effective learning in religious education and supporting good practice in collective worship. The work of a SACRE has become increasingly challenging and diverse. In many ways a SACRE reflects the work of governing bodies in schools i.e. they act as a critical friend to the LEA on matters of religious education and collective worship. They also mirror the work of governing bodies in that members are unpaid volunteers who give up their time to support RE and collective worship locally.

A key question for a SACRE to consider is that if they were abolished tomorrow, who would miss them? This guide to SACREs and self-evaluation is designed to help individual SACREs evaluate their role and in particular to consider their impact on pupil's learning. The guidance highlights five key dimensions of a SACREs work and provides exemplification of good practice. It encourages all SACREs to consider their distinctive, key strengths and areas for developing. Using the self-evaluation guidance should enable a SACRE to have a clear picture of its strengths and areas which could be further developed. It encourages SACREs to consider their key priorities, their organisational patterns and structures and their partnership with the LEA and other key stake-holders.

This self-evaluation tool has been developed from three main sources:

- The recent Ofsted report on the inspection of SACREs
- QCA's annual analysis of SACRE reports
- The National Association of SACRE's (NASACRE) work in exemplifying effective practice in SACRE's

Rationale

The purpose of the self-evaluation tool is to help SACREs and LEAs assess the quality and effectiveness of their work and to identify where they might develop further.

The tool focuses on a range of aspects of the work of SACRE including:

1. The monitoring and improvement of the standards, quality and provision for RE
2. The partnership between SACRE, the LEA and other key stakeholders
3. The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus
4. The monitoring and improvement of the provision and quality of collective worship

5. The contribution of SACRE to the promotion of social and racial harmony

Each SACRE should be able to identify where it is in relation to three broad stages of development: **Developing, Established and Advanced**. Wherever possible some exemplars of good practice are included.

Stage 1 Developing

SACREs at this stage of development, while they may be fulfilling their statutory obligations, do so at a fairly basic level and are not able to be proactive in providing advice to the LEA or in taking the initiative in promoting developments. They are often unclear about their roles and responsibilities and are not particularly well informed about the strengths, weaknesses or priorities for development in schools. They often have a formal relationship with the LEA but have little input to or awareness of the LEAs priorities. The issues facing SACREs at this stage may be:

- Finding it difficult to meet their statutory responsibilities
- Low levels of attendance at SACRE meetings
- Limited awareness of the quality of provision for RE and collective worship in schools
- Limited subject specialist or financial support from the LEA
- Little information about the impact or effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus
- Limited representation from religious diversity in the local community
- No development plan to focus the future work of SACRE

The objectives for SACREs at this stage of development is to focus on ways of becoming more proactive in their work and moving beyond the basic fulfilment of their statutory obligations. Key targets might include:

- Reviewing and extending the membership of SACRE
- Making SACRE meetings more purposeful
- Identifying sources of specialist advice to support SACRE's work
- Producing an action plan to focus ways of developing the work of SACRE
- Creating stronger links with RE teachers in local schools.

Stage 2 Established

SACREs at this stage will have a well-established relationship with their LEA and have a clear idea about their priorities for development. Resourcing levels enable it to carry out its functions effectively. They will be reasonably well-informed about the quality of provision in local

schools and, as a result, are in a position to challenge and support the work of the LEA. Meetings will be seen as purposeful and worthwhile occasions.

The issues facing SACREs at this stage may be:

- Limited opportunities to take the initiative in promoting new ideas
- Gaining better information about the quality of provision in schools
- The need to extend the links with wider LEA priorities and activities
- Ways of extending their analysis of the impact and effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus

At this stage maintaining momentum maybe an imperative and key targets might include:

- Exploring ways of measuring the impact of their work more effectively
- Extending the ways in which SACRE can contribute to the LEAs priorities
- Investigating opportunities to be more proactive in promoting and initiating activities to improve quality and provision
- Exploring ways in which SACRE can extend its contribution to the promotion of social and racial harmony

Stage 3 Advanced

SACREs at this stage will have very effective practice. Members will have a shared vision and understanding of their aims and purpose and will be proactive in seeking to sustain their positive work in the light of changing needs and priorities. Meetings will be very purposeful and focussed on the major priorities for improvement in schools. There will be a very effective partnership with the LEA and SACREs will be well supported in terms of subject specialist advice, training and funding. They will be very well informed about the quality and provision for RE and collective worship in schools and about wider LEA and national priorities and developments. The process of reviewing, revising, implementing and evaluating the locally agreed syllabus will be very robust ensuring that schools are well supported in their work. Objectives at this stage will be concerned with innovation and sharing good practice to sustain the momentum and success. Key targets might include:

- Extending the range of initiatives taken to improve standards and quality in schools
- Ensuring pupil progress can lead to recognition of achievement through, for example, GCSE accreditation
- Exploring ways of sharing good practice more widely with other SACREs and schools
- Improving the ways in which evidence is gathered about standards and the quality of provision in schools particularly in the light of changes in the nature of Ofsted inspections

- Developing the ways in which SACRE can contribute to the promotion of social and racial harmony

The responsibilities of a SACRE

The legal responsibilities of the LEA are to:

- Ensure that there is a SACRE
- Ensure all four committees are represented on SACRE
- Ensure there is an Agreed Syllabus which is reviewed at least once every five years
- Ensure that support is in place for SACRE to enable it to discharge its responsibilities
- Take note and respond to any advice it receives from SACRE
- Reference to SACREs from the LEA may include advice methods of teaching, the choice of teaching material and the provision of teacher training.

The SACRE must:

- Publish an annual report of its work and send this to QCA
- Consider requests for determinations on collective worship when required
- "Advise the LEA upon such matters as collective worship and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus".

The SACRE is also likely to

- Monitor the provision for both RE and Collective Worship
- Provide support and advice on RE and Collective Worship to schools

1. Standards and Quality of Provision of RE

How effectively does SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, monitor and evaluate standards and the quality of provision for RE in schools?

How effective are the strategies to improve Standards and the quality of provision?

Key Area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Exemplar
1a Compliance and time allocation for RE	Little knowledge of levels of compliance with the legal requirements for RE in schools. Little information about the time schools are allocating to RE	Informed about levels of compliance and time allocations but limited opportunities to establish strategies for action where evidence of non-compliance or inadequate time allocation is reported.	Well-informed about levels of compliance and time allocations and factors impacting on these. Clear understanding of effective ways schools can provide adequate time for RE. Established strategies to take action to support schools which are non-compliant and receive feedback on the impact of interventions.	Where an Ofsted report highlights non-compliance or inadequate curriculum time for RE, a SACRE requires the LEA to investigate and report back on the action being taken by the school to address the situation.
1b Standards and achievement: including AS/A2 level, GCSE and standards at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.	Limited knowledge about standards within schools and no clear SACRE/LEA strategies to address areas of concern or share good practice.	Informed about standards of RE in schools locally and by comparison with national figures but limited analysis of the data and little opportunity to develop strategies to address weaknesses. Largely dependent on information from Ofsted reports on schools.	Detailed information about standards with careful analysis of data against national figures and trends. Information about standards extends to primary and key stage 3. Clear strategies in place to address areas of weakness. Developing independent mechanisms to gather data about performance independent of Ofsted reports.	A SACRE receives detailed analysis of examination performance and requires the LEA to explain how it would intervene in schools where there was clear evidence of under-performance. A SACRE requests schools to provide details of pupils' levels of performance at the end of each key stage.
1c Quality of	Limited knowledge about the quality of teaching and	Information provided about findings in relation to quality of	Clear and detailed information about the quality of teaching and	A SACRE receives regular presentations from teachers about

teaching and leadership and management	leadership and management of RE in schools.	teaching and leadership and management derived from Ofsted reports but limited analysis of strengths and weaknesses and little opportunity to develop strategies to address weaknesses.	leadership and management with some analysis of trends and strengths and weaknesses. Good strategies to share good practice and target improvement strategies on areas of weakness.	good practice in teaching and learning in RE. A SACRE advises the LEA to provide guidance to schools about effective leadership and management of RE in primary and secondary schools.
1d Recruitment and retention issues. Level of specialist provision	Little knowledge of data and issues related to the recruitment or retention of specialist RE teachers in schools.	Some investigation and analysis of subject recruitment and retention issues. SACRE is aware of the level of non-specialist teaching of RE but has limited opportunity to take action to address concerns.	Detailed knowledge of patterns of recruitment, retention and specialist provision. SACRE is active in promoting strategies to improve recruitment and provide training to address the needs of non-specialist teachers of RE.	A SACRE recommends to the LEA that a comprehensive analysis is undertaken of the provision of specialist staffing for RE across the LEA. They then build links with local teacher training providers to explore ways of improving recruitment of specialist staff.
1e Resources	Little knowledge about issues related to the quality of resources for RE in schools	Some information about issues related to resources for RE in schools but limited opportunity to address areas of concern.	Detailed knowledge of issues related to resources for RE in schools. SACRE is active in promoting the development of resources and setting benchmarks about appropriate levels of funding for the subject in schools.	A SACRE works in partnership with the LEA to develop a subject website which incorporated guidance about current high quality resource materials

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

How far does SACRE's partnership with the LEA enable it to carry out its responsibilities effectively?

Key Area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Exemplar
2a SACRE Meetings	Meetings are held regularly. Routine administrative arrangements are in place. Agendas and papers distributed appropriately. Attendance is satisfactory. Business is dealt with in a prompt and orderly way. There are limited opportunities for teachers and representatives of faith communities to be invited to share their work. Business tends to be focused solely on routine statutory requirements and tends to be dominated by the LEA officers.	Attendance is good and all four committees are well represented. Agendas and papers are distributed well in advance ensuring all members have time to consider them carefully. Meetings are well managed with strong contributions from a wide range of members. Meetings move beyond routine matters to consider wider issues about the quality of RE and collective worship.	SACRE members contribute to development of the agenda. Meetings are lively and purposeful with wide variety of contributions. Teachers and representatives of faith communities regularly attend and participate fully in meetings sharing their experience and insights. Meetings are held in a variety of venues including local places of worship and schools.	A SACRE frequently holds meetings in local places of worship providing opportunities for members to develop their understanding of the religious communities in the local area.
2b Membership and training	The membership fulfils the basic statutory obligations. The arrangements to fill vacancies are not always effective. There are limited induction and training opportunities for SACRE members.	The membership strongly reflects the diversity of the wider religious and professional community. There are some opportunities for SACRE members participate in training activities.	Very good use is made of co-option to ensure SACRE membership which is well informed and is highly representative of the diversity of the local community. There is a strong and co-ordinated programme of induction and training opportunities for SACRE members.	A SACRE has a well-developed process of co-option of local teachers of RE to ensure it has a broad representation from all types of school in the LEA.
2c Improvement/	SACRE does not have an action plan to focus its future work and	SACRE has a basic action plan which is reviewed	SACRE has a well-defined action plan with clear objectives	A SACRE is provided with a summary of the current LEA

Development planning	there is little overt link between the priorities of the LEA's development/improvement plan and the work of SACRE	regularly and up-dated on an annual basis. This provides an effective focus for SACRE's work. There is some attempt to link the plan to the wider LEA priorities	and success criteria. Resource implications are clearly defined. There is a clear link between the plan and the wider objectives of the LEA. SACRE is regularly represented at national events relevant to its work (e.g. NASACRE)	priorities and identifies ways its our action plan can incorporate relevant objectives related to these priorities
2d Professional and financial support	Representatives of the LEA attend meetings but there is limited subject specialist advice available. Basic SACRE functions are resourced but there is no specific budget for SACRE and little opportunity for SACRE to take initiatives requiring funding.	SACRE has some access to subject specialist advice. The LEA is represented at meetings and can provide a means of communication with the wider LEA. SACRE has a modest budget which enables it to fund some initiatives.	SACRE is well supported by a subject specialist who provides effective advice and is well informed about the provision and quality of RE in the LEA and about national developments. SACRE is also attended by a led officer from the LEA who can provide a strong link between the work of SACRE's work and the wider LEA. SACRE has access to funds to enable it to make decisions about its priorities and ensure these can be properly resourced.	A SACRE in an LEA with no subject specialist adviser co-opts a local AST with expertise in RE and secures release time for her to undertake development work for SACRE and schools
2e Information And Advice	SACRE receives routine information relevant to its statutory duties such as GCSE data and information from Ofsted reports on RE. There is limited information provided about wider national and local developments. SACRE tends to receive information in a reactive way rather than taking a	SACRE is regularly provided with clear information relevant to the quality and provision for RE and collective worship in local schools. SACRE receives the information in a way that enables it to challenge and question the LEA's work.	SACRE receives detailed and well-analysed information about the quality and provision for RE and collective worship. As a result SACRE uses this information effectively to give advice to the LEA which leads to strategic action to improve standards and quality in schools. SACRE has a strong partnership	A SACRE, as a result of receiving detailed evidence about pupil performance, identifies significant under-achievement by boys. It advises the LEA to undertake an exercise to identify good practice and provide guidance to schools about effective strategies for raising boys' achievement.

	proactive role in asking questions and challenging the LEA's work.		with the LEA and plays an active role in promoting ideas and initiatives.	
2f Partnership with other key stakeholders (e.g. pupils, parent, ASTs, specialist schools, ITT providers, local religious organisations and groups, Commission for Racial Equality	SACRE has little contact or awareness of other local agencies and rarely has contact with pupils or parents.	SACRE is well informed about other key stakeholders supporting RE and has some contact with the groups involved.	SACRE has opportunities to hear the views and experience of pupils and parents about RE. Representatives of key support networks such as ASTs and HEI providers are regularly involved with SACRE. SACRE's activities build on the local networks effectively.	A SACRE invites RE trainees on the PGCE course at the local university to attend one meeting a year to provide an opportunity for the trainees to develop their understanding of the role of SACRE and provide a forum to discuss issues of mutual interest.

3. The Effectiveness of the local Agreed Syllabus

How effectively does SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, monitor the impact of the Agreed Syllabus in raising standards, utilize national guidance (e.g. the non-statutory national framework) and evaluate the effectiveness of the previous Agreed Syllabus?

Further information on the quality of an Agreed Syllabus can be found at Appendix One.

Key Area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Exemplar
3a Review of the Agreed Syllabus	<p>Little opportunity to review the effectiveness of the previous Agreed Syllabus. Teachers' views are not known and there has been no external evaluation of strengths/weaknesses of the existing. There is little budget for Agreed Syllabus development and no clear action plan to structure the review process.</p>	<p>The SACRE has a good idea of the strengths/weaknesses of the previous Agreed Syllabus. Teachers' views and some external evaluation are carefully taken into consideration and there is a clear action plan and sufficient budget for the Agreed Syllabus review.</p>	<p>The SACRE has a clear and systematic process for reviewing the Agreed Syllabus including full consultation with schools and other key stakeholders, particularly faith communities. The budget is clearly costed, including consultation meetings, external evaluation and printing/distribution costs. There is strong sense of ownership of the Agreed Syllabus review with clear targets for what needs to be achieved.</p>	<p>A SACRE reviews all available evaluation data about the effectiveness of the existing Agreed Syllabus. It consults local teachers through meetings and a questionnaire to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Agreed Syllabus. It invites participation of an external consultant to provide a more objective view of the quality of the existing Syllabus.</p>
3b Using National Framework for Religious Education	<p>The SACRE has a limited view of the role and significance of the National Framework in relation to the Agreed Syllabus review process and does not use the Framework in a coherent way</p>	<p>The SACRE is aware of the National Framework and uses it in their Agreed Syllabus review but does not extend the framework to reflect local circumstances.</p>	<p>The SACRE fully utilizes the National Framework in the construction of the revised Agreed Syllabus understanding fully the importance of retaining the coherence and integrity of the Framework. It uses and extends the Framework in a coherent way to reflect local circumstances.</p>	<p>A SACRE undertakes a careful cost-benefit analysis of the value of using the National Framework for Religious Education as a basis for its revision of the existing Agreed Syllabus. As a result it establishes a clear view of the way its revision of the Agreed Syllabus will build on the National Framework.</p>

	Syllabus, particularly in raising standards.		process provides a strong professional development opportunity. There are clear arrangements in place to monitor the impact of the new Agreed Syllabus and to measure its effectiveness in raising standards.	next five year revision.
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<p>3c Developing the revised Agreed Syllabus. See Appendix 1 for the characteristics of an effective Agreed Syllabus.</p>	<p>The SACRE has no clear structure for process of developing a revised Agreed Syllabus. It does not undertake a thorough revision tending to add material rather haphazardly to the existing syllabus leading to lack of coherence in the final outcome. There is little or no consultation during the development of a new Agreed Syllabus.</p>	<p>The SACRE has clear objectives for the revision and involves a wide range of local expertise in its construction. SACRE ensures that strong direction is provided to design an Agreed Syllabus which is coherent, clear and accessible. The SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, hold consultation meetings which are reasonably supported.</p>	<p>The SACRE ensures that high quality advice is sought to review and advise on the revisions as they develop. The SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, holds very well attended consultation meetings and briefings to ensure teachers are fully involved in, and have a sense of ownership of, the revision process.</p>	<p>A SACRE produces a regular newsletter circulated to all schools outlining the progress with the revision of the Agreed Syllabus.</p>
<p>3d Consultation/Launch of the Agreed Syllabus</p>	<p>No special launch is planned and schools are not aware of the significance of the revisions for their teaching and learning in RE. There is little training provision for implementing the revised syllabus.</p>	<p>A launch event is organised and other forms of communication e.g. LEA/SACRE website are utilized to promote the launch. There are clear arrangements for training teachers on implementing the syllabus; this training is well supported and managed.</p>	<p>A high profile launch, involving the wider community and strong media coverage gives the Agreed Syllabus a high profile as an important development in the work of the LEA/SACRE. Effective training on implementing the Agreed Syllabus, which is supported by all schools, leads to teachers being clear about standards and expectations in the Agreed Syllabus and the implications for teaching and learning.</p>	<p>A SACRE provides clear guidance about ways in which schools might begin the process of reviewing their own provision for RE in the light of the revised syllabus.</p> <p>The launch event includes high quality presentations from a range of local religious communities and schools.</p>
<p>3e Additional guidance/monitoring and evaluating the Agreed Syllabus</p>	<p>The LEA/SACRE is limited by financial and professional constraints and not able to provide any significant additional guidance on using the Agreed Syllabus. It has limited arrangements in place to monitor the impact of the Agreed</p>	<p>The LEA/SACRE, through its costed development plan, has arrangements in place to develop additional guidance. The SACRE is able to monitor the impact of the Agreed Syllabus, particularly in raising standards.</p>	<p>The LEA/SACRE has fully costed precise plans for further guidance and support and has consulted extensively with schools on what these should be. Teachers are actively involved in the development of support materials ensuring the</p>	<p>A SACRE builds a process of monitoring the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus into its Development Plan. It identifies a series of specific and phased activities which will be undertaken to provide evidence of the impact of the syllabus leading through to the</p>

4. Collective Worship

How effectively does the SACRE fulfil its responsibilities for the provision and practice of collective worship?

Key Area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Exemplar
4a Practice and provision for collective worship	The SACRE/LEA has not provided guidance to schools on collective worship and arrangements for determinations are not in place. Issues regarding collective worship have not featured as part of the SACRE Agenda and national developments are not known. There is no training provision for collective worship.	The SACRE/LEA has not provided guidance to schools on collective worship, focussing on good practice. SACRE meetings regularly focus on provision and practice in collective worship and schools consider they are well supported by their SACRE on matters related to collective worship. The SACRE is aware of national developments in collective worship. Training is provided for schools and is reasonably supported.	The SACRE/LEA provides high quality advice and support on collective worship, sharing best practice, which leads to improvements in the quality of children's learning experiences. The SACRE regularly focuses on collective worship in its meetings and updates schools on new resources. The SACRE is actively involved in national developments in collective worship. High quality, well-supported training enhances provision.	A SACRE regularly, through its website, provides exemplar acts of worship for schools to use. These are frequently updated. SACRE members visit schools to observe and/or lead collective worship and share their findings. Feedback from schools indicates high-level usage of the exemplar acts of worship.
4b Monitoring the provision of collective worship and addressing issues of non-compliance	The SACRE/LEA does not monitor provision of collective worship. Members are unaware of the issues facing schools and do not provide advice on how issues of non-compliance can be addressed.	The SACRE/LEA monitors provision of collective worship and is aware of non-compliance issues and the demands collective worship places on schools. As a result of monitoring, further advice is provided to schools but SACRE members have limited 'hands-on' experience of collective worship in schools.	The SACRE/LEA closely monitors provision for collective worship and provides guidance and support for schools, particularly on non-compliance. SACRE members have direct experience of collective worship in schools through first hand observation. They discuss key issues with staff and pupils and provide further advice in the light of their findings.	A SACRE, in partnership with the LEA and the local secondary heads association, arranged for all its members to visit local secondary schools to observe acts of worship and discuss issues with staff and pupils. Following the visits a report was published, highlighting best practice and ways in which non-compliance might be addressed.

SACRE Self-Evaluation

What is distinctive about your SACRE?

Page 22

Key Strengths

Key Areas for Development

5. Contribution of SACRE to the social and racial harmony agenda

How effectively does SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, contribute to the wider social and racial harmony agenda?

Key Area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Exemplar
5a Representative nature of SACRE	SACRE membership meets statutory requirements but is not necessarily strongly representative of the religious diversity of the local community.	SACRE and the LEA ensure representation broadly reflects the religious diversity of the local community.	SACRE has strong representation from all major local religious communities including different groups within the same religious tradition (e.g. different Muslim communities)	A SACRE in an LEA with few non-Christian communities is proactive in seeking out members who are representative of a wide diversity of other religious traditions.
5b Knowledge and understanding of the local religious, cultural and ethnic community	SACRE has limited knowledge about the religious, cultural and ethnic diversity in the local area.	SACRE is well aware of different groups representing the diversity within the local area.	SACRE is very aware of the nature of the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity in the local area and takes active steps to inform itself about the distinctive needs and opportunities created by this diversity.	A SACRE is provided with a detailed analysis of the religious and cultural diversity within the LEA and issues related to the relative educational performance of pupils from different ethnic groups.
5c Understanding the intrinsic contribution which RE can make to social and racial harmony	SACRE has a basic grasp of the contribution which RE can make to the social and racial harmony agenda but has limited opportunity to promote this further.	SACRE has a clear commitment to the part RE can play in promoting the social and racial harmony agenda and seeks to promote this throughout its work.	SACRE plays a key role in promoting activities to extend the contribution of RE to the development of social and racial harmony. It ensures this embedded explicitly in the Agreed Syllabus and related guidance.	A SACRE produces guidance for schools to support the contribution RE can make to social and racial harmony and the wider inclusion agenda.
5d Links to local authority initiatives promoting social and racial harmony	SACRE has limited information about, or contact with, wider local authority initiatives linked to the promotion of social and racial harmony.	SACRE is aware of the wider local authority initiatives promoting social and racial harmony and has opportunity to discuss and contribute to this work.	SACRE plays a key role in the work of the local authority in this area and takes the initiative in promoting activities and links, which relate to this work.	A SACRE in a predominantly mono-cultural area takes the initiative in the local authority in developing links with a small new Muslim community.

Appendix One

The characteristics of an Agreed Syllabus

An effective local Agreed Syllabus is likely to promote quality religious education if it has the following characteristics:

- Provides a clear structure which users find easy to follow and highlights the role of RE in the curriculum
- Meets statutory requirements but also reflects breadth and balance in religious education, particularly in taking into account local characteristics and circumstances
- Has clear statements about expected standards
- Provides appropriate levels of challenge for pupils of differing ages and abilities, which are progressive and demanding but realistic
- Reflects national developments particularly the use of the non-statutory national framework
- Gives clarity over assessment requirements
- Builds carefully on prior Agreed Syllabus provision
- Ensures that learning in RE has both continuity and progression

Key Area number	Key Area	Developing	Established	Advanced
1a	Compliance/Time allocation			
1b	Standards and Achievement			
1c	Teaching/Leadership			
1d	Recruitment and retention			
1e	Resources			
2a	SACRE meetings			
2b	Membership and training			
2c	Improvement planning			
2d	Professional/financial support			
2e	Information and Advice			
2f	Partnerships			
3a	Review of the Agreed Syllabus			
3b	Using the National Framework			
3c	Developing an Agreed Syllabus			
3d	Implementing the AS			
3e	Guidance and Monitoring			
4a	Provision for collective worship			
4b	Monitoring collective worship			
5a	Representative SACRE			
5b	The local community			
5c	Promoting harmony through RE			
5d	Links to other local initiatives			

Developing SACREs – Points for Action

In order to develop the role of SACREs further, SACREs might consider the following action points:

- Find out more about other SACREs in the local area to share ideas, resources and expertise.
- Develop the partnership, where appropriate, with local HEI providers.
- Encourage SACRE members to access national websites (e.g. DfES, Ofsted, QCA) and RE organisations (NASACRE, REC, AREIA, PCFRE) to keep informed of developments in RE and Collective Worship.
- Develop relationships with key personnel in the LEA who have responsibility for racial/social harmony issues.
- Utilize the LEA Education Development plan and review where SACRE might be able to make a contribution to meeting objectives.
- Use the self-evaluation guidance as a basis for drawing up development priorities for the work of a SACRE.

MINUTE EXTRACT

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TUESDAY, 21 JUNE 2005

6. How Effective is the SACRE? - An Evaluation

Catherine Coster (SACRE Advisor) introduced the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) Self-Evaluation Toolkit and outlined the context in which SACRE's were being asked to consider their roles and their effectiveness against a set of performance criteria, including the legal responsibilities of the SACRE.

The SACRE Members discussed the Swindon SACRE's effectiveness of its monitoring in relation to the first criteria: 'Standards and Quality of Provision of RE', and graded itself Developing, Established, Advanced or Exemplar as follows in the way that it carried out its roles, and gave reasons for the judgements: -

- (1a) 'Compliance and Time Allocation' - Developing / Established
The SACRE had been informed about the quality of teaching via visits to local schools and presentations from teachers but had not received detailed information about the time allocation given to RE teaching in schools.
- (1b) 'Standards and Achievement' - Established
The SACRE had received Ofsted reports and information about examination results, but had not compared results to national trends or developed other ways outside Ofsted of gathering data about schools.
- (1c) 'Quality of Teaching, Leadership and Management' – Established
The SACRE has monitored teaching standards through Ofsted reports and has supported forums for sharing good practice between teachers, but has not carried out detailed analysis of trends and strengths and weaknesses.
- (1d) 'Recruitment and Retention Issues' - Developing
The SACRE had not previously considered this its role and had not received detailed information on staffing issues, only that which was included in teachers' presentations.
- (1e) Resources - Established
The SACRE has received information relating to resources for RE in Schools, and had produced some guidance to assist areas of concern, but information was specific to schools not general.

The SACRE members recognised the need to identify ways to gather additional information from schools about the teaching and resourcing of RE without placing an additional burden on the school.

It was agreed that the remaining criteria for assessing SACRE's effectiveness be considered at the next meeting, with groups of members possibly being asked to report back on how the SACRE might improve in key areas, within its available resources.

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To: Members of the Standing
Advisory Council on Religious
Education

Date: 13th December 2005

By: Director of Law and
Democratic Services/ SACRE
Advisor

Parish/Ward: ALL

Self-Evaluation Toolkit for RE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To receive and consider the new AREIAC '*Self Evaluation in RE: A Toolkit for Subject Leaders*' and its potential for schools and for providing the SACRE with monitoring information.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the SACRE notes the new toolkit for evaluating RE and comment on its usefulness to schools, and to the SACRE.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

4 Risk Implications - Social, Environmental, Staffing, Legal / Human Rights and all other risks

- 4.1 There are no direct social, environmental, staffing, legal / human rights or other risk implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 It is the function of the SACRE support the effective provision of effective RE and collective worship in schools, and advise the Local Education Authority on how the provision might be improved, including methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers. In order to provide such advice and support, the SACRE needs to keep itself fully informed of the performance of local schools.

5 Detail

- 5.1 At the last meeting the SACRE noted that due to a change in the way in which Ofsted reports are now structured it will no longer be possible to identify specific comments on the performance of a school in relation to the teaching of religious education. The SACRE requested information on options for future tools of the evaluation of religious education and teaching.

- 5.2 The Association for RE Inspectors, Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC) have produced a toolkit to help schools evaluate performance in RE and to contribute to the completion of the School's Self Evaluation form.
- 5.3 A copy of the toolkit has been circulated to Members of the SACRE with the Agenda and can be downloaded from the www.betterRE.org.uk website.
- 5.4 The SACRE is asked to consider the toolkit and its usefulness to schools. The SACRE might also consider how the use of the toolkit might inform the SACRE of the effectiveness of teaching of RE, to enable targeted support and advice.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 None

7 Date

- 7.1 30 November 2005

THE FOLLOWING UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN RELIED ON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT: None.

The Lead Member for the subject matter of this report is Councillor Garry Perkins, Lead Member for Children's Services.

The Director of Law and Democratic Services and the Director of Finance are consulted on all reports. The Director of Quality and Standards has also been consulted in respect of this report.

Further information regarding this report can be obtained from Catherine Coster (SACRE Advisor) on Direct Dial No. 01117 927 7454 Email: Catherine.coster@bristoldiocese.org or Sarah Lawrence on Direct Dial No. 463603 or Email: slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

To: Members of the Standing
Advisory Council on Religious
Education

Date: 13th December 2005

By: Director of Law and
Democratic Services

Parish/Ward: All

Report on NASCRE Conference

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To receive a verbal report from the SACRE Advisor on the NASACRE Conference of 6th December 2005.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) note the report of the SACRE Advisor on the NASACRE Conference and consider any implications for the work of this SACRE.

3 Financial and Procurement Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications relating to this presentation.

4 Social, Environmental, Staffing, Legal/Human Rights, Risk and Other Implications

- 4.1 *Social, Environmental, Staffing, Legal, Human Rights or Other Risks* – This report has no direct social, environmental, staffing, legal, human rights or other risk implications.
- 4.5 *Links to Corporate Plan* – The work of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education and its overview of the provision of religious education in schools contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan objective of becoming 'A Learning and Creative Place', in particular its aim of achieving excellence through partnership.

5 Detail

- 5.1 The National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) are holding their Annual Conference on 6th December 2005 on the theme: 'What difference does SACRE make, and how to we know?'

- 5.2 As well as being an opportunity to network across different SACREs, the conference was planning to give delegates the chance to discuss responses to the SACRE self-evaluation toolkit and explore the potential of the new '*Self-Evaluation in RE: A Toolkit for Subject Leaders*', produced by AREAIC.
- 5.3 The SACRE Advisor is planning to attend the Conference and will report to the SACRE on the event and any areas from which the Swindon SACRE can learn.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 None

7 Date

- 7.1 30 November 2005

The Director of Finance and Director of Law and Democratic Services are consulted on all reports.

Further information regarding this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on Direct Dial No. 463603 or Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk

The Cabinet Lead Member for the service area subject to this report is Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

To: Members of the Standing
Advisory Council on Religious
Education

Date: 13th December 2005

By: Director of Law and
Democratic Services/
SACRE Advisor

Parish/Ward: ALL

Agreed Syllabus Implementation Update

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To receive the report of the SACRE advisor on the progress of the implementation of the agreed syllabus.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the progress of the Agreed Syllabus implementation be noted.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

4 Risk Implications - Social, Environmental, Staffing and Legal/Human Rights and all other risks

- 4.1 *Social Implications* - The implementation of the new agreed syllabus will have implications for the way in which religious education is taught in schools.
- 4.2 *Environmental and Staffing Implications* - There are no direct environmental or staffing implications arising from this report.
- 4.3 *Legal and Human Rights Implications* – It is a Executive Function of the SACRE to consider whether or not to require a review of the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education must comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and recommend that religious education is delivered in a way that deals proportionately with the respective rights of those involved.
- 4.4 *All other Risk Implications* – There are no other specific risk implications.
- 4.5 *Links to Corporate Plan* – The work of the Standing Advisory Council contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan objective of becoming 'A Learning and Creative Place'.

5 Detail

- 5.1 The Agreed Syllabus Conference approved the new Agreed Syllabus for Swindon at its meeting held on 6th June 2005.

- 5.2 The Agreed Syllabus was printed and copies of the syllabus sent to all schools.
- 5.3 The new syllabus was presented to Schools Heads at a conference held in July 2005, and the SACRE Advisor has held cluster meetings with primary and secondary schools to implement the syllabus and to explore ways to develop the schemes of work.
- 5.4 The Advisor will update the SACRE at the meeting of the progress of implementation of the Agreed Syllabus.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 None

7 Date

- 7.1 30th November 2005.

THE FOLLOWING UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN RELIED ON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT: None.

The Lead Cabinet Member for the subject matter of this report is Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

The Director of Finance and Director of Law and Democratic Services are consulted on all reports. The Director of Quality and Standards has also been consulted on this report.

Further information regarding this report can be obtained from Catherine Coster (SACRE Advisor) on Direct Dial No. 01117 927 7454, email: Catherine.coster@bristoldiocese.org or Sarah Lawrence on Direct Dial No. 463603 or Email: slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

To: Members of the Standing
Advisory Council on Religious
Education

Date: 13th December 2005

By: Director of Law and
Democratic Services /
SACRE Advisor

Parish/Ward: ALL

Annual Report of the SACRE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To receive and approve the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report to be submitted to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the SACRE's Annual Report attached at Appendix '1' be approved and the SACRE Advisor be authorised to submit it to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

4 Risk Implications - Social, Environmental, Staffing, Legal / Human Rights and all other risks

- 4.1 *Social Implications* – This report has no direct social implications.
- 4.2 *Environmental Implications* – There are no environmental implications arising from this report
- 4.3 *Staffing Implications* – There are no staffing implications arising from this report
- 4.4 *Legal/Human Rights Implications* – This report has no specific human rights implications. The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education is required by Section 391 of the Education Act 1996 to produce an Annual Report of the exercise of its functions during the preceding year.
- 4.5 *All other Risk Implications* – There are no other specific risk implications.
- 4.6 *Links to Corporate Plan* – The work of the Standing Advisory Council and its overview of teaching of religious education in schools, contributes to the

Council's Corporate Plan objective of becoming 'A Learning and Creative Place'.

5 Detail

- 5.1 The proposed Annual Report of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education is attached at Appendix '1' for the SACRE's approval, in order that it can be submitted to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).
- 5.2 The Advisor to the SACRE, Catherine Coster, will present the report to the meeting.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix '1' – Proposed Annual Report of the SACRE

7 Date

- 7.1 30th November 2005.

THE FOLLOWING UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN RELIED ON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT: None.

The Cabinet Member for the subject matter of this report is Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

The Director of Finance and Director of Law and Democratic Services are consulted on all reports. The Director of Quality and Standards has also been consulted on this report.

Further information regarding this report can be obtained from Catherine Coster (SACRE Advisor) on Direct Dial No. 01117 927 7454 Email:

Catherine.coster@bristoldiocese.org or Sarah Lawrence on Direct Dial No. 463603 or Email: slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

SACRE REPORT TO QCA 2004-2005

2004-2005 has been a very busy year for Swindon SACRE. The Agreed Syllabus Conference became the responsibility of SACRE and the year was taken up with working groups discussing, deliberating and producing draft sections of the syllabus, which were then referred back to the main SACRE body for discussion.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference made considerable revisions to the existing syllabus to take account of the new non-statutory guidance from QCA, and included new material such as Special Needs and the P levels, links with literacy and ICT and citizenship. Careful consideration was given to adjusting the existing levels to fit with the new suggested levels from QCA.

The syllabus was introduced to primary and secondary teachers at a conference in July where there was also the opportunity to benefit from a number of workshops that explored some different aspects of teaching, learning and monitoring provision for RE.

It is now our intention to work closely with teachers to provide some updated and comprehensive schemes of work to support the implementation of the syllabus. All of this has involved, and will involve, a considerable amount of work. It is our intention to work in conjunction with advisers and teachers in Wiltshire, as we share much common material, but we are aware that many colleagues on SACREs all around the country are engaged in similar work and that we are all to some extent reinventing the wheel. We look forward to receiving some schemes of work from QCA which, while non-statutory, will hopefully point the way to set an agenda for national development of the subject.

The Swindon SACRE has held four meetings over the past year. There is good representation on the SACRE of the teachers' unions, Christian denominations and the Muslim, Sikh, Hindu communities in Swindon. We were able to hold one of our meetings in the Gurdwara and welcomed the opportunity to hear about the life and work of the Gurdwara in Swindon. Other meetings have been held in Swindon schools and members of the SACRE find it stimulating to hear of the work of teachers and pupils in RE. Attendance from local councillors has improved but we still need to find ways to give ourselves a higher profile within the LEA and to become linked with the Authority's Children's Services Plan.

The SACRE is currently engaged in a process of evaluation of its work using the toolkit and this will inform the SACRE development plan, but the commitment of members of the SACRE to furthering the work of SACRE is crucial. We realise that many of our members are committed to good RE in the borough and willingly give their time to meet and discuss educational issues, but the SACRE will need over the coming year to ask itself about any other wider role it wishes to pursue, and whether there is the inclination and commitment from individual SACRE members to do so, given already heavy commitments of their time.

Religious Education

Over the past year, the SACRE has received the OFSTED reports for RE for schools in the borough and letters have been written in response to these. Standards in RE continue to be satisfactory and good in the primary sector. Provision in the secondary sector is variable. In some schools it is well led, but on two occasions a lack of adequate provision is highlighted.

There is concern over how SACRE will receive information about RE in the future and about how it will continue to carry out a monitoring role. We are to consider the use of the self-evaluation tool published by AERIAC but are not clear about how the SACRE would receive information from this process.

Training

The SACRE is committed to raising standards of teaching and learning in RE and would wish to continue to use some of its budget to provide teachers with the opportunity for training and regular inset.

Opportunities are taken to offer places for Swindon teachers for training on conferences organised by Wiltshire, South Gloucestershire and Bristol.

Cluster/network meetings for primary and secondary teachers have been held regularly over the past year.

Collective Worship

This is a difficult area to monitor. Sometimes there has been no mention of it in the report. All primary schools meet statutory requirements but for reasons of space, timetabling etc. secondary schools do not. Where worship provides a worthwhile and engaging experience for pupils, there is evidence that it builds and supports community cohesion, and contributes effectively to the ethos of the school and the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils.

SACRE has not provided training in this area in the past year, since all energies have been devoted to the revision of the syllabus.

There have been no requests for determinations during the academic year 2004/2005.

Links with other agencies

A member of SACRE attended the NASACRE and QCA Conferences and reports were given to SACRE members.

The Adviser to SACRE attended the headteachers' briefing to pass on information about the Agreed Syllabus.

Copies of SACRE news from NASACRE were received and distributed.

SACRE Arrangements

Professional and Administrative Support

The SACRE receives the services of an adviser and an excellent clerk who deals with distributing the agenda, preparing papers for the meeting, and taking the minutes.

The SACRE receives an annual budget of £5,000 to support its work.

SACRE Membership and Meetings

The SACRE has met four times during 2005/2005. Issues covered at these meetings included:

- Consideration of the revisions made by the working parties to the Agreed Syllabus.
- Response to QCA Non-Statutory Guidance for RE.
- Presentation by the Inter-Faith Group on “Faith Groups in Swindon”.
- Presentations by a Headteacher on “What makes for good RE” (following a highly acclaimed OFSTED Report).
- Presentation by the Islamic Awareness & Education Project (IAEP) on teaching Islam in Swindon Schools.

Constitution

Attached (Annex 1).

GCSE Results

Attached (Annex 2 – To be Tabled).

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Swindon Borough Council
Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education
CONSTITUTION

Revised: 30 March 2004

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Local Education Authority is required by Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 to constitute a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). The SACRE shall operate in line with legislation and guidance. This Constitution sets out the framework within which the SACRE should operate, in accordance with the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards Framework Act 1998, including the requirement for the SACRE to broadly represent the proportionate strength of local religious groups.

2. Functions of the Sacre

- 2.1 SACREs have a range of functions, some of them advisory, and some of them executive.

- a) Advisory Functions: To advise the Council upon such matters connected with:
- i) Religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which are not defined as having religious character; and
 - ii) The religious education to be given in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus; or
 - iii) Matters the Council may refer to the SACRE or the SACRE itself may think fit, including methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.
- b) Executive Functions:
- i) To consider and determine in accordance with Section 394 of the Education Act 1996 applications from the Head Teachers of community schools or foundation schools which are not defined as having religious character in relation to the requirement of Christian collective worship to apply at their school.
 - ii) To consider whether or not to require a review of any Agreed Syllabus for the time being adopted by the local education authority (see paragraph 6.3).
 - iii) To publish an annual report.

3. Membership of the Sacre

- 3.1 The SACRE shall include representative members as detailed in 3.2 below and may include co-opted members as set out in 3.3 below. Substitute members can attend in accordance with 3.4 below. The total membership of the SACRE shall not at any time exceed 30, excluding the number of co-opted members.

3.2 Representative Members:

- 3.2.1 The Council shall determine from time to time the number of representative members of the SACRE and the individual appointments shall be made by the Council after taking all reasonable steps to assure itself that the individual is representative of the denomination or association concerned.
- 3.2.2 It is suggested that there be four groups of representative members appointed by the Authority and these be constituted as follows:
- i) GROUP A - Five representatives of the Council (Councillors).
 - ii) GROUP B – Five representatives of the Church of England.
 - iii) GROUP C - Eight representatives of those associations of teachers as, in the opinion of Council, ought, having regard to the circumstances of Swindon, to be represented; to include at least 3 teachers of religious education of whom at least one must be a primary school teacher.
 - iv) GROUP D - Eight representatives of such Christian (other than the Church of England) and other religious faiths as will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in Swindon and the number of representative members reflects broadly the proportionate

strength of that denomination or religion in the area. These are determined as a result of consultation.

- 3.2.3 The representative members, except the five Council representatives, shall hold office for a period of 4 years expiring in the first instance 4 years from the date of the establishment of the SACRE and every 4 years thereafter. The five Council representatives shall be appointed on an annual basis.
- 3.2.4 Any representative member appointed to fill a casual vacancy shall hold office only for the unexpired period of office of the member in whose place she/he was appointed.
- 3.2.5 An individual representative member may be removed from membership by the Council if in the opinion of the Council she/he ceases to be representative, as the case may be, of the denomination or associations which she/he was appointed to represent on the SACRE.
- 3.2.6 Any individual representative member shall cease to hold membership if failing to attend 3 consecutive meetings of the SACRE or representative group, but may be reappointed.

3.3 Co-opted Members

- 3.3.1 There shall be no more than 4 co-opted members of the SACRE.
- 3.3.2 The co-opted members shall be appointed only by those members of the SACRE who have not themselves been co-opted ('the representative members').
- 3.3.3 Co-opted members shall hold office for a specific purpose, on such terms, and for a period of time as may be determined at the time of co-option by the representative members and shall hold office at the pleasure of, and may be removed at any time by, the representative members.
- 3.3.4 Co-opted members shall not be entitled to vote.
- 3.3.5 No representative group shall be entitled to co-opt additional members.

3.4 Substitute Members

- 3.4.1 A named substitute may attend a meeting in place of a representative member of the SACRE in accordance with the following provisions, but Members of the SACRE are encouraged to use this facility infrequently in view of the need to maintain continuity.
- 3.4.2 The substitute member must have been appointed by Council for a particular body, denomination or association or for a particular representative Group, and can only attend in place of the appropriate representative member. The Secretary to the SACRE shall maintain a list of those named substitutes appointed by the Council. A substitute member shall hold office and may be removed from office in the same way as if she/he was a representative member.
- 3.4.3 The substitute member shall have the same voting rights at a meeting as the representative member in whose place she/he is attending.
- 3.4.4 It shall be the responsibility of the relevant representative member to a) determine whether or not it is necessary for the relevant named substitute to attend a meeting in their place, b) notify the named substitute of the time and place of the proposed meeting, c) brief the named substitute on the proposed meeting and d) notify the Secretary in advance of the meeting that the named substitute will attend the meeting in his/her place.

3.5 Resignation

3.5.1 Any member of the SACRE may at any time resign his/her office.

3.6 Persons Ineligible to be Members of the SACRE

3.6.1 No person who has not attained the age of 18 years shall be eligible for appointment as a member of the SACRE.

3.6.2 A person shall be disqualified for holding, or for continuing to hold, office as a member if, within 5 years before his or her appointment would otherwise have taken effect, or since his or her appointment, he or she has been convicted in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man of any offence and has had passed on him or her a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine. Where, by virtue of this paragraph, a person becomes disqualified for holding office as a member that person shall give notice of that fact to the Clerk to the SACRE.

4. Chair and Vice-Chair of the SACRE

4.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair of the SACRE shall be appointed annually by the SACRE from among the representative members. The Vice-Chair should not be appointed from the same representative group as the Chair.

4.2 The Chair shall preside at meetings of the SACRE. The Vice-Chair of the SACRE shall preside at meetings of the SACRE during the absence of the Chair. In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair at a meeting of the SACRE, the members of the SACRE shall elect one of their number who is a member of a representative group to preside at the meeting during such absence.

4.3 The person presiding at a meeting of the SACRE shall have a second or casting vote only in relation to questions concerning co-opted members in accordance with paragraph 5.4 below.

5. Voting at Meetings of the SACRE

5.1 Any question to be decided by the SACRE shall require a majority of the votes cast by those present and entitled to vote.

5.2 Only the representative groups shall be entitled to vote on any questions and each group shall have a single vote.

5.3 If the question before the SACRE is whether or not to require a review of an Agreed Syllabus (see paragraph 2.1 b(ii)) the representative groups entitled to vote shall not include Group A (Councillors).

5.4 If the question before the SACRE is concerned with the appointment of a co-opted member then the Chair shall be entitled to a second or casting vote in the event of a tie.

6. Representative Groups

6.1 Representative Groups shall be free to arrange their own rules for the conduct of business, and may if they wish appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair annually from amongst their number.

6.2 Any question to be decided by a representative group shall require a majority of the votes cast by those present and entitled to vote. Each member of a representative group shall be entitled to one vote.

- 6.3 A meeting of any representative group may be convened (on a majority vote of those members of the representative group then present) during the progress of a meeting of the SACRE, for the purpose of determining or reviewing the view of that representative group on a question then before the SACRE and upon which that group may cast its vote. The SACRE may adjourn its own meeting for a period that it determines when this occurs.
- 6.4 A separate meeting of a representative group may be convened in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 10, or may be requisitioned in writing, specifying the business to be transacted, by such number of members of that group as equals or exceeds the quorum for that group plus one.

7. Validity of Proceedings

- 7.1 The validity of the proceedings of the SACRE or of any representative group shall not be affected:
- i) By any vacancy in the office of a representative member;
 - ii) On the grounds that a member of the SACRE appointed to represent any denomination or associations does not at the time of the proceedings represent the denomination or associations in question;
 - iii) By reason of an individual not having received written notice of a meeting or a copy of the agenda; or
 - iv) By reason of any failure to comply with the provisions of paragraph 11.1.
- 7.2 The validity of the proceedings of the SACRE shall not be affected by the failure of any representative group to agree on how its vote should be cast on any particular issue before the SACRE.

8. Secretary

- 8.1 The Chief Education Officer or his/her representative shall be Secretary of the SACRE and to each of the representative groups. The Director of Education, their representative or any Officer designated by them shall serve as Clerk to the SACRE.
- 8.2 Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of the SACRE. The decisions of representative groups shall be reported to the SACRE.

9. Quorum

- 9.1 The quorum for a meeting of the SACRE shall be not less than two members each of not less than three representative groups.
- 9.2 The quorum for a meeting of a representative group shall not be less than one third (rounded up to a whole number) of the membership of that representative group when complete.
- 9.3 If within a period of ten minutes after the time fixed for the start of the meeting of the SACRE or a representative group a quorum is not present, the meeting shall not be held. If during the course of a meeting, a quorum is no longer present, the meeting shall be terminated. If a meeting is not held or is terminated before all the proposed business has been transacted, a further meeting shall be convened as soon as is reasonably practicable.

10. Agenda

- 10.1 No issue shall be discussed at a meeting of the SACRE or of any representative group, unless notice of the intention to discuss that issue is given in the agenda for the meeting.

- 10.2 Any SACRE Member or Representative Group can at any meeting of the SACRE propose agenda items for the next meeting.

11. Convening meetings of SACRE

- 11.1 A meeting of the SACRE shall be convened by the Secretary (or clerk acting in their place) after consultation with the Chair or in their absence, the Vice Chair. The Secretary shall comply with any direction given by the SACRE at a previous meeting or given by the Chair (if consistent with a direction of the SACRE).
- 11.2 A meeting of the SACRE may be requisitioned in writing specifying the business to be transacted by a representative group, with the agreement of the Chair and Secretary.
- 11.3 Every member (including every named substitute) of the SACRE shall be given, not less than **5** clear days before the date of the meeting, written notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda for the meeting; provided that where the Chair, in their absence, the Vice-Chair, so directs on the grounds that there are matters demanding urgent consideration, it shall be sufficient if the written notice convening a meeting and a copy of the agenda, are given within such shorter period as (s)he specifies.

12. Attendance of the Public and Media at meetings

- 12.1 The attendance of the general public and representatives of the news media at meetings of the Agreed Syllabus Conference or Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education are subject to the Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994.
- 12.2 The public and media may not attend meetings of any representative group.

13. Approval and Amendment of Arrangements

- 13.1 The arrangements for the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education were approved by the Swindon Education Committee at its meeting on Thursday 20 February 1997, and have been amended by the SACRE subsequently in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
- 13.2 These arrangements may not be amended so as to make them inconsistent with the provisions of the 1988, 1996 and 1998 Acts.
- 13.3 To the extent that these arrangements may be amended, those arrangements that relate to the SACRE may only be amended by a decision of the SACRE and those arrangements that relate to a representative group may only be amended by the representative group concerned.
- 13.4 In order to ensure a consistent approach to meetings and that changes to these arrangements are not made without full notice and proper consideration of the implications of any proposed change, any change shall only be made as follows:
 - i) in case of the SACRE, only a representative group may propose a change to these arrangements;
 - ii) in the case of a representative group, only a member of that representative group may propose a change to these arrangements;
 - iii) at the first meeting when a proposal to change the arrangements is made there shall be no debate, and the proposal shall stand adjourned to the next meeting of the SACRE (or appropriate representative group) for determination.