

Swindon Borough Council

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Tuesday, 1 December 2009

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices, Swindon
(Anticipated meeting room)

At 6.00 p.m.

Councillors (Group A)

Councillor Doreen Dart (Chair)
Councillor Michael Bray
Councillor Mavis Childs
Councillor Raymond Fisher
Councillor Fay Howard

Church of England (Group B)

Ms Norma McKemey
Ms Steph Mundin
Mr. Paul Noble
Mrs Penny Summers
Reverend Arthur Woo

Teacher Organisations (Group C)

Mr David Easter
Ms Janet French (tbc)
Ms Jo Garton
Mrs Tracy Mason
Mrs Emma McCarthy
Mrs Helen Miller
Miss Anne Wang
Mrs Mandy Sandleton

Other Faiths (Group D)

Mrs Helen Hancox, United Reformed Church
Reverend David Howell, Swindon Evangelical Alliance
Mr M S Khan, Muslim Community
Mr Dinesh Patel, Hindu Community
Mrs Wendy Tucker, Methodist Church
Mr Malkit Singh Virk, Sikh Community
Mr Arun Bedi, Sikh Community - Deputy

SACRE Adviser:

Ms Katy Staples, SACRE Adviser

Committee Officer: Sarah Lawrence (Telephone 01793 463603)

email: slawrence@swindon.gov.uk

Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street,
Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

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 22nd September 2009.

5. Chair's Announcements (Pages 5 - 18)

- Attached for information is a copy of the letter which has going out to Swindon Schools with a copy of the Face to Faith DVD and resource booklet.
- The latest edition of 'SACRE News', from NASACRE (the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education) is attached. SACRE Members are invited to raise any issues of note, which they would like the SACRE to explore further at a future meeting.

6. Membership Update (DLDS-B) (Pages 19 - 20)

7. SACRE Surveys Feedback (Katy Staples) (Pages 21 - 32)

8. Reviewing our Vision as a SACRE (Katy Staples) (Pages 33 - 42)

9. Suggested Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE Consultation (Katy Staples) (Pages 43 - 48)

10. Feedback from Network Meetings (Katy Staples) (Pages 49 - 50)

11. Understanding Faith

To receive a short presentation from a member of the SACRE on their faith.

Councillor Mick Bray will provide a short presentation at the meeting, and will answer questions from SACRE members.

12. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SACRE is on 16th March 2010 at 6 pm.

Date of Despatch: 23 November 2009

Key: Officers:

GDC – Group Director: Children

DLDS-B - 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.

This page is intentionally left blank

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TUESDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2009

PRESENT:-

Group A: Councillors	Councillors Doreen Dart, Michael Bray, Mavis Childs, Raymond Fisher and Fay Howard
Group B: Church of England	Mr. Paul Noble and Reverend Arthur Woo
Group C: Teacher Organisations	Ms Jo Garton, Mrs Tracy Mason, Mrs Helen Miller and Janet French
Group D: Other Faiths	Mrs Helen Hancox (United Reformed Church), Reverend David Howell (Swindon Evangelical Alliance), Reverend Paul Knight (Baptist), Mr Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community) and Mr Arun Bedi (Sikh Community)

Co-opted Members:

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: - Ms Katy Staples (SACRE Adviser)

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Steph Mundin, Mrs Penny Summers, Miss Anne Wang and Mrs Mandy Sandleton.

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. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

13. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June 2009 be approved.

Further to Minute 7, the SACRE noted the formal response which had been submitted by the SACRE Advisor to the consultation on Curriculum Review, alongside an online submission.

Further to Minute 9, the SACRE Advisor confirmed she would be approaching the Chair of SASH (Swindon Association of Secondary Headteachers) on the best way to encourage teachers to attend the Secondary network meetings.

14. Membership Update

The Clerk to the SACRE presented a report updating the SACRE on changes to its membership, including advising that Reverend Paul Knight was stepping down from the SACRE at this meeting to take up a new position in Northamptonshire.

Resolved - 1) That the Membership update be noted.

2) That Reverend Paul Knight be thanked for his service to the SACRE over

many years.

3) That the SACRE Advisor and Clerk seek suitable representatives to fill the vacancies in Group D (Other Christian Denominations and Other Faiths).

15. Face to Faith Pilot Final Report

Paula Harrison (Community Support Manager) and Kati Wood (Neighbourhood Engagement Officer) presented the final report on the Face to Faith pilot project. The project had ran during the academic year, September 2009 to July 2009, in four secondary schools: Kingsdown Secondary School, Commonweal School, Ridgeway School and Nova Hreod School. It had used workshops with young people to explore their understanding of faith, and the issues associated with having faith in society, and had culminated in arts projects and films produced by the young people in conjunction with Create studios.

The SACRE viewed the films produced including one on how the project came about, and films from each of the four schools. It was noted that these had been shown at a showcase event held at the Arts Centre, which had been very successful.

The SACRE praised the outcome of the project, and agreed that the project had been an extremely effective use of the funding from the successful application to the National Association of SACREs and community cohesion funding.

The report to the SACRE highlighted the objectives which had been achieved well in terms of enabling young people to explore faith and non-faith positions, and where it still had outcomes to meet in terms of linking into community and other faith groups in the town, and enabling the schools to use the material. The SACRE reviewed the Schools Resource booklet, which had been produced to enable other schools to utilise the specific activities undertaken by each of the school groups, and were advised by Kati Wood on the options being explored to carry out similar projects in other schools, subject to suitable funding being identified. The SACRE gave consideration to the next steps for promoting the material arising from the project.

Resolved :- 1) That the SACRE notes the successful completion of the Face to Faith Pilot and thanks Community Support Manager and Neighbourhood Engagement Officer for their work on the Project.

2) That the Schools Resource booklet is approved, subject to a correction to the use of religious symbols on page 3 for the version to be placed on the Council's website and when reprinted.

3) That the Chair, SACRE Advisor and Clerk meet with the Community Support Manager and Neighbourhood Engagement Officer to agree how to publicise the Face to Faith Resource Booklet and DVDs to schools, faith groups and with other young people, including agreeing the outcomes sought, and how these materials can be linked to the current Agreed Syllabus and Schemes of Work.

16. Understanding Faith

Reverend Arthur Woo of the Church of England gave an oral presentation to the SACRE regarding his own personal history and his faith, and received questions from Members in respect of his presentation.

Resolved – 1) That Reverend Arthur Woo be thanked for the interesting insight into his faith.

2) Councillor Mick Bray give a presentation on his faith at the next SACRE

meeting.

17.

Announcements

The Chair had invited Jo Garton to bring to the meeting and display pictures produced by her year 5 / 6 class as part of the unit of work on 'Artists interpretations of Jesus'. The SACRE praised the work and the diversity in the children's image of Jesus, and the SACRE appreciated the opportunity to get closer to children's views, which are not always directly available to the SACRE. Subject to their completion and the children giving permission, it was suggested that the pictures form a display for use in the Civic Offices reception, with information on the work of the SACRE.

Mr Dinesh Patel invited SACRE members to a celebration at the Link Centre on Saturday 26th September from 8.30 pm – 11 pm, as part of the Hindu Community's nine day Navraatri festival.

Mr Arun Bedi advised that the Swindon Interfaith Group was holding an event on 28th October from 7 pm – 9.30 pm at the Pilgrim Centre, which would be an opportunity for people of different faiths, including young people, to give a presentation of their beliefs. Mr Bedi extended an invitation to all members of the SACRE.

18.

Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The SACRE noted that the next meeting of the SACRE would be held on Tuesday 1st December at 6 pm.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 5
Councillor Doreen Dart
Chair of SACRE
c/o Civic Offices,
Euclid Street
Swindon
SN1 2JH

Contact: Sarah Lawrence
Clerk to the SACRE
01793 463603
slawrence@swindong.gov.uk

To:

Headteacher / Head of RE

Our Ref: SACRE / Face to Faith
18 November 2009

Dear Colleague

Face to Faith School Resource

I am really pleased to send you this exciting "Face to Faith" Schools Resource Booklet and DVD. The films on the DVD have been made by the students in Kingsdown, Ridgeway, Commonweal and Nova Hreod Schools.

This project was funded partly by the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education and as Chair of Swindon SACRE I would like to commend it to you as a useful tool to support Religious Education, PSHE and Citizenship. What is the huge strength of this material is that it is made by students in Swindon – for students in Swindon.

We will also be seeking to make a copy of the booklet and the DVDs available via the Schools Online site.

Set out below are some starting suggestions for the ways in which the DVD films might be used to link to the current Swindon Agreed Syllabus and curriculum for Religious Education in schools.

1. Nova Hreod School Film called "Who cares" - This could be an interesting starter in the Key Stage 2 Unit Christianity – "Why do people believe in God?", asking specifically why do people believe in God if it means they are bullied or feel left out as a result? This film uses "Creature Comforts" Ardman Animations style stop-frame techniques and would appeal to Key Stage 2 pupils. They could even be encouraged to make their own animation/ cartoon strip about "Why do people believe in God" in response.
2. The Kingsdown film "Dance, Diversity and Faith" - This could be used within the Key Stage 3 unit "Expressions of Meaning": an exploration of how symbolic movement can be used in different faith traditions. Pupils could be asked to speculate on the meaning of the movements used in the film, leading into an

exploration of how physical symbolic movements are used within faith traditions. Again this could then be used to challenge students to construct their own sequence of symbolic movement, and other groups could speculate as to the intended meaning.

3. The Commonweal film "Place and Faith" - This would provide an excellent starter trigger for a GSCE RE or Citizenship short course that explores Religious Diversity in the UK and covers the issue of stereotyping. Students could be asked to devise their own "twice- played tableau" similar to the final scene with the artist and the soldier. A scene when you first look appears to be one thing and then on further inspection the truth is something else.
4. The Ridgeway Film "Texture of Peace" - This may make a calming spiritual introduction to the Key Stage three unit "Living in Peace". Students could try to unpack the central messages of Peace communicated in the film. This could then be shown again at the end of the unit to explore whether the ideas about Peace learnt through studying Islam and Christianity can be found in the film – what are the similarities and differences? Why do they think that is?

We would be interested in hearing of other ways in which you have used the material, both the DVDs and Resources booklet ideas, so that this can be shared with other teachers via the RE Network meetings. Please inform us of these by writing to Chair of the SACRE c/o Sarah Lawrence, Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, SN1 2JH, or on slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

If you have any questions about the resource booklet and DVDs please contact Kati Wood on 01793 466236 or kwood@swindon.gov.uk.

I hope that you will find this DVD and Booklet a useful resource and join me in congratulating those students, teachers, community workers and artists who were involved with this project.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Doreen Dart
Chair of Swindon SACRE

SACRE NEWS



Issue 25

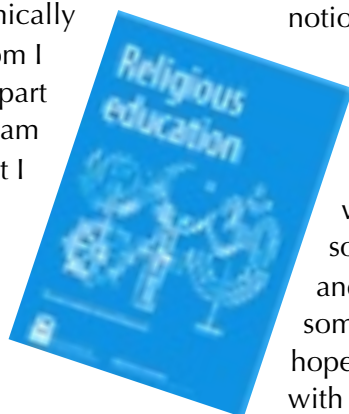
FROM THE CHAIR...



Welcome to the Summer – or maybe it should be 'Indian Summer' – version of NASACRE News. Such was the rush and pressure at the end of last term, with the numerous initiatives and consultations going on, that we were unable to produce the Summer 2009 Newsletter in time, for which I do apologise.

I trust that those of you who have had a summer break have returned refreshed and enriched.

I have to admit that whilst I feel honoured to be the chair of NASACRE, I do also approach it with not an insignificant sense of trepidation. For 25 years I have worked in the RE world as a teacher and an adviser. I have read books by, worked alongside and encountered numerous people, both academically and community-based, for whom I have the utmost respect, and a part of me wonders what on earth I am now doing in this role and what I can bring to it that will help SACREs in the work they do. The answer on one level, of course, is that it is a team effort, and I am privileged to work with the members of the executive who each bring their individual experience, expertise and perspective to the collective task of supporting and representing the interests of the hugely diverse community of SACREs.



In this Issue

From the chair	p1
AGM: Morning Keynote address	p4
AGM: Changes to the executive	p5
GM: News TPFF	p6
AGM: Afternoon Keynote address	p7
Obtaining data to monitor schools	p8
Kirkless SACRE	p9
Westhill Awards 2009 / 2010	p14
SACREs of the South	p10
Back Page	p18

On the other hand, there is something about the role of chair that brings with it a particular responsibility and to a certain extent people look to the chair as the voice of all that is SACRE! Now when you consider the diversity in each SACRE, and when you then consider that there are approximately 152 SACREs in England, the notion of 'a', let alone 'the' voice is plainly impossible.

So, when I am writing this as 'from the chair', I know with confidence that there will be many of you who will disagree with some, or maybe all, of what I have to say – and I equally know that there will be at least some of you who will agree with bits! What I hope is that regardless of whether you agree with what I write, provided we share some sense of common purpose for RE, collective worship and community cohesion, my reflections, my enthusiasm for RE and my commitment to a

whole-child approach to education will stimulate thinking, discussion and action within and between SACREs to improve learning and living for the children and young people in our schools and communities.

These are interesting and challenging times for everyone. Medical and other forms of technology are transforming the futures (please note the plural; it is important) of homo-sapiens at a staggering rate. Whether we think this is 'good' or 'bad' is not as important a question as 'how are we going to equip our future generations to cope with all this?', because it is happening as we debate. How we live is having an impact not just in increased space (ie globally), but also in accelerating and expanding time (and possibly irreversibly). Communication revolutions spawn more communication revolutions and the speed of change, to me, is surpassed only by the speed my children manage to send texts! RU with me, lol?

And so never has it been so important for our future generations to become adept at handling complex concepts for understanding life and what it means to be a person, to be an 'I' encountering other 'I's in a world that risks becoming increasingly fragmented and objectified. These are life-enshrining concepts, in which tensions between individual and community, self and other, illusion and reality, knowledge and faith, truth and falsehood can be explored in a meaningful way that relates to the lives of the children and young people. If we give them the chance.....

I recently read Richard Dawkins' "The God Delusion" and Christopher Hitchens' "God is not great". These are books that should be taken seriously because they deal with serious issues.

However, I found both difficult to read, not because they followed complex argument or used specialist vocabulary, but actually for quite the opposite reason – they are populist books, written to have a stab at 'religion' in the modern world. Now is not the time or place to dwell too much on a criticism of these books, however, a

few reflections are relevant to what we are about.

First and foremost, in terms of the caricature of 'religion' contained in these books, there is little that many of us would disagree with. The sadness is the reluctance to address more fruitful, more affirming, nourishing and open dimensions and expressions of faith lived out in local geographical communities, many of which have few sources of hope. It is easy to knock the weakness and distortions that inhabit all forms of human endeavour; however, one should likewise do justice to the dignity, creativity and depth of faith lived for others and in spirit, even if in disagreement. These two books had more farce than force, were more dismissive than incisive and thus alienated rather than engaged

with the human spirit of people with

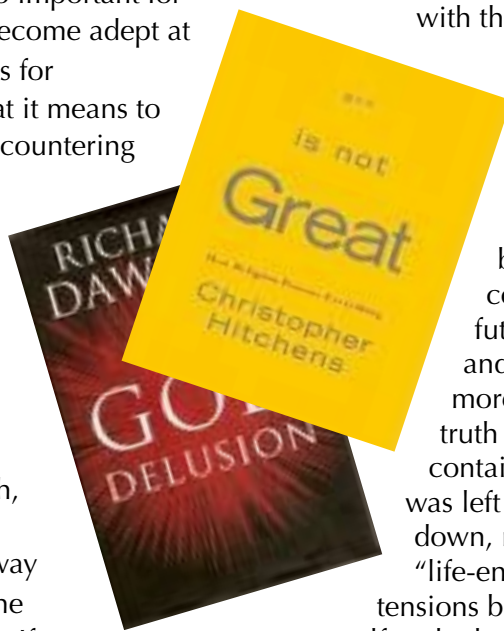
sincere and deep faith. We need to

be aware of this, for we are a diverse community that includes people from faith communities and people with secular world-views; but we are all struggling to become more human and to create communities that flourish and have a future. We cannot do this if we belittle and alienate. It is an issue that deserves more than humour often based on half-truth and blurred pictures. The books contain some really good points, but I was left with a dissatisfied sense of being let down, rather than challenged to reflect on "life-enshrining concepts, in which

tensions between individual and community, self and other, illusion and reality, knowledge and faith, truth and falsehood can be explored in a meaningful way that relates to the lives of the children and young people."

Is this the legacy we will leave for our children?

Or should we help children and young people explore visions of humanity that contain hope





and beauty but which also take as real the ways in which individuals and communities fall short of these? Shouldn't we precede the question 'what is a good citizen?' with the questions around 'what does it mean to be me, to be a person?' We each are engaged in SACRE because we have a vision for humanity. Our children are nurtured into our particular vision, but they also need to be encountered by other visions. What is the role of schools in this? What is the place of RE and what about collective worship? How will SACREs contribute and what is our role? What can each group in your SACRE do and how do you as an individual participate in this enterprise? How do we work with other groups involved in inter-faith dialogue and community cohesion?

We have had important developments recently. A new curriculum: where is RE in this?; where are the transcendence and the spiritual (which can both have secular expression and experience)?; where is the vision of humanity that goes beyond the functional, the utilitarian, the 'citizen'? The answer to all of these is: 'where we create them.' Certainly this includes putting on pressure to ensure that RE has parity within the new curriculum; but it also involves engaging actively and creatively with changes that *all* subjects face, and doing so with vision

and with hope, pulling together all our expertise and experience. I appreciate that there was some frustration at the AGM in the light of all the change going on. We facilitated questions within a large audience and a packed agenda and for some this was not ideal. What is clear is that we are in the midst of a process of change affecting all of education and that we can influence how it moves forward.

Our role as SACREs has to be to enable RE in our schools to be so good that headteachers, pupils, parents and staff want good RE, have the framework to achieve this (the Locally Agreed Syllabus) and adequate training, support and resources. No mean task then! We are working on revising the SACRE SEF (Self Evaluation Form), the SACRE Report format and the RE Subject SEF which will be available over the next year. We hope that these will help you in this task. We need also to work together to ensure that Agreed Syllabus development is of a consistently high standard to provide stimulating learning experiences and to

link conceptual understanding to living experience for our children and young people.

I look forward to working with you all on these issues and to raising questions with you. In addition to the changes going on, there are also

some new and exciting initiatives. During the week beginning 15th November we will have the first 'Interfaith' week. Guidance on this is on our website and also on the NATRE and IFNUK websites. Please work strenuously to ensure that this will be the first of many!

Also, 2011 will be a year of Celebration for RE; more on that as it unfolds. We continue on a journey. Let us tread carefully and reflectively together.



Annual General Meeting - Keynote

Councillor Salma Yaqoob

Julie Grove introduced Councillor Salma Yaqoob as someone who might offer a new perspective on issues relevant to SACREs with particular reference to community cohesion. She has been a councillor since 2006 following experiences of racism as a result of 9/11. She has a strong commitment to issues of equality. She was included in the list, published in the Times in March 2009, of the 50 most influential Muslim women in Britain.



Faith as a force for community cohesion

Salma began by acknowledging that faith is often seen as a source of distress and a cause of prejudice. She questions the commitment to liberal values of some secularists who seem to present very intolerant views of religion reminding her listeners that there is nothing wrong with forms of secularism which allow the open expression of a wide variety of views and faiths. She pointed out that it is not appropriate to paint all religions as a force for bad. She expressed her intention to put her address in a wider political context.

She explained that her faith is a source of inspiration and that she has been saddened by examples of Muslim terrorism and the responses to it - her own negative experiences of people's responses to Muslims have forced her to become more actively involved in social action.

Believing that religion can be a source of hope and solace for people, she claimed that the issues she was addressing were more than religious questions but broad human questions. She is against all forms of oppression and is keen to stress that we need to champion the pluralism we have in Britain. She contrasted her experiences of this with the situation in France where she had been challenged as a 'headscarf' wearing Muslim being allowed a platform for public speaking. People claimed she was an example of an oppressed woman supporting the oppression of others.

When she entered to public life the first criticisms of her were from Muslims - they said Muslim women should not be taking public roles. Some Muslims supported her criticism of Britain invading Iraq others said it was a time to keep heads down and stay quiet - not antagonise or give impression they were disloyal. It was difficult for the issue of the invasion of Iraq to be discussed in mosques.

Meetings were held in churches. Misunderstandings caused an inward-lookingness. In defence of her position she quoted from the Qur'an a verse which says, 'Stand up for justice even if it goes against yourself and family'. She quoted this to her father who was encouraging her to be quiet to protect her personal safety, the safety of her children and his reputation. Her position has been motivated by her faith. She has been inspired and strengthened by people of many other faiths as well, people who have lived out their faiths in these difficult times. Diversity in the population has great potential. It is important that there is no imposition of a single faith. As soon as you start to take away the rights of one group then gradually the rights of others are eroded.

We live in times of moral crisis eg politicians expenses scandal etc etc. There is a real need for religious moral values to come to the fore on issues such as the environment, drug culture, nurture in homes/families, materialistic society etc. These values must find a place in the education system. Salma finished with a challenge for us all to consider: how can we create situation in which difference is celebrated?

AGM changes to the executive

Elections

- Denise Chaplin thanked the three people who were leaving the executive: Jane Brook, Karl D'Cruz and Robin Kanerek for all their work.
- Debbie Tibby, formerly a member of the executive was up for re-election.
- Only single nominations were received for treasurer (Michael Metcalf) and new deputy Chair, Bruce Gill, so both were duly elected.

Election outcomes

New members elected to the executive were announced:

- Helen Harrison
- Professor Harbhajan Singh
- Debbie Tibbey



The new Chair takes over: Thank you Denise

Denise Chaplin handed over to Bill Moore, the new Chair. Bill thanked Denise for all her work as Chair over the last two years and she was presented with a basket of flowers. He recognised her strengths in representing NASACRE, RE and interfaith dialogue. NASACRE has been enriched and empowered by her work.

Find out more

Find out more about the executive and the work that they do on behalf of SACREs at a national and international level by looking at the executive section of the website.



News from the AGM : Young People's Faith Forum Awards

Michael Metcalf expressed appreciation of the 18 applications for awards and to Stephen Orchard for his involvement in the initiative. The rubric for submissions has been changed for this year and is now about creating compelling learning experiences. This has enabled a wider range of projects to be included.

The following were announced as winners of awards for the coming year:

Bromley SACRE (£1300) "Faith Numbers" – a one day conference for Year 12 pupils addressing issues of community cohesion for the future, and leading to the formation of a Youth SACRE.

Redcar & Cleveland SACRE (£5000) A project on the refugee experience which involves the Borough's eleven secondary schools and uses the interactive exhibition "Escape to Safety" with a project worker and assemblies.

Solihull SACRE (£5000) A conference for 30 Year 6 pupils, leading to carefully planned visits to places of worship and the production of a quality DVD resource for use in all Solihull Primary Schools.

Southwark SACRE (£5000) A project working with Primary and Secondary pupils to explore identity, faith and reconciliation in the context of diversity and gang culture and produce a teaching resource to include statement banks and role play ideas.

Suffolk SACRE (£3000) A one day conference on ethical and global issues for gifted Year 7-9 pupils to prepare for involvement in the UNICEF Youth Voice project and launch three pyramid networks.

Torbay SACRE (£2000) The extension of last year's part-funding for TIFFY – Torbay Inter-Faith Forum 4 Youth, giving support to their project "Community Building Through Crossing Boundaries".

Waltham Forest SACRE (£5000) Production of a quality pilot teaching resource in the form of a film/video of a local pupil in partnership with a SACRE member acting as guides to a visit to their place of worship.

Windsor and Maidenhead SACRE (£2000) A well-planned RE Film Festival, with a short DVD competition for Year 6 and 9 pupils, is already under way. The Award will release funds for further development of the project.

NOTE: Reports on these will appear on the website and in the newsletter

AGM: Afternoon Keynote

After a good buffet lunch, no snooze-slot. Dialogue with national officers brought a rumble of concern about the future of Religious Education amid recent Government proposals for our youngsters' curriculum. Into this growing turbulence stepped Geoff Teece, with a most timely address. Feeling elastic about his title 'Learning from Religion and Building Community' he posed questions:



Why does good RE matter? What is RE's distinctive contribution? Why do local, national and international communities need it?

Through the address, his companion (and ours) was an inspiring collection of quotes from Madeline Bunting, Ninian Smart, Michael Grimmitt, John Hick, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus, the QCA and – not least – Jonathan, aged 12.



What do we need to understand about devotees? Not so much their religion as their religious-ness. In a synagogue we enter not so much a collection of artefacts as a house of holiness. Selfless service may be a better insight into Sikhism than a catalogue of the 5K's.

A religious interpretation of religion is the soul's depth-exploration of what it is to be fully human. The World Faiths seek to lead us from the fallen, frustrated state of human nature into a transformation where humans can find peace and happiness in a right relationship with the Divine.

What light can be a metaphor of green turtles shed on this matter? Can good RE teach us how to pursue wealth and sexual pleasure within the lotus of enlightenment?

Geoff's cultured, professional, quietly passionate championship of AT2 and RE can be found in full on our website.

Tristram Jenkins

How your SACRE can obtain the data it needs to monitor school RE provision

Phra Nicholas Thanissaro - Buddhist Representative: London Borough of Greenwich SACRE

For a SACRE to fulfil its proper function of monitoring proper provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship in its local authority's jurisdiction, it does need to work on the basis of reliable data. Although I am new to the SACRE circuit, I have heard concerns voiced in many areas of England that this data is no longer coming through to SACREs and monitoring schools over the last two years has become rather like 'working in the dark'. At the NASACRE AGM on 5 June 2009, I had the chance to question Alan Brine HMI on just this subject and considering that this issue may be of concern to SACREs other than my own, I am sharing the response for other members to whom lack of data on quality RE remains a mystery.

Most SACREs have been in existence since about 1988 and during the period 1993-2007 it was relatively easy for them to gain feedback on RE and CW performance in schools simply by reading Section 10 of the HMI school reports which were made in an extensive format during that period. In 2009, unfortunately there is no question of Ofsted reinstating the extensive format of Section 10 inspection reports merely through the lobbying of SACREs – however, Alan Brine HMI, Ofsted's Subject Specialist Adviser on Religious Education, gives SACREs the following thoughts, that as with pre-1993 data collection, SACREs may wish to take the initiative in data collection again. Initiatives might include the following activities:

- Building data collection (and analysis) into every SACRE's five-year plan as a 'monitoring action plan'. This should be synchronized with the cycle of Agreed Syllabus revision. A particular focus to the monitoring might be targeted for each year. Each SACRE could calculate the cost of monitoring and analysis and include this cost in the budget requested from its Local Authority each year.
- Ask your Local Authority to circulate questionnaires about the quality of RE and CW provision to all schools in the SACRE's jurisdiction for all age ranges. (Penny Orr-Smith has tried this approach for the London Borough of Bromley SACRE but in reality received a return rate of less than 30% - it often being non-compliant schools that fail to respond . . .)
- Discuss the possibility of using your local authority's link adviser for each school to ask questions about the provision for RE and CW
- Asking to what extent the tick boxes on the back page of the SEF are being filled out for each school (any more information than this would be deemed confidential)

If SACREs are able to implement such reforms in data collection, it will contribute to the increased credibility of SACRE status in the eyes of the schools and the Local Authority. SACREs will be much better positioned to identify and correct cases of non-compliance in RE and CW for schools in their jurisdiction.

Kirklees SACRE: Development of Interfaith Kirklees (Schools)

'My pupils learnt more in a two hour visit to the Buddhist Centre than in a whole year inside a classroom'

(Head of RE Department)

How can we support a more relevant RE curriculum for our pupils by providing real and relevant opportunities for 'learning from' religion and for the development of the spiritual, in a religion-neutral experiential context? This quest to create space for the numinous, led Kirklees SACRE to set up Interfaith Kirklees (Schools) in 2005, an organisation funded initially through the Home Office 'Positive Images' stream and more latterly by Kirklees Council.

Seven Faith Centres - spaces attached to specific places of worship – have been developed, representing the major faiths and the demographics of the region. For each, a number of 'hosts' from the relevant faith community, have been appointed and teachers, hosts and officers have combined to create bespoke 'learning packages', the hosts themselves trained to deliver these with the support of an Education Officer. This has allowed the offer to local schools of visits to the Centres – each lasting half a day, involving a class of pupils in relevant, interactive and spiritually reflective learning experiences. In excess of 6,000 pupils from Early Years children to University students have so far visited the Centres in 2008/9.

Experiences combine contemporary approaches to teaching and learning. Metacognitive and thinking skills, the concept-building, Godly Play and labyrinth approaches replace the traditional 'tour'. Emphasis is placed on the development of the philosophical and spiritual; the phrase, 'I wonder...' is to be heard frequently. A connection is made between the child's life and the religious concepts being explored, links made between the Kirklees Agreed Syllabus, 'One World, Many Faiths' and the changing nature of the curriculum.



Where to from here? Kirklees SACRE along with the newly formed Kirklees Faiths Forum in partnership with the Interfaith Kirklees (Schools) Steering Committee is to support the development of an offer of visits for parents prior to their children's visits. Rather than simply inform, we want to allow those parents to experience, to allow greater understanding of that sense of space for the numinous.

For further information, contact:

David **Raven-Hill**

School Improvement Officer (RE and Community Cohesion)
Kirklees SACRE

david.raven-hill@kirklees.gov.uk

SACREs of the South

It was tempting to call it the Solent Syndicate ... Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight, and, at a stretch, Hampshire and Bournemouth. Misleading, though, as commercial gain did not feature among their motives for joining up.

This is an interesting, rich grouping: varied cultures – urban, suburban, rural and island, ensuring no-one is insular. Since 2007 these distinct SACREs have held extra network gatherings in the afternoon, rotating venues and chairs; and they intend to continue.

There was honest sharing of priorities, tensions, events and creative ideas. Three operate one Syllabus, and were checking on keeping in step with one another over its review (and this review vitally assisted by a joint working group).



What are the merits and pitfalls of SACRE members visiting schools and observing lessons? These were touched on. Should the visitors be briefed, even accompanied by an Adviser?

One proposed a school competition for a SACRE logo. Could others take this up too? But a second regretted it would clash with their own inter-faith competition, so the competition was abandoned. However, a third reminded us all that a logo was needed to launch the website, and invited ideas. A fascinating discussion ensued. How might a SACRE website best be branded and designed in order to serve the whole regional quintet? How could teaches in each Local Authority be induced to visit beyond their own LA for good ideas, events, resources? Should the site be titled 'The Living Difference' ... as the Syllabus for 3/5 of the group was dynamically called? This found strong support. Under the canopy of RE, could good stuff about Community Cohesion and Collective Worship be included?

Further publicity, in the form of a pamphlet: one member circulated a draft text which would explain the work of SACRE to schools and faith communities around this region, and asked for feedback.

Difficulties with the media ... suppose a good, balanced resource is produced by one partner-in-syllabus. The press grab bits of it and distort it. In this controversy local politicians are under pressure to dissociate their schools from the distorted version. They appear to reject the initiative, and partners-in-syllabus seem to fall out among themselves. So ... there's need to establish a protocol ... partners, perhaps, to agree a joint press-release where matters of common interest are concerned?

Among the participants, I felt an atmosphere of common sense and goodwill, in a forum where sharing is well-established..

I know there is ongoing thought of regional groupings for SACREs. This network seems to me the right size, and I guess a larger grouping might place strain on it.

I'm most grateful the five invited NASACRE to send an observer. Some neighbouring SACREs in other parts of England do meet and share, of course, and my two even operate jointly: more SACREs would benefit from such reinforcing co-operation.

Tristram **Jenkins** on behalf of NASACRE's Executive

inter faith
week

15 - 21 November 2009

promoting good inter faith relations

highlighting the contribution of faiths to building community

increasing understanding between faiths and wider society

Inter Faith Week will run from 15 to 21 November. Its aims are:

- to strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels;
- to increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society; and
- to increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious belief.

The Week is being facilitated by the Inter Faith Network for the UK and the Department for Communities and Local Government but will be community-led, with local people and groups of different backgrounds holding their own events and to highlight work going on to promote understanding between people of different faiths and beliefs.

For more about interfaith week see their website at www.interfaithweek.org

BACKPAGE

SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ...

October

3rd	Jewish	Sukkot begins
7th	Buddhist	Pavarana
10th	Jewish	Simchat Torah
11th		Interfaith Week of Prayer for World Peace
17th	Hindu	Divali
20th	Baha'i	Ann. of the Birth of the Bab
20th	Sikh	Guruship of the Guru Granth Sahib
26th	Chinese	Chung Yuan
31st	Pagan	Hallowe'en

November

1st	Christian	All Saints' Day
2nd	Christian	All Souls' Day
2nd	Rastafarian	Crowning of Halle Selassie I
2nd	Sikh	Anniversary of Guru Nanak
5th	Buddhist	Kathina Day
8th		Remembrance Sunday
12th	Baha'i	Ann of the Birth of the Baha'u'llah
15th	Japanese	Shichi Go San
24th	Sikh	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur
28th	Muslim	Eid-ul-Adha
29th	Muslim	Eid-ul-Adha
29th	Christian	Advent Sunday
30th	Christian	St. Andrew's Day

ON THE WEBSITE ...

Do keep an eye on the website where you will find:

- 🗎 News updates
- 🗎 Information about NASACRE
- 🗎 News about events
- 🗎 News on projects
- 🗎 The Newsletter Archive
- 🗎 The FAQ archive
- 🗎 Agenda items for your next SACRE meetings
- 🗎 A membership list
- 🗎 Exemplar documentation



Contributors

BILL MOORE
TRISTRAM JENKINS
DAVID RAVEN-HILL
MICHAEL METCALF

Please also check your details and if necessary update the membership section and add to the exemplar documentation. Contact us at web@nasacre.org.uk

SACRE News: the newsletter of the National Association of SACREs, published termly. The opinions expressed in articles are those of their authors and not necessarily of the NASACRE Executive. For details see the website. Copies of this e-newsletter may be distributed to SACRE members but content may not be altered or adapted unless specifically stated.

This Summer issue is edited by Geoff Teece and Paul Hopkins. Newsletter design by MMI web - www.mmiweb.org.uk

Membership Update

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1 December 2009

Author: Director of Law and Democratic Services / SACRE Advisor

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To ask the SACRE to note the Membership update and approve the appointment of Mr Mark Cawte as a deputy representative to Group D (Other Faiths).

Recommendation

- To note the Membership update.
- That the SACRE endorse the appointment of Mr Mark Cawte as a joint deputy member to Mrs Helen Hancox (United Reformed Church) and Mrs Wendy Tucker (Methodist Church) on Group D (Other Faiths).
- That the training being made available to new members of Group D (Other Faiths) by the NASACRE be noted, and any members attending be invited to report back to a future meeting to share their experiences and learning with other members of the SACRE.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 The Council appoints the membership of SACRE every four years, but the SACRE approves changes to membership mid term. The Council formally renewed the Membership of the SACRE in September 2007. All appointments made by the SACRE in the interim run until September 2011, the date of the next formal review.

2. Detail

- 2.1 The SACRE is currently holding two vacancies on Group D (Other Faiths) for a Baptist representative and a Catholic Representative. The Free Churches' Group, Churches Together In England, are currently in the process of seeking suitable representatives on behalf of the SACRE, and nominees when received will be reported back to a future meeting. In addition, the SACRE has received a nomination for Mr Mark Cawte, who is the Community Worker and Local Preacher for Highworth United Reformed and Methodist Church in the Swindon and Marlborough area, to be appointed as a deputy representative to the current United Reformed Church and Methodist Church representatives on the SACRE. The SACRE is requested to confirm this appointment.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Membership Update

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1 December 2009

NASACRE Training

- 2.2 The NASACRE are currently running a recruitment and training programme, funded by the Department for Children, School and Families (DCSF) and Curriculum Cohesion Unit to build SACRE capacity. This is intended to initially to fill vacancies on the Other Faiths Group. Our SACRE is part of the south regions benefiting in 2009/10. Therefore, Members our SACRE who have joined in the last few months to the Other Faiths Group (Group D) have been invited to attend training by the NASACRE.
- 2.3 The training will comprise two full days, one focused on RE and one on collective worship. In between the training days, delegates will be invited to attend a local SACRE meeting of their choice, and make an accompanied visit to a school to see an RE Lesson. It is suggested that any SACRE members attending this training be invited to report back on key areas of learning and experience at a future meeting of the Swindon SACRE.

Alternative Options

- None.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

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

Legal / Human Rights Implications

- This report has no specific legal or human rights implications. The legal requirements for appointment of representatives is set out in the SACRE Constitution (appended to Item 1 on this agenda).

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

- The work of the SACRE contributes to the Council's aims to improve the opportunities for children and young people.

Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.
- Director of Schools and Learning
- Principal Advisor (School Improvement)

Background Papers and Appendices

- None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

SACRE Surveys Feedback

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1st December 2009

Author: Director of Law and Democratic Services / SACRE Adviser

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To consider the responses to the surveys issued to Schools on Religious Education and Collective Worship and implications for the SACRE's next Development Plan.

Recommendation

- That the SACRE considers the responses to the surveys issued to Schools on Religious Education and Collective Worship and implications for the SACRE's next Development Plan.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 It is part of the SACRE's role to advise the Council on the delivery of religious worship and the agreed syllabus in schools. In order to carry out this function, the SACRE needs to collect information and monitor the delivery of religious education and collective worship in Schools.

2. Detail

- 2.1 When the SACRE agreed its Development Plan for the April 2009 to March 2010 period at its meeting in March 2009, it was highlighted that there was a need for better intelligence in relation to the resources and teaching of RE in Schools, and on the delivery of collective worship.
- 2.2 At its meetings in March and September, SACRE agreed survey forms to go out to all Primary and Secondary Schools to assess these elements.
- 2.3 The forms were sent to all schools, and attached at Appendix '1' is a summary of the feedback received to date. The SACRE Advisor will report back at the meeting on any further outcomes of the surveys.
- 2.4 It is hoped that the outcomes from the questionnaires will enable the SACRE to establish a picture of provision, to assist it to better support effective religious education and better fulfil its statutory role, and these will feed into its review of the year at the next meeting and the next development plan.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk

SACRE Surveys Feedback

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1st December 2009

2.5 The SACRE is asked to consider the following questions:

- What picture of collective worship in our schools do these surveys offer SACRE in Primary, Secondary and in Special Schools?
- What picture of RE do these surveys offer SACRE in Primary, Secondary and in Special Schools?
- Do the findings of these surveys indicate any actions needed to be taken in the new development plan?
- Do the findings of these surveys need to be shared? If so to whom and by what method?

Alternative Options

- The SACRE may wish to identify further questions or priorities in the light of the feedback.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal / Human Rights Implications

- This report has no specific legal or human rights implications.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

- The work of the SACRE contributes to the Corporate Plan aims to improve the opportunities for children and young people.

Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.
- Director of Schools and Learning
- Gill Illic, Principal Advisor

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Summary of the School Surveys.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

Swindon SACRE School's Collected Worship Audit 2009

The numbers of returns we gained for these surveys probably reflects:

- a) The immense workload on the desks of most Headteachers.
- b) Our system of ensuring surveys land in the right hands is flawed.
- c) School worship is not necessarily a priority issue in schools.

Secondary Schools returned Surveys 3/11 (27%)

Pattern of worship – There is one assembly a week for each year group in one school. Another school reported that there was no act of collective worship, but there were assemblies (so there may need to be a clarification of terms.) Another school reported that there was an act of collective worship or tutor period for each pupil every day.

Time of worship – This is held at the beginning of the day.

Responsibility for planning -

In one context it was the Curriculum co-ordinator, in others it was the senior leadership team (SLT).

Involvement – It is led by the SLT Heads of Learning and Tutors in different schools.

Monitoring – In one context it was monitored by verbal feedback in others the impact of assemblies/ worship was not gathered.

Regular materials used –

One school reported using the Secondary Assemblies for SEAL materials. Others had no regular sourced material that they used.

Comments made

Worship is part of the broad based school strategy. Collective worship is delivered in Assemblies.

There is no Collective worship – on occasions members of the SLT will ask pupils to bow there heads at the end of assembly.

Thanks to: - Greendown Community School, Kingsdown School and Swindon Academy

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

Primary Schools

We received 15/62 (including Infant and Junior schools (24%))

Pattern of Worship

All schools reported a daily act of collective worship.

All schools report having a moral code/ theme worship focus and a "Celebration of achievement" focus during the week.

Other assemblies will be key stage worship, class worship or "singing practice and reflection" style worship.

6 schools reported having a youth worker, minister or vicar who helps to lead worship regularly.

Time of worship

Seven schools held their worship in the morning from any time between 8.45 – 10.40 am.

Three schools held their worship in the afternoon at either 1.14 or 2.30 pm.

The rest of the schools varied the time of day for worship between the morning and the afternoon depending on the day of the week.

Planning

In two contexts the Headteacher planned the worship. In two contexts it was organised by the school worship/assembly co-ordinator. In one context it was organised by a deputy head. In the majority it was planned by a team sometimes including the SLT, R.E. co-ordinator, music co-ordinator and other teachers.

Leading worship

All staff in all of the schools responding took turns in leading worship and involve children in assemblies.

Monitoring the Impact of Collective Worship.

53% of schools reported no system of monitoring the impact of worship currently.

Other schools monitored the impact of worship through questionnaires, evaluation sheets filled in regularly by the children and staff, through pupil conferencing and through evaluation of the targets for pupil behaviour.

Resources used:

Primary assemblies SEAL/ Twelve Baskets; Values For Life; Margaret Cooling Assembly materials; Spotify for music; Espresso; Primary Assemblies online; Teachernet Assemblies; Assembly Box; The Bible and Ideas from Courses.

Questions raised / comments made

- Does SACRE realise that in some schools the majority of adults have no faith? We have one teacher in the school who believes in
- God and is willing to lead prayer.
- The law on collective worship needs re-visiting but no political party will have the courage to do so for fear of offending middle English floating votes!

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

- I find the network meetings useful.
- Abi Carr has been a real asset.

What they would like to see -

- A list of CRB checked people from Swindon Faith Communities who would be happy to take assemblies.
- More practical ways to monitor the impact of collective worship
- The Law on Collective worship on 1 page of A4
- I would like to see a leading teacher do a collective worship time with a whole school.
- More ideas for KS1

Thanks to: Bridlewood Primary, Peatmoor Community Primary, Colebrook Junior, Haydon Wick Primary, Liden Primary, Eastrop Infants, Mountford Manor Primary, Gorse Hill Infant, South Marston CofE Primary, Oliver Tomkins CE VA Infant and Nursery, Oliver Tomkins CE VA Junior, Millbrook Primary, Lainesmead Primary, Grange Junior.

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

Special Schools

Returned Surveys 2/7 (28%)

Pattern of Worship

Both schools hold a daily act of collective worship or assembly.

In one it is a daily whole school assembly with a celebration assembly with awards on Friday. The other has class assembly in the form of a circle time with reflection each day except Friday when they have a whole school celebration.

Time of Day

One school has it at the end of the day except on Friday when it is at the beginning of the day, the other always has it at 9.30 am.

Who is involved with planning

In one school it is the Headteacher, staff and the music co-ordinator, in the other it is the Headteacher and staff.

Method of monitoring the impact of worship

Neither school had a method of measuring the impact of collective worship on the life of the school.

Resources used

In one school they emphasised the fact they need a set pattern for the children to feel the familiarity and feel at home.

In the other they used a lot of "big" books and music and photos as well as 3D resources.

Questions asked

How do you effectively measure impact of collective worship?

Support received

One school reported that they benefit from a local vicar who participates and leads worship.

Thanks to: Brimble Hill and The Chalet Special Schools

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

Swindon SACRE RE audit 2009

The numbers of returns we gained for these surveys again probably reflects:

- a) The current workload for most teachers
- b) The accuracy we have of ensuring the survey reaches the right person
- c) The current status of RE in some school

Secondary Schools

4 Schools returned the survey 4/11 36%

Percentage of staff teaching RE who are specialists

This ranged from 100 % to 0%

In one school the Head of RE was not a specialist and there were 6 other people teaching RE – none of whom were specialists. All schools reported they concerns they had about the lack of commitment some of their non-specialists colleagues had to teaching good RE

How RE is delivered

In all four schools it is taught discreetly with some contributions to drop down days or curriculum events.

Use of the Agreed Syllabus annual disc and websites

75% of the schools used the annual disc, one did not know of its existence and none used the saled.org or candyp.org websites that have material linked to the syllabus posted. One school commented that they find the Lat Blaylock RE Today materials very useful.

Time allocation

Key Stage 3 –

100% of schools that returned the survey reported a time allocation of between 50 minutes to 1 hour per week over the whole key stage.

In one school pupils had 1½ hours per week in Year 7.

In another in Year 9 pupils only had the equivalent of ½ an hour's RE a week.

Key Stage 4 -

In one school there is no RE currently taught at KS4.

In two schools students have an hour a week and are entered for a Short Course RE. In one school this is taught on a carousel system in blocks of 6-8 weeks in year 10 and there is no RE in year 11. However, that school also offers an Option course, which is taught in 2 ½ hours per week for year 10 and 11.

Post 16

Of the surveys returned none of the schools offered any post 16 RE.

Standards

50% of the schools reported that standards were rising

50% reported they were staying the same or they weren't sure because they were new to the post.

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

Evidence

Using GCSE results, assessment levels and by pupil conferencing.

Funding

100% reported that they were “surviving just”.

Areas of Focus for RE Departments for the next year

- The implementation of new elements of GCSE
- Raising the profile of RE
- Updating the Key Stage 3 schemes of work
- Introducing assessment in Key Stage 3
- Working with History and Geography on Humanities days

Challenges for RE Departments

- Time for Preparation
- Funding (50%)
- Lack of specialists (50%)
- Disparity of time compared with Geography and History
- Lack of Option at KS4

Successes

- Good integrated drop down day.
- Pupils choosing to do a second short course RE to gain a full GCSE.
- Enthusiastic year 8 pupils.
- Schemes of work updated and pupils are responding well to them.
- GCSE results are better.

Thanks to: Warneford Highworth, Kingsdown, Churchfields and Commonweal Schools

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

Primary Schools

Returned Surveys: 21/62 Primary (34%) (including Infant and Junior Schools)

Numbers of specialists (an element in their ITT or through regular sustained INSET)

9/21 (42%) of schools had one teacher who was an RE specialist,
3 schools had 2 specialists (14%), the rest had no specialists (44%)

How is RE delivered

The majority of RE is taught as a discrete subject for the majority of the time (85%)

In many schools RE is delivered in some partly or fully through PPA time (57%)

Many schools report that there is some degree of integration increasingly occurring (71%)

The kinds of themes where RE becomes integrated are :

Light and Dark, Environment, Festivals, Art in RE, WWII and Judaism, People in our Community, Our Local area (religious buildings), The Romans (who was Jesus) Divali, India, I am Special, Growing, People who Help, Our Wonderful World. Families and Belonging. Animals, Caring, Creation, Persecution, Asia, International Day, Our High Street, Linking artists interpretation of Jesus to a topic on comic books through the Magna Bible.

Use of annual disc and websites

71% of schools had found the Annual disc useful.

The rest had either not used it or were new in post and it had not been passed on to them.

The websites were only used by 11% of respondents.

The following were requested items to be included on the disc –

- More lesson materials and good practice teaching, persona doll training, assessment modules.
- More materials for the Jesus in Art unit, and how it fits in with Every Child Matters and Community Cohesion Resources for Interactive White Boards.
- Links to good free resources on the web.
- Humanism – it should be reflected that some people do not believe in God

Standards

Many schools reported that standards were staying the same (47%)

Some schools reported that standards were rising (33%)

2 schools said standards were dropping. (9%)

3 schools either did not answer the question or stated that they did not know (11%)

Evidence sources

- At the primary phase there are no external national forms of testing RE.
- Children's book scrutiny.
- Pupil conferencing.

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

- Clearly levelled tasks understood by all staff – recorded and tracked.

Funding

- 52% stated they were satisfied with current levels
- 33% stated they were only just surviving on current levels.
- 9% stated they were unhappy with their funding
- The rest failed to comment

Challenges

- Budget restrictions (x2)
- Time (3 schools)
- Confidence
- Class teachers don't back up the PPA taught lessons
- Integrating successfully into Creative Curriculum (3 schools)
- Raising the profile of RE (3 schools)
- Changing staff attitudes – they see it as irrelevant (4 schools)
- Implementing Community Cohesion in RE especially with new diversity within school.
- No formal assessment procedures in place for RE
- Resources – no money
- Staff not teaching to the levels
- Teachers letting RE slip off the end – as their least priority.
- Continuity
- RE syllabus assumes all children are Christian
- Lack of specialist RE knowledge amongst staff
- KS2 – have a quality lesson a week because of timetable restrictions
- Getting all teachers on board
- To ensure that both Attainment Targets are covered
- Enough resources to teach the Hinduism and Sikhism units
- Finding out how to be an RE co-ordinator
- Finding time to be RE co-ordinator
- Time for monitoring children's work – work sampling
- Supporting an American teacher
- Getting children to talk about their beliefs
- Developing the children's questioning skills
- To ensure our school is meeting the requirements
- Parents who do not appreciate the diversity of today and question the teaching of
- Faiths other than Christianity
- Not enough hours in the day

Successes

- Attending an RE course
- Everyone in school being taught some RE
- Having Visiting Speakers
- Year 2 children are enthusiastic
- Children are enthusiastic about learning about other faiths
- Visits to Places of Worship
- Other teaching staff and children are positive
- Levelling happening across the board
- Progression across the school
- Links with the local Church (3)

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

- Dedicated subject manager time
- Enthusiastic children
- A successful SIAS (Church School) Inspection (2 Schools)
- Due to PPA (Planning, Preparation, Assessment), RE is taught regularly in all classes and consistency is ensured
- RE is being taught in a creative way
- Resources are being utilised
- Finding a willing RE co-ordinator
- Planning
- RE folders have raised the profile of RE

Thanks to: Seven Fields Primary, Even Swindon, Beechcroft Infants, Gorse Hill Infants, Liden Primary, Oliver Tomkins CE VA Junior, Haydon Wick Primary, Chiseldon, Grange Junior , Colebrook Junior, Colebrook Infant, Peatmoor Community Primary, Mountford Manor Primary, Wanborough Primary, St Francis CE VA Primary, Toothill, Bridlewood Primary, Lainesmead Primary, Millbrook, South Marston CE VC Primary

Summary of Outcomes of Surveys of Schools

Special Schools

Responses

2/7 Special Schools returned their questionnaires (28%)

Staffing

In 1 school the same person teaches RE to pupils and she is a specialist. In the other there is one specialist but all teachers teach RE.

How is RE delivered?

In one school RE is fully integrated, in the other there is a little integration. Integrated topics include: Water project, Charity Work, Forest Schools, Winter Festivals, Clothes

Use of the disc and websites

One school did not know to what the question referred. The other found that the tasks were too mainstream orientated but has found some foundation stage material useful.

Suggested materials to be added to the disc: ideas for multi-sensory delivery of RE and updates on what worked for others.

Standards

In one school it was felt they were rising and in the other that they were staying the same.

Funding

Both schools were satisfied with their current funding levels.

Planning focus for RE

- To attend a Special Schools and RE CPD day in London.
- Make RE more integrated and therefore more meaningful.
- Use more parents and visitors to make festivals etc more interesting.
- Provide more artefacts to support Multi-faith RE.

Challenges

- Involving staff in RE as it is taught through PPA
- Storing extensive resources
- B squared assessment
- Finding appropriate materials for the development level of children
- Enthusing staff
- Seeing the impact when it is always integrated with PSHE

Successes

- Excellent teaching of RE by PPA teacher
- Wonderful resources
- Great pupil and parent involvement
- Whole school Festival celebrations
- RE stories are linked to Topics

Thanks to: Brimble Hill and The Chalet

Reviewing our Vision as a SACRE

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1st December 2009

Author: SACRE Adviser

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To invite the SACRE over a series of meetings to consider its vision and purpose as a SACRE.

Recommendation

- That the SACRE considers its vision for its role as a SACRE and how it might wish to be promoted to local Schools.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 To ensure that SACRE as a body is clear as to its vision, and purpose.

2. Detail

- 2.1 Over the next three SACRE meetings we will discuss and hopefully come to a consensus about what our vision for SACRE is, why we have that vision and how we hope to implement and communicate it.
- 2.2 This meeting we will try to decide upon a vision statement for SACRE.
- 2.3 A copy of the SACRE's constitution is attached at Appendix '1' as background information to this discussion.

Alternative Options

- There are none.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal / Human Rights Implications

- None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk

Reviewing our Vision as a SACRE

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1st December 2009

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

- The work of the SACRE contributes to the Council's aims to improve the opportunities for children and young people.

Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.
- Director of Schools and Learning
- Gill Ilic, Principal Adviser

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1 – SACRE Constitution

Swindon Borough Council
Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education
CONSTITUTION

Last Updated: 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.

This page is intentionally left blank

Suggested Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE Consultation

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1st December 2009

Author: SACRE Adviser

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To update the SACRE on the consultation on a Suggested Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE and to authorise the SACRE Advisor to submit a response from the SACRE to the RE Council of England and Wales..

Recommendation

- That the SACRE discuss and authorise the SACRE Advisor to provide their comments to the RE Council of England and Wales (REC) on the Suggested Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE.
- That the SACRE consider how such a Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE might be used in the local context.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 The SACRE has a duty to help schools fulfil their statutory obligations with regard to religious education, and to be kept informed of changes in policy or legislation which could have implications for the teaching for RE.

2. Detail

- 1.2 The RE Council of England and Wales (REC) has produced a Suggested Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE, which aims to complement the GTC's general code for teachers. It is the intention that the Code will be voluntary and will be published on the website of the RE Council of England and Wales from December 2009.

- 1.3 RE today when commenting on the new Code states that:

“When that code was being drawn up, there was some concern about the implications of ‘demonstrating respect for diversity and promoting equality’ and whether that principle might ever come into conflict with a teacher’s sense of integrity in relation to his or her own beliefs. This proposed code for teachers of RE is designed to help reassure teachers of RE themselves as well as pupils, parents and colleagues that a professional approach to such issues can and will be observed.”

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk

Suggested Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE Consultation

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1st December 2009

- 1.4 A copy of the Code is attached at Appendix '1'. The original deadline for comments was 24th October 2009, however it is suggested that the SACRE still takes the opportunity to provide comments to the REC, and to consider how this should be used in the local context.

Alternative Options

- There are none.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal / Human Rights Implications

- None

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

- The work of the SACRE contributes to the Council's aims to improve the opportunities for children and young people.

Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.
- Director of Schools and Learning
- Gill Ilic, Principal Adviser

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1 – REC Suggested Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE

REC Suggested Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE

Demonstrating respect for diversity and promoting equality: religious and non-religious belief in schools

<p>Teachers are influential people and it is important that this influence is exercised in a professional and responsible manner, particularly in relation to religious and non-religious beliefs.</p> <p>All teachers operate within the framework of human rights legislation. The following principles are offered for teachers to support them particularly when working with religious and non-religious beliefs.</p>
--

Principles

Exemplifications

<p>1. Respect persons. One hallmark of a professional teacher is sensitivity to pupils. Irrespective of their religious or non-religious beliefs, every pupil should be treated equally out of respect for their dignity as a human being.</p>	<p><i>Learning is planned in a way that allows pupils to express opinions in confidence e.g. collecting anonymous comments on post it notes which are then shared by the class</i></p> <p><i>Before involving any pupil from a particular religious or non-religious background as a 'living resource' teachers consult with them, and ideally their family, to make sure they are comfortable to take on this role, to agree how their contribution will help learning and to check that they are knowledgeable enough to do this successfully</i></p> <p><i>Teachers always allow pupils to withdraw from answering a question and/or participating in an activity if they feel compromised, being careful also not thereby to draw attention to such pupils</i></p>
<p>2. Value reason-giving. Schools are places of critical engagement and respectful, vigorous debate where no belief is above the requirement of reason-giving. Pupils should be encouraged to think</p>	<p><i>The teacher's careful use of the 8 level scale in planning lessons allows pupils to employ skills of evaluation and encourages them to be</i></p>

<p>skilfully about, and to take responsibility for, the beliefs that shape their behaviour and attitudes so that they continue in or change their own beliefs through lifelong critical reflection.</p>	<p><i>reflective learners.</i></p> <p><i>Teachers' planning creates opportunities which allow pupils to challenge and reflect through the use of thinking skills activities such as 'Mysteries' and 'Community of enquiry'</i></p>
<p>3. Practise reciprocity. The Golden Rule, "treat others as you would like to be treated", is a principle which is widely shared across human communities. When handling beliefs in school, teachers should treat other religious and non-religious beliefs as they would like their own beliefs to be treated in the same circumstances.</p>	<p><i>Teachers include the Golden Rule as one of the ground rules for RE lessons negotiated at the start of each year with every class</i></p>
<p>4. Accept contestability and value self-awareness. Beliefs are always contestable; the teacher should recognise that they may be controversial and should frame their language accordingly. This entails a willingness to be self-aware, particularly in relation to the way in which the teacher's own beliefs impact on his or her approach to teaching and learning.</p>	<p><i>The word 'we' is used with caution by teachers eg 'Because we believe in God....' is never appropriate as teachers cannot assume belief, even in a faith school context.</i></p>
<p>5. Be open. Appropriate openness about what a teacher believes can be a professional asset. This means being prepared to answer questions about and talk about his or her own beliefs when that is appropriate (an important professional judgment) in a way that enables pupils to develop in their own learning.</p>	<p><i>Before sharing their response or belief with students teachers routinely ask themselves, 'Will this help the learning?' They also consider prefacing their thoughts with 'My comments/beliefs are no more important than those of anyone else in this room/group', and are receptive to pupils' critical evaluations of their responses</i></p>
<p>6. Promote fair and accurate representation. Where people of diverse beliefs meet, there is opportunity for both conflict and co-operation. To promote cooperation, teachers should treat diversity as an opportunity to work with others in the shared task of achieving</p>	<p><i>Teachers' planning allows their students to work with members of different groups within the same religion or non-religious belief eg ask the same questions to Sunni and Shi'a Muslims. Teachers consider how they present religious or non-religious beliefs, ensuring they avoid</i></p>

excellence in teaching and learning. Teachers should strive for fair and accurate representation of religious and non-religious beliefs by drawing on sound scholarship and by including a range of authentic voices.	the phrase 'Hindus believe...' or 'Jewish people worship by..' preferring 'Some ...' or 'Many ...'.
7. Demonstrate vulnerability. In a culture where open debate and hard questions are encouraged, teachers will often find there is much that they do not know. Professionalism in these circumstances means being open to the discussion moving into challenging territory and being willing to learn.	<p><i>It may be appropriate for teachers to adopt the role of 'learner' alongside pupils thus modelling that to be adult means to accept that you don't always have all the answers. The words 'I don't know' can be powerful in the RE classroom especially if they are followed by the questions 'Is there an answer?' and if so, 'How could we find out?'</i></p> <p><i>In many case, teachers should be, in the words of Philosophy for Children, 'the guide on the side' rather than 'the sage on the stage'.</i></p>
8. Promote balance. The search for truth is central to education. When dealing with a controversial issue, you should encourage consideration of a balanced range of views, even if you find this uncomfortable on occasion.	<i>Teachers provide pupils with cards with a wide range of comments and views and ask them to rank order them, justifying their own ideas to others in the group.</i>

Draft 6

17 September 2009

This page is intentionally left blank

Feedback from Network Meetings

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1 December 2009

Author: Director of Law and Democratic Services / SACRE Adviser

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To update the SACRE on the discussions at Network Meetings.

Recommendation

SACRE is requested -

- To note the report.
- To consider any actions arising for the SACRE from the Network Meetings.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 The SACRE has a duty to help schools fulfil their statutory obligations with regard to religious education.
- 1.2 It is important that the SACRE be kept informed about the provision for religious education and collective worship in schools in the Borough and the support being provided to schools.

2. Detail

- 2.1 The SACRE Adviser meets with teachers of religious education in both primary and secondary schools through regular network meetings.
- 2.2 A Secondary Network meeting was held on Wednesday 4th November 2009 at Churchfields School. Five teachers attended, representing four of the secondary schools.
- 2.3 Key points of discussion at the meeting were:
 - a) The use of the Face to Faith DVD.
 - b) New downloadable films to aid recruitment for GCSE RE and to explain the importance of RE for Open Evenings from NATRE (National Association of Teachers of Religious Education) website.
 - c) How RE looks when it is integrated - some sharing of ideas and materials.
 - d) How to teach Sanctity of Life Issues for Key Stage 4.
 - e) The dates of the next meetings were set and the venues of Commonweal School and the Sikh Gurdwara were agreed. There

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Feedback from Network Meetings

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 1 December 2009

is also a full day's course on 10th June 2010 which will be joint with Wiltshire Secondary RE colleagues.

2.4 The Primary Network meeting took place on Thursday 19th November, and there were seven schools represented. The discussions focused on the following areas:

- a) Successes and challenges.
- b) Using Philosophy 4 Children strategies in RE to develop questioning, reasoning and good speaking and listening.
- c) The next meeting will be on Thursday 18th March 2010 at the Sikh Gurdwara.

2.5 The SACRE Adviser will highlight at the meeting the key outcomes from the network meetings, and any actions that the SACRE might wish to consider as a result.

Alternative Options

- None

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- The costs for the SACRE Advisor meeting with the secondary and primary networks are met from within the SACRE budget, which is £5000 per annum.

Legal / Human Rights Implications

- This report has no specific legal or human rights implications.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

- The work of the SACRE contributes to the Council's aims to improve the opportunities for children and young people, and to support local communities by empowering people to participate in local decision-making and overcoming social exclusion.

Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.
- Director of Schools and Learning
- Gill Ilic, Principal Adviser

Background Papers and Appendices

- None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.