

Swindon Borough Council

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Tuesday, 15 June 2010

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices
(Anticipated meeting room)

At 6.00 p.m.

**Group A:
Christian Denominations
and Other Religions or
Religious Denominations**

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
Mr Mark Cawte, United Reformed Church & Methodist -
Deputy

**Group B:
The Church of England**

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

**Group C:
Teacher Associations**

David Easter
Janet French
Jo Garton
Mrs Tracy Mason
Mrs Emma McCarthy
Mrs Helen Miller
Miss Anne Wang
Mrs Mandy Sandleton

**Group D:
The Local Authority**

Councillor Doreen Dart
Councillor Junab Ali
Councillor Michael Bray
Councillor Raymond Fisher
Councillor Janet Heenan

Support Officers:

Ms Katy Staples, SACRE Adviser
Ms Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser
Miss Sarah Lawrence, Committee Officer, (Telephone 01793 463603)
email: slawrence@swindon.gov.uk

AGENDA

- 1. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair for Municipal Year 2010/11**
Nominations are invited for the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair. The SACRE Constitution requires that the Chair and Vice-Chair are appointed from different representative groups.

Voting for the Chair and Vice-Chair will take place in constituent groups, with each constituent group entitled to a single vote on each role.
- 2. Welcome to New Members of the SACRE and Apologies for Absence**
- 3. 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.
- 4. 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.
- 5. Minutes** (Pages 1 - 6)
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2010.
- 6. Chair's Correspondence and Announcements** (Pages 7 - 8)
 - The Chair will present to Mr Arun Bedi and Mr Mark Cawte (Deputy Representatives on Group A) certificates from NASACRE for attending NASACRE Training in April 2010.
 - A copy of a letter which was sent to the Group Director and to the SACRE Chair from the British Humanist Association is attached as an Appendix for information and will be subject to a further report in due course.
 - Ofsted has in the last few days published 'Transforming Religious Education' an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of RE in primary and secondary schools. Key issues will be highlighted in a report to the next meeting. A copy of the report can be found on the Ofsted website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).
- 7. Implementing the SACRE Development Plan 2010/11** (Pages 9 - 12)
(SACRE Adviser)
- 8. Religious Education in English Schools - Non Statutory Guidance 2010**
(Pages 13 - 28) (SACRE Adviser)
- 9. Effective SACREs - New Training Materials** (Pages 29 - 30) (SACRE Adviser)
- 10. Update on National Developments in Relation to SACREs** (Pages 31 - 34)
(SACRE Adviser)
- 11. Feedback from NASACRE AGM and Other Training Events** (Pages 35 - 44)
(SACRE Adviser)

12. Future meetings of SACRE

Meetings of the SACRE will be held during this municipal year on Tuesday 28th September 2010, Tuesday 7th December 2010, and Tuesday 15th March 2011. All meetings will start at 6 pm.

The SACRE has asked that some of its meetings each year are held at places of worship or schools. Members of the SACRE are invited to contact the Clerk if they wish to offer a venue for a future meeting.

Date of Despatch: 07 June 2010

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.

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STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TUESDAY, 16 MARCH 2010

PRESENT:-

Group A: Councillors	Councillor Fay Howard
Group B: Church of England	Ms Norma McKemey, Ms Steph Mundin and Mrs Penny Summers
Group C: Teacher Organisations	Jo Garton (Vice-Chair in the Chair), David Easter, Janet French, Mrs Tracy Mason and Mrs Helen Miller.
Group D: Other Faiths	Reverend David Howell (Swindon Evangelical Alliance), Mr M S Khan (Muslim Community), Mr Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community), Mrs Wendy Tucker (Methodist Church) and Mr Mark Cawte (URC Deputy).

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Doreen Dart, Councillor Michael Bray, Councillor Mavis Childs, Councillor Raymond Fisher, Mr. Paul Noble, Reverend Arthur Woo, Miss Anne Wang, Mr Malkit Singh Virk and Mr Arun Bedi.

30. Declarations of Interest

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

31. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

32. Chair's Announcements

The Vice-Chair updated the SACRE in respect of the following matters: -

- The latest edition of SACRE News were circulated with the Agenda. The SACRE asked the SACRE Advisor to submit an item for a future edition on the Face to Faith Project.
- The Vice-Chair invited members of the SACRE to contact the Clerk if they wished to nominate items for future agendas.

33. Minutes

Resolved – 1) That the minutes for the meeting held on 1st December 2009, be confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to a correction to the attendance list to include Jo Garton in Group C and to delete Mrs Emma McCarthy from attending as part of Group C.

2) That further to Minute 27, the SACRE note that the General Code of Conduct for teachers was in existence, but agreed that it did not need to consider it further in relation to the code proposed for RE teachers.

3) That further to Minute 29, the SACRE note that Mrs Tracy Mason could no longer host a future SACRE meeting at Crowdys Hill School due to changes in her classroom space.

34. SACRE Annual Report and Development Plan

The SACRE considered in detail the draft SACRE Annual Report for September 2008 to September 2009 to be submitted to the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA). The SACRE split into work groups to provide detailed feedback on the Annual Report, which the SACRE Advisor agreed to take into account in the final version, subject to any additional changes submitted outside the meeting. The SACRE also reviewed the development plan for the SACRE for 2010/11, arising from the priorities in the Annual Report, and agreed for the SACRE Advisor to reflect their comments in the final version.

The Director of Schools and Learning attended the meeting to provide to the SACRE the context for the RE results set out in the Annual Report, and to comment on aspects of the annual report. He highlighted that it was difficult to see a trend in RE results due to the small cohort. It was reported that one school who did not offer GCSE RE this year, either short or long course, had recognised their different offering to other schools and decided to offer short course GCSE to Year 9 and full course GCSE to Year 10 next year. The SACRE were pleased to see how the annual report was able to highlight these issues to schools. The importance of RE as a subject to encourage critical thinking and communication, and as a way of promoting community cohesion was recognised, and it was agreed ways should be sought to further highlight these benefits to headteachers.

The SACRE recognised that it had a limited budget of £5k per annum, which primarily paid for the costs of the SACRE Advisor and her support to the SACRE and cluster meetings. The SACRE were keen to explore ways in which SACRE members could themselves become involved in offering their time to promote RE to schools, assisting with the development plan or training activities and asked for a report to come to their next meeting to explore these opportunities. The Director of Schools and Learning suggested that the SACRE bid for grant or other funding opportunities which would promote RE, but could also enhance teaching and learning in schools, support leadership enhancement and promote community cohesion.

Resolved– 1) That the SACRE Advisor be authorised to finalise the SACRE Annual Report 2008/2009, taking into account the comments provided by SACRE members and to submit it to the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA), including the following comments and any further submitted by SACRE members following the meeting:

- Remove the comments about specific School results from the introduction to Section 1 and place in Section 1b, providing information on the likely re-introduction of RE GCSE short and long course in one of the secondary schools next year.
- Replace the first sentence of Section 1 introduction paragraph 7 with 'Qualitative data from the Primary Schools Survey returns, showed that 80% of responders considered standards in RE were the same or rising'.
- Section 1c, the last sentence of the section 'Overview, RE has in the main continued to be delivered as a discrete subject' be moved to the start of the

second paragraph.

- In Section 5, update the first sentence to reflect that the current vacancies in the Catholic and Baptist nominations means that the SACRE membership does not currently completely reflect the religious and cultural diversity of Swindon, and to include reference to the assistance provided by Churches Together in England in seeking to assist with filling vacancies on the 'Other Faiths and Christian Denominations' Group.

2) That the SACRE Approve its Development Plan for 2010/11, subject to the following amendments:

- Inclusion of the SACRE advisor and Appropriate Representatives of the SACRE exploring the extent to which the Solihull Guidance document is used in Schools to support Foundation Stage teaching of RE.
- Inclusion of SACRE Members as responsible for assisting the SACRE advisor in the delivery of key actions.
- Amendment of SACRE 'Committees' to 'Groups'.

3) That the SACRE Advisor in conjunction with SACRE Members consider how to produce a summary version of the Annual Report to suitable to send out to schools and Councillors for next year's Annual Report, to include examples of good practice of Religious Education from the Borough sourced through cluster meetings.

4) That the SACRE Advisor bring back a report to the next meeting on ways in which SACRE members can become involved in the delivery of the Development Plan for 2010/11 and the promotion of Religious Education in School, including assisting with reviewing of the use of the Solihull support document for Foundation Stage, SACRE members visiting secondary schools to promote RE and encouraging increased survey results, and members of the SACRE and the SACRE Advisor presenting to SAPH / SASH how Religious Education can contributed to community cohesion outcomes and activities on which schools are assessed.

5) That the SACRE Advisor explore with the Director of Schools and Learning and Community Cohesion Team opportunities for grant funding or accessing other funding for the promotion of Religious Education, to support and SACRE aims.

6) That the Director of Schools and Learning provide to members of the SACRE additional information on the size of school cohorts and examination results by school.

35. National Developments for SACREs

The SACRE Advisor provided the SACRE with an update on national policy developments which had implications for the SACRE and its role.

Firstly, the SACRE noted that the Government had published the Religious Education in English Schools: Non Statutory guidance 2010. This guidance replaced elements of Circular 1/94 relating to Religious Education, but did not replace the elements of the circular related to the provision of Collective Worship.

The SACRE noted that the new Primary Curriculum had been issued during January 2010, and would be taught in schools from September 2011. This would need to be reflected in the next Swindon Agreed Syllabus review. It was recognised that the teaching of Religious Education still stood outside the main blocks of teaching required by the curriculum. However, Religious Education was now a statutory subject for all maintained schools and a programme of learning for primary religious education has been issued, with revised non-statutory guidance, which strengthened the status of Religious Education. The SACRE noted that the SACRE advisor was attending the Annual General Meeting of the National Association of

SACREs on 12th May 2010, on behalf of the Bristol SACRE, and it was recommended that the costs be shared with Swindon SACRE, for a report to come back on the outcome to a future meeting. The SACRE agreed that this was appropriate, but suggested that it might be appropriate to nominate other SACRE members to attend events necessary to the SACRE's work, to make the best use of the SACRE budget and the SACRE Advisor's time.

Resolved – 1) That the SACRE note the issue of the Religious Education in English Schools: Non Statutory guidance 2010

2) That further to 1) the Director of Law and Democratic Services be authorised in consultation with the SACRE advisor to make the appropriate changes to the SACRE's Constitution and implement any changes when seeking nominations to SACRE Groups as appropriate, and to report back to the next Committee with any key implications arising from the Guidance, including any updates to the SACRE's constitution.

3) That the SACRE note the place of Religious Education in the new Primary Curriculum.

4) That the SACRE Advisor be nominated to attend the NASACRE AGM on 12th May 2010 on behalf of the Swindon SACRE to report back to the next meeting on key outcomes.

5) That the SACRE consider sending other Members of the SACRE to future conferences or events which are necessary to support the work of the SACRE.

36.

Training Update

The SACRE heard back from two of the four members of the SACRE who had recently attended NASACRE training events.

Mr Mark Cawte had attended a training programme funded by the Department for Children, School and Families (DCSF) and Curriculum Cohesion Unit to build SACRE capacity. The training involved two days, one focused on RE and one on collective worship. In between the training days, delegates were invited to attend a local SACRE meeting of their choice, and make an accompanied visit to a school to see an RE Lesson. Mark Cawte confirmed that the training had been very useful in exploring best practice from other SACREs and exploring the law as to what a SACRE should do, and what makes an effective SACRE. One such idea was the publication of the Annual Report in a summary form which had been discussed as part an earlier agenda item.

Mr MS Khan reported back from attending a one-day SACRE conference. He advised that he had learnt much in relation to the history of SACREs and collective worship and information about other faiths. He had already been able to use his new knowledge in relation to teaching he carries out with local muslim children, and highly commended the conference for offering the opportunity to broaden understanding.

It was noted that Mr Arun Bedi and Mr Arthur Woo who also attended the respective courses would be invited to report back at the next meeting.

Resolved – That the SACRE note the training update.

37.

Feedback from Network Meetings

The SACRE Advisor presented an update to the meeting on the recent Network Meetings. The SACRE were pleased to note that the Secondary Network meeting on 3 February 2010 had been very useful and better attended, and that the next meeting would be on 16th June 2010 at the Sikh Gurdwara. In addition, there

was a full day's Secondary Conference on 10th June 2010 which would be held jointly with Wiltshire Secondary RE colleagues. The Primary Network meeting was also meeting at the Sikh Gurdwara on 18th March 2010.

Resolved - That the report on the Network Meetings be noted.

38. Understanding Faith

Resolved – That the update from Reverend David Howell on his faith be deferred to a future meeting.

39. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The Clerk to the SACRE advised the provisional dates for the meetings of the SACRE in 2010/11 but that these were not yet confirmed. It was agreed that the SACRE should continue to meet on a Tuesday at 6 pm as a general rule.

Resolved – 1) That the Clerk to the SACRE write to all the Members of the SACRE to advise meeting dates for 2010/2011 when finalised.

2) That the Clerk to the SACRE arrange for the next meeting to be held at a local Place of Worship.

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RECEIVED
26 APR 2010

Mr John Gilbert
Director of Children's Service
Sanford House
Sanford Street
Swindon
SN1 1QH

April 23rd, 2010

Dear Mr John Gilbert,

I am writing to you to encourage you to make the co-opted humanist representative to your SACRE a full member of your Committee A.

As you may be aware, in January the government published new guidance on Religious Education. The guidance solidified many positive improvements that have been made in recent years.

Significantly, it deleted the prohibition on humanists serving as full members of SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs), which had appeared in the previous guidance (Circular 1/94). It also observed that SACREs could include members to represent non-religious views (p.13) and noted how this could be done in the interests of inclusion (p.21).

With regards to RE syllabuses the guidance also reaffirmed the government's view that RE should examine both religious and non-religious perspectives. It noted that:

- 'Religious education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It can develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions **and worldviews** that offer answers to questions such as these' (p.7).

The Government had already set out that RE should examine non-religious perspectives in:

- the new secondary curriculum published in 2007, which noted that RE should study a 'secular world view' (p.7 of the KS3 programme of study)
- the new RE programme of learning for the primary curriculum published in September 2009, which recommended that 'over the primary phase as a whole, children should draw on both religious **and non-religious world views**' (p.2)

- the 2004 national framework for RE, which recommended that there should be 'opportunities to study secular philosophies such as **humanism**' (p.14). The framework was endorsed by a wide range of RE professional and religious groups, including the Church of England, the Catholic Education Service and the Muslim Council of Britain.

Following the release of the updated RE guidance we are writing to all those SACREs in England that do not currently have a humanist representative as a full member of their Committee A to urge that you admit one.

We believe that the new guidance has removed any sound reason SACREs may have had about not admitting a humanist as a full member and that as non-religious views should be taught in RE lessons, it follows that humanists should have the same full role in monitoring how their views are taught alongside those representatives of religious groups on your council.

We believe that admitting a humanist as a full member will ensure that your SACRE is both being fully inclusive and acting fairly, while strengthening the position of your co-opted humanist will enable them to better contribute to your work to help ensure that the RE in your area remains broad and balanced. This is the experience of SACREs that do have humanists as full members.

Humanists have had a long history of contributing towards and improving RE. The British Humanist Association has been a member of the Religious Education Council for well over thirty years, while some of our representatives have served on SACREs as full members throughout this period with distinction, including as Chairs and Vice-Chairs of both SACREs and ASCs. We hope that you will let your co-opted humanist member now join this growing list.

If the status of your humanist representative changes in due course I would be very grateful if you could let my colleague Paul Pettinger know so that we can update our records accordingly. You can contact Paul at paul@humanism.org.uk or on 020 7462 4993.

Best regards,



Andrew Copson
BHA Chief Executive
andrew@humanism.org.uk

Implementing the SACRE Development Plan 2010/11

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010

Author: SACRE Adviser

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To consider how SACRE Members can support the delivery of the SACRE Development Plan in 2010/11

Recommendation

- That the SACRE consider and agree how to support the delivery of its Development Plan for 2010/11, as attached at Appendix '1'.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 The SACRE's Development Plan enables it to plan the delivery of its statutory role.

2. Detail

- 2.1 The SACRE at its last meeting approved its Development Plan for 2010/11 and this is attached, as updated, at Appendix '1'. In addition, the SACRE asked for suggestions of ways that SACRE Members might become more involved in the delivery of the plan.
- 2.2 Set out below are key areas of involvement of SACRE Members:
 - a) Promotion of the use of the Solihull Guidance Document to support Foundation Stage via visits to the Primary Network Meetings (Development Plan Item 1) – One or two members to support the SACRE Adviser
 - b) Discussion with Swindon Association of Primary Headteachers (SAPH) and Swindon Association of Secondary Headteachers (SASH) on the contribution of RE to promoting community cohesion. (Development Plan Item 2) – One or two members to support the SACRE Adviser
 - c) Seek to encourage greater survey responses in relation to the delivery of RE and Collective Worship (Development Plan Item 3) - – One or two members able to visit schools.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Implementing the SACRE Development Plan 2010/11

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010

- d) Providing support to the development of the SACRE Annual Report to 2010/11, including collection of examples of RE best practice in Swindon, through network meetings (Development Plan Items 4 and 6) – One or two members supporting the SACRE Adviser or sub-group
- e) Work with SACRE Advisor on developing a new Inter-Faith project in Swindon (Development Plan Items 1 and 2) – One or two members supporting the SACRE Adviser or sub-group
- f) Visits to Schools to provide Faith Perspectives (supporting Development Plan Items 1 and 3) – One or two Faith representatives to be available to schools as required.

2.3 Members of the SACRE are asked to volunteer where they would wish to be involved in these specific activities, and suggest any additional areas where they could provide support. SACRE may wish to consider setting up sub-group(s) to support one or two of these activities.

Alternative Options

- The SACRE Members could select just one or two of the areas of the development plan to support directly.

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- Costs of delivering the SACRE's Development Plan must be contained within the £5k annual budget provided to support the SACRE's work, which includes funding for support from the SACRE Adviser.

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.

Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.
- Paddy Bradley, Director of Schools and Learning
- Sarah Foukes, School Improvement Adviser

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1 – SACRE Development Plan 2010/11

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

SACRE Development Plan April 2010 – April 2011

Area for Improvement: Increasing the effectiveness of SACRE in developing teaching and learning in Swindon schools.					
Success Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of pupils learning in RE is improved through the implementation of recent curriculum developments KS1-3 • School communities are well informed about and confident to implement recent educational initiatives that affect RE, Community Cohesion and Collective Worship. • SACRE , Swindon LA and all schools are informed as to the role and function of Swindon SACRE • SACRE and Swindon LA effectively meet their statutory requirements in relation to RE and Collective Worship. 					
Monitoring	Sarah Foulkes /Gill Illic	Evaluation	SACRE Working group in producing Self Evaluation Annual Report		
Who		Who			
How and when	Regular meetings with RE Adviser Four SACRE meetings a year	How and when	Report to SACRE meeting		
Lead Person	Katy Staples	Others involved	SACRE members		
1.RE Adviser to monitor and support the further development of RE within the curriculum with a particular focus on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Curriculum at KS1+2 • New KS3 curriculum for RE at KS3 • Foundation Stage (particularly an evaluation of effectiveness against the Solihull Guidance Document) 		Start date	End date	Resources Needed	Link to Budget
		APRIL 10	MARCH 11	Secondary Conference (joint with Wiltshire LA)	1 day Adviser time
				3 x Cluster meetings for Primary and Secondary	3 days Adviser time

2. RE Adviser and SACRE members to monitor and support schools in fulfilling their duty to promote community cohesion.	APRIL 10	MARCH 11	Offer as specific cluster meeting CPD for Primary and Secondary. Include specific questions to ascertain impact of delivery in annual survey	
3. SACRE members to secure reliable and valid data on standards of learning in RE and Collective Worship : encourage greater participation from schools in returning surveys.	APRIL 10	MARCH 11	Analysis of Exam data and increased returns from annual survey to schools	2 days adviser time and possible travel costs for some SACRE members
4. SACRE members ensure that SACRE continues to meet its statutory requirements through training and regular updates on educational initiatives relevant to RE and CW	APRIL 10	MARCH 11	Write annual report Attend NASACRE conference and AREIAC Conference	3 days adviser time and SACRE members to write summary report. 1 day adviser (time and cost shared with Bristol SACRE) plus members expenses
5. SACRE Members are proactive in securing full representation on SACRE for all groups.	APRIL 10	MARCH 11	Through help of National SACRE support and membership networking – co-ordinated by the Clerk to SACRE	
6. Adviser to gather evaluative data on effectiveness of courses and resources produced to support schools.	APRIL 10	SEPTEMBER 11	Adviser to collate returned surveys from those attending cluster meetings and receiving resources	Part of the annual survey
7. RE Adviser to respond to additional support needs of schools in the areas of RE and Collective Worship.	APRIL 10	MARCH 11	Respond to requests and offer advice when asked	1 day adviser time

Religious Education in English Schools – Non Statutory Guidance 2010

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010

Author: SACRE Adviser

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To update the SACRE further on the Religious Education in English Schools – Non-Statutory Guidance 2010.

Recommendation

SACRE is requested -

1. To recommend to Council to approve the updated SACRE Constitution attached at Appendix 1, subject to any further amendments which the SACRE wishes to make.
2. To note the summary of the Religious Education in English Schools – Non-Statutory Guidance attached at Appendix '2'.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 To inform the SACRE of changes in national policy which have implications for the SACRE's role and operation.

2. Detail

Religious Education in English Schools: Non Statutory guidance 2010

- 2.1 The SACRE was advised at the last meeting that the Government had published the Religious Education in English Schools: Non Statutory guidance 2010. This guidance replaced elements of Circular 1/94 relating to Religious Education, but did not replace the elements of the circular related to the provision of Collective Worship.
- 2.2 As agreed, the SACRE Constitution has been amended to reflect the changes in the guidance and to correct any errors, and those changes are shown in bold in Appendix '1'. The SACRE is asked to endorse the updated constitution, subject to any additional amendments that it wishes to make.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Religious Education in English Schools – Non Statutory Guidance 2010

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010

- 2.3 A summary of the key elements of the Religious Education in English Schools – Non Statutory Guidance 2010 is attached at Appendix ‘2’ for information. Some of the recommendations of the Guidance, such as the potential for inclusion of Humanists within Group A of the SACRE if a SACRE so chooses, cannot be implemented without further legislation.
- 2.4 Full copies of the Guidance document are available on the SACRE web pages alongside the SACRE Agenda for March 2010. The attached summary highlights the purpose and principles for the SACRE and provides the context for the SACRE to consider how it can be most effective, which is the subject of the next Agenda Item.

Alternative Options

- None

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- There are no financial Implications associated with this report.

Legal / Human Rights Implications

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

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies

- The work of the SACRE contributes to the Councils 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.
- Paddy Bradley, Director of Schools and Learning.
- Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1 – SACRE Constitution Updated June 2010.
- Appendix 2 – Summary of the Religious Education in English Schools Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 (Document Summary Service)

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Swindon Borough Council
Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education
CONSTITUTION

Last Reviewed: March 2004
Updated: June 2010

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, the School Standards Framework Act 1998 and **RE Guidance in English Schools 2010 – Non Statutory Guidance**, including the requirement for the SACRE to broadly represent the proportionate strength of local religious groups.

2. Functions of the SACRE

- 2.1 **The broad role of a SACRE is to support the effective provision of RE in schools in order to enrich the experience of RE for all pupils, and to support the provision of Collective Worship.** SACREs have a range of functions, some of them advisory, and some of them executive.

Advisory Functions:

a) To advise the **Local Authority** upon such matters connected with:

- i) Religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which are not defined as having religious character.
- ii) The religious education to be given in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus.
- 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) **To provide advice and support to schools on the effective teaching of the agreed syllabus, and how RE can contribute to the duty to promote community cohesion.**

c) **To monitor the provision and quality of the RE taught, and the overall effectiveness of the syllabus and to consider with the Local Authority any changes required to the syllabus or support on the effective teaching of RE.**

Executive Functions:

- a) 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.
- b) To consider whether or not to require a review of the Agreed Syllabus as adopted by the local authority.
- c) To publish an annual report **on its actions and on actions taken by its representative groups.**

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** - Eight representatives of such Christian **Denomination** (other than the Church of England) and other **religions and religious denominations** 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.
- 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** - Five representatives of the **Local Authority**

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 **D (Local Authority representatives)**.
- 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.

1. INTRODUCTION

This new guidance is for everyone with a responsibility for, involvement in or interest in religious education. Its introduction points to many changes over the last several years, including: new illustrative RE programmes of study for secondary education published in 2007; a new RE programme of learning for primary education published in January 2010, ahead of the implementation of the new primary curriculum in September 2011; new types of schools, including the establishment of minority faith schools in the maintained sector; the importance of cross-curricular dimensions such as identity, cultural diversity and community cohesion; the establishment of citizenship in the curriculum; and increasing flexibility and variances in the way that RE is located in the curriculum through, for example, integrated cross-curricular learning.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF RE

Chapter 2 of the guidance rehearses the importance of RE as a subject in its own right and in the contributions it makes to promoting ‘the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society’ as required by the *Education Act 2002*. It summarises RE as a subject which:

- **provokes challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development;
- **encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives;
- **enables pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society;
- **teaches pupils to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice;
- **prompts pupils to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

3. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chapter 3 is a detailed but succinct description of the legal framework regulating RE in maintained schools in England. Footnotes cite all the relevant legislative bases of this framework¹.

- the **legal basis of RE** in the curriculum of maintained schools
- the **role and responsibilities** of:
 - a **local authority (LA)**
 - a **standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE)**
 - the occasional body called an **agreed syllabus conference (ASC)**, which every LA is required to establish and support

¹ The nine pages of Chapter 3 may be particularly helpful especially to headteachers, governors, members of SACREs and ASCs and, for example, trainee teachers of RE.

- the **RE curriculum** in different types of schools. Brief paragraphs specifically cover:
 - Community, foundation and voluntary-aided or voluntary-controlled schools without a religious character;
 - Foundation and voluntary-controlled schools with a religious character;
 - Voluntary-aided schools with a religious character;
 - Academies.
- **inspection**
- the **responsibilities of governors and headteachers**. This paragraph states:
 - *Governing bodies and headteachers, like LAs, must:*
 - *ensure that RE is provided as part of the school's basic curriculum, following the locally agreed syllabus, unless they are schools with a religious character which are free to determine their own syllabus;*
 - *provide an annual report to parents or carers giving brief particulars of progress and achievements in all subjects including RE.'*
- **RE provision and the workforce**, [again detailed by type of school]
- **parents and pupils**
- **complaints**

4. GUIDANCE AND GOOD PRACTICE

Chapters 4 – 6 of the guidance set out the details of guidance and good practice for:

- LAs working in partnership with SACREs and ASCs [Chapter 4];
- School governors and headteachers [5];
- People who manage, plan, teach and support RE [6].

These chapters all include thumbnail case studies, and conclude with checklists of the central questions for each of the above groups of people².

[The checklists are reproduced in full in the Appendix to this Summary].

5. FURTHER REFERENCES

Chapter 8 comprises a comprehensive list of professional associations, government agencies, publications and websites relating to RE in schools. Full website addresses are given.

Appendix to Summary DSS 09/10 30

Religious Education in English Schools – Non-Statutory Guidance 2010 - Ref. DCSF-00114-2010

[The following checklists are reproduced as they appear in the original publication]

² It should be noted that the publication's Contents page lists the checklists for Chapter 6 at the end of Chapter 6, but they actually appear at the end of Chapter 7. The page numbers given are, though, correct.

The full guidance can be viewed/downloaded at: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk> > **Entering DCSF-00114-2010 in the Search field, or on Teachernet:**
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/re/guidance/>

Copies of the publication can also be obtained from: DCSF Publications, PO Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham, NG15 0DJ, Tel: 0845 60 222 60, Fax: 0845 60 333 60.

1. Checklist for an effective partnership between an LA and its SACRE/ASC

- Do the LA and its SACRE/ASC carry out their **statutory duties**?
- Is SACRE/ASC properly resourced and well supported by **subject specialist advice and training**?
- Do members of the SACRE/ASC have a **shared vision and understanding** of their aims and purpose, seeking to sustain their positive work in the light of **changing needs and priorities**?
- Are SACRE/ASC **meetings** purposeful and focused on the major priorities of improving the quality of RE in schools?
- Is the SACRE/ASC well informed about **the quality of RE in schools** and about **wider LA and national priorities and developments** affecting the subject?
- Has the LA adopted a **high quality agreed syllabus** that provides a good grounding for planning, teaching and learning in RE and enables the schools to deliver RE as part of a coherent curriculum?
- Is there an effective process of reviewing, revising, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the locally agreed syllabus?
- How far does the SACRE's partnership with the LA enable it to help teachers and schools **raise standards** in RE and the quality of RE teaching?
- How far does the SACRE **contribute effectively to the community cohesion agenda** by supporting inclusion in schools and improving engagement within the community?

2. Checklist for governors and headteachers

- Do all pupils make **progress in achieving the learning objectives** of the RE curriculum?
- Is RE **well led and effectively managed**?
- Are standards, achievement and quality of provision in RE regularly and effectively **self-evaluated**?
- Are those teaching RE suitably **qualified and trained in the subject**? Do they have regular and effective opportunities for CPD?
- Are teachers aware of RE's contribution to developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the **duty to promote community cohesion**?
- Where appropriate, do pupils have opportunities to take courses leading to an **accredited qualification** in the subject?
- Is clear information provided for **parents** on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw?
- Are teachers aware that they **do not have to teach** RE?
- Is RE **resourced, staffed and timetabled** in a way that means the school can fulfil its **legal obligations** on RE and pupils can make good progress?
- Where there are **insufficient teachers** in a school who are prepared to teach RE, does the headteacher ensure that pupils receive their RE entitlement?

3. Checklist for managing the right of withdrawal

- Is the school careful to ensure that RE is of **educational value** to all pupils, whatever their belief background, thus reducing the likelihood of parental/carers requests for withdrawal?
- Does the school ensure that the nature, objectives and content of RE are **shared with parents**?
- Are parents or carers notified about plans for RE as part of the curriculum for the coming session for their child's class?
- Does the school have a **procedure in place** for parents or carers who want to withdraw children from RE?
- Does the **organisation of the curriculum** allow parents to exercise the right of withdrawal?
- What **practical implications** arise from a request by parents to withdraw a child from RE and how might they be addressed?
- Are **all those who teach RE** aware of the school's procedures?
- Are **all teachers aware of their own right not to have to teach RE**?

4. Checklist for people who manage, plan, teach and support RE

- What implications do the **school's ethos, values and aims** have for the provision of RE? For example, the school's specialist status, religious character, or the nature of the school's community.
- What about the school's **overall curriculum priorities**? Are statutory requirements for RE being met? Is RE's contribution in terms of raising standards and achievement being taken into account?
- Will RE be **taught separately**, be **combined** with other subjects, or **both**?
- Will RE be taught **every week, term or year** in the key stage? Is the programme of study required by the agreed syllabus properly met? Is the provision evaluated as part of the school's self-evaluation process?
- What about **curriculum design**? Does the RE curriculum ensure an appropriate balance between RE-led units, whether systematic or thematic, and cross-curricular units?
- How will the organisation of the RE curriculum be **adapted to suit individual pupils** with different abilities and needs? For example, the needs of the most able pupils can be met by accelerating their learning, and the needs of less high-achieving pupils can be met by reinforcement techniques.
- How will the design of the RE curriculum help pupils to make a smooth **transfer from one key stage to the next** and to make **steady progress** within a key stage? For example, through the provision of bridging units to support transition from key stage 2 to 3.
- What about **curriculum enrichment**? What might need to be added to the RE curriculum to enrich pupils' learning in terms of, for example, fieldwork, LOtC [*learning outside the classroom*], and special focus days?

5. Checklist for monitoring and evaluating RE provision

- Have RE curriculum decisions been based on the **principles of effective planning**? Has there been sound application of these principles?
- Can the **parental right of withdrawal** be accommodated, where necessary? Does the model of curriculum delivery take into account how provision might be adapted?
- **Do pupils value and recognise the contribution RE makes to their understanding** - of different communities and ways of life, and to the concept of diversity?
- Do pupils have real opportunities to explore and gain **first-hand experience of religious and cultural diversity**?
- Does the school **help pupils to deepen their understanding** - of their own beliefs and values? Of other people's?
- Does RE provide **a context to build relationships with the local communities** - including those groups with whom it is more difficult to forge links?
- Within the school, does RE provide **a voice for religious and other minority groups**? Does it develop a culture of mutual understanding and respect?
- **Does the school treat religion and belief seriously**? Does it model ways of building respect?
- Does the school know enough about **the diversity of religion and ethical perspectives within the local community**? Does it explore ways of making links with those communities?
- **In a largely mono-cultural school**, how well is RE working to foster a broader awareness of cultural and religious diversity?

6. Checklist for planning RE post 14

- **Do the pupils have opportunities to:**
 - reflect on, express and justify their own opinions and beliefs about religion and religious, philosophical, moral and spiritual questions?
 - develop their own values and attitudes so that they can recognise their rights and responsibilities in light of their learning about religion and belief?
 - relate their learning to the wider world, gaining a sense of personal autonomy in preparation for adult life?

- develop skills that are useful in a wide range of careers and in adult life generally, especially skills of critical enquiry, creative problem-solving, and communication in a variety of media?
 - have their achievements in RE recognised by an approved qualification?
- **If the pupil is to study RE wholly or partly in a further education college:**
 - has appropriate provision been made?
 - is it coherent and of good quality?
- **Has a parent or pupil exercised their right of withdrawal?** Has this been taken into account in RE planning?

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Effective SACREs – New Training Materials

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15 June 2010

Author: SACRE Adviser

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- For SACRE Members to review training materials provided by NASACRE.

Recommendation

- That the SACRE note the training materials and consider how they might be used to support the development of the SACRE.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 To give SACRE Members the opportunity to review information provided by NASACRE to support their work.

2. Detail

- 2.1 The NASACRE have recently been developing a number of training materials to assist SACREs to be effective in line with the new non-statutory RE Guidance in English Schools 2010.
- 2.2 The SACRE adviser will provide a demonstration to the SACRE of some of the materials provided. Members are asked to consider how they would wish to use these materials to ensure that they are operating effectively.

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.

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.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Effective SACREs – New Training Materials

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15 June 2010

Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.
- Paddy Bradley, Director of Schools and Learning
- Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser

Background Papers and Appendices

- None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Update on National Developments in Relation to SACRE

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010.

Author: SACRE Adviser

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To update the SACRE on national policy developments in relation to the provision of RE and to consider implications for Swindon Agreed Syllabus.

Recommendation

SACRE is requested -

1. To note the report and the new national developments in relation to RE.
2. To ask the Group Director Children to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to begin the review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 The SACRE is required to request the Local Authority to review the Locally Agreed Syllabus every five years, and can advise the local authority and schools on teaching materials and teacher training to support the delivery of RE in the Agreed Syllabus.

3. Detail

National Approach to RE / Locally Agreed Syllabus

- 2.1 The SACRE has previously been advised that the implementation of the Rose Review creating a new Primary Curriculum would be delayed until after the election. Early indications are that the new Government will not be implementing the recommendations of the Rose review. It is understood that a new committee is being set up to write a new national framework for RE. A small number of SACREs have been asked to look at the development of a recommended model in relation to which elements should be part of a National RE curriculum, and which should be locally determined. It is understood that this may be offered for SACREs in 2011.
- 2.2 Swindon currently has an adopted Locally Agreed Syllabus which runs from September 2005 to September 2010. In line with advice from the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) the SACRE had not begun

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Update on National Developments in Relation to SACRE

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010.

its review of the syllabus, as it was awaiting implementation of the changes in the Primary Curriculum, and receipt of the RE Guidance in English Schools 2010.

- 2.3 However, the SACRE is required to ask the Local Authority to call an Agreed Syllabus Conference every five years to review the Agreed Syllabus. As the national picture in relation to RE seems uncertain in the near future, it is recommended that the SACRE asks for the Local Authority to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to agree the way forward. This would largely comprise representatives of the current SACRE. Options before the Conference would be to:
- a) To agree a timetable and process for a substantial review of the Syllabus. There are potential difficulties with following this course given the current uncertainty as to the Government's review of the primary curriculum.
 - b) To consult with school and other relevant bodies about adopting the current Syllabus for a further two or more years or until there is clarity in the national picture.
 - c) Option b, but to provide additional guidance to Schools in relation to the changes in national policy since it was first published including a great emphasis on Every Child Matters and the role of RE in enabling schools to meet their duty to promote community cohesion.
- 2.4 The current agreed syllabus was drafted in conjunction with Wiltshire Local Authority. It is understood that Wiltshire LA convened an agreed syllabus conference at the end of their last SACRE Meeting in March to begin the process and agree the terms of reference for their own review of the Agreed Syllabus. The SACRE Advisor will provide an update at the meeting in relation to their progress.

Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) – Training and Events

- 2.5 The Religious Education Council of England and Wales are promoting a range of resources and events of which the SACRE should be kept informed:

REsilience Project

- 2.5.1 The REC was commissioned by the former DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families) to design, develop and deliver a Resilience training programme for RE Teachers in maintained secondary schools in England and Wales. This initially ran as a

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Update on National Developments in Relation to SACRE

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010.

pilot in early 2010, but schools can now apply to be part of the programme in September 2010 to March 2011.

2.5.2 The intention is to train RE teachers to give them confidence when addressing contentious issues in the classroom, including potentially extremist views, and to support individual schools to better promote community cohesion. The programme involves mentors working with individual schools over a six-week period.

2.5.3 Swindon schools have been sent information about the Resilience project and can apply to take part.

RE Handbook for Teachers

2.5.4 The Religious Education Council of England and Wales have published a Religious Education Handbook. This is a new electronic handbook for RE teachers in all sectors and is a very useful guide. This is the first time there has been something so comprehensive available electronically, and can be found at www.re-handbook.org.uk.

2.5.5 The handbook draws on information from a range of expert contributors from different faith traditions, teachers, advisers and academics, and includes sections on the history of RE, religious traditions and beliefs, the RE curriculum, approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, among others.

2.5.6 Teachers will be advised of this resource through Network meetings.

Celebrating RE Month – March 2011

2.5.7 The Religious Education Council of England and Wales have announced a celebrating RE Month for March 2011. Flyers for the event will be available to SACRE members at the meeting and further information is available on www.celebratingre.org.

Alternative Options

- The alternative options, where applicable, are set out in the body of this report.

Risk Management

<i>Financial and Procurement Implications</i>

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Update on National Developments in Relation to SACRE

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010.

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- The Local Authority is required to support the costs of any Local Agreed Syllabus Conference. Currently the SACRE has an annual support budget of budget of £5k for its work, which includes the support costs of a SACRE Advisor.

Legal / Human Rights Implications

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

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies

- The work of the SACRE contributes to the Councils 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.
- Paddy Bradley, Director of Schools and Learning.
- Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser

Background Papers and Appendices

- None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Feedback from NASACRE AGM and Other Training Events

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010

Author: SACRE Adviser

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To update the SACRE on NASACRE AGM and other Training Events.

Recommendation

SACRE is requested -

- To note the report and consider any implications for its work.

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

NASACRE AGM

- 2.1 At the last meeting the SACRE agreed that the SACRE Adviser should attend the NASACRE AGM on 12th May 2010 and report back to the SACRE.
- 2.2 The SACRE Adviser's report on the day is attached at Appendix '1' for information.

Joint Secondary Conference with Wiltshire Schools

- 2.3 The Secondary Conference for teachers, which is a joint event with Wiltshire Schools, will take place on 10th June 2010.
- 2.4 The SACRE Adviser will provide feedback from the day. Any of the secondary head representatives on the SACRE are invited to provide additional feedback.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

Feedback from NASACRE AGM and Other Training Events

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th June 2010

Alternative Options

- None, as this report is for information.

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 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
- Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Summary from SACRE Adviser of NASACRE AGM – 12th May 2010

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples on 0117 927 7454 or katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org or from Sarah Lawrence on 01793 463603, Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk.

NASACRE AGM

Wednesday 12th May 2010

The British Medical Association, Tavistock Square, London

Key Note Address: **Clare Short** former MP and minister

“Religion, Politics and Community: SACRE’s capacity to engage ...”

Pre-amble

(Clare Short was speaking the day after David Cameron became Prime minister.)

“Interesting times” – the Chinese curse.

However there is a real sense of a new beginning and hope in a Hung Parliament.

We live in the age of a voracious 24 hour news driven political world – which sucks politicians into its agenda – creating arrogant central politics.

Power is sucked into No 10 with the Commons as a rubber stamp.

Potentially a coalition will force a more considered style of governing – if different backgrounds and traditions are thrashing things out, this may result in better decisions - which will be for the good.

However – difficult times are ahead – there will be massive cuts and increases in taxation. Things will be cut back to spending levels of 1997.

There may be some hope in this – as the centralisation of public services has meant bureaucratic targets which have stifled creativity and spontaneity - if those elements are cut it will be good.

Main Address

Praise for what we have achieved

Religious Education in Birmingham in the late 50s and early 60s, as a Catholic girl of Irish decent – they would point at the local Anglican Parish Church and refer to it as the church that was stolen from them.

Late 1950s and 60s saw post war migration from the Caribbean and the Indian sub-continent.

With this migration came an increase in deep racism – Enoch Powell “Rivers of Blood” speech. 15% National Front Vote.

They were nasty times and we have come a long way since then.

RE teachers have played an important role in massively shifting the attitudes of people in Britain and in educating people to understand a diversity of faith.

Within 10 years Birmingham will be a minority white city with a majority nothing population.

Learning about diversity in schools has meant liberation of people’s stories. It is not just about avoiding discrimination – we are bigger people when we learn from others.

RE teachers have been instrumental in leading our society through education to be one where we can appreciate each others rich stories.
It is not the same in other European countries – where there are silos of difference.
We have done well and RE teachers should be proud.

Challenges ahead

Clare quoted the main purposes of RE (from the NASACRE SACRE booklet) as being to help young people to answer those huge questions of meaning and purpose, which are the hardest questions people have ever asked.

As educational professionals it has to be done without being political – which is to walk on eggshells.

Britain is richer now than it has ever been (Richard Layard's work on Happiness and Wilkinson's "The Spirit Level"). Individual happiness does increase up to £7,000 per head, per annum, as basic needs are ensured – after that there is a decline in happiness levels as competitiveness and dissatisfaction increase.

The satisfaction levels in some of the wealthiest countries and States in the US, with the greatest inequalities, are very low – indicators of dissatisfaction are: crime, violence, drug addiction, alcohol addiction and teenage pregnancies.

We are rich in Britain – but not happy – so what is the meaning of life? – This is a question RE needs to address.

Ours is a Hedonistic culture – overworking with no time for those you love.

Yet most report that there is no meaning without relationship to others and that those engaged in service to others enjoy the greatest happiness.

These questions belong on the RE agenda.

But is this political?

We live in a global IT web world – one global community?

This provides massive threats.

Climate change – catastrophes – Hurricane Katrina – water shortages – lead to conflicts – middle East.

This in turn leads to a displacement of people – so demands on immigration of richer countries will grow – with an ugly expensive ineffective system of processing asylum seekers.

There is a deep mood in the country - a concern about immigration.

Old established migrants from the post war wave of migration are angry about the new wave of migrants.

The bottom of the labour market is affected.

In Netherlands and Sweden this has led to a swing to the right and anti-Islamic feeling and legislation.

International Convention of Asylum seekers need re-visiting.

Where there is more migration there is likely to be more "nastiness". Nasty Politics could take over.

We are at a point in History.

The way we live in OECD's is not sustainable – and others want to live like us.

The world population is expanding rapidly.

There needs to be a way of providing for all – or we will kill each other.

Either we share or even the selfish billionaire will be without safety and the world will become very ugly.

The wealthy cannot inoculate themselves from this.

In the Middle East and Gaza there is growing division which affects the globe.

A division of Arab/Muslim v Other countries.

Muslims feel "got at" – which leads to greater hatred.

Geo-Politics effect the RE agenda.

Global co-operation will be harder if we are ripping up the rules set up at the end of WW2 – which are all breached in the Middle East.

It is not good enough just to listen to one another, Geo-Politics affects everything we do in RE.

This is notable in the agenda of the BNP, the rhetoric has shifted from being anti-black to being anti-Islamic.

Issues of Religion are being used as the identity of conflict as identity is drawn around religion.

This is an issue for us.

Religious traditions can be misused and the results can be ugly.

We cannot gloss over this.

We are moving into a period of cuts – there is no boom where money might be sprinkled to all groups.

There will be competition for resources and some will get more and some will get less.

Support for the BNP is likely to rise.

RE needs to hold moral respect and get these issues on the agenda.

People are yearning for something more than hedonism.

RE should be a force that holds on to generous values.

You walk on eggshells and take the next generation by the hand to guide them through the difficult times.

Questions

Q. The place of science and environmental developments in helping a dividing world?

A. Ground heating, solar power – more emphasis on engineering important.

Q. How can we make SACREs more effective?

A. Problem often is that SACREs all concentrate on commonalities and not divisions – needs to be more discussion of the misuse of our religious traditions – greater honesty. We have had a period of education initiatives from top-down that fail to consult the practitioners. More effective SACREs – there have been great achievements in Birmingham – but I cannot tell you how to be more effective – that is up to you.

Q. How do you counter the statements and beliefs made by BNP supporters?

A. We need to ask why such people become so full of hate and fear. Blame will only increase hate.

We need to be generous and look for solutions.

People support BNP because they are full of disgruntled anger (also now including Sikh and Caribbean supporters).

We need to approach people with a generous attitude – draw people in not push them out.

Q. Have voting patterns and religious groups for certain political parties changed ?

A. There is less religious block identification with any political party and people appear to be putting less posters in their windows - greater privacy around voting.

Q. Is there really progression in religious understanding aren't we asked to provide sitar and samosas?

A. Token samosas are everywhere. However there has been real progress and you don't know what you have done - today's generation do know more.
Someone earlier mentioned 3rd generation Pakistani children still having to define themselves as Pakistani.

People are British but it is good that people acknowledge their origins.

Diversity is rich but labelling people has helped - for example working class boys underachieving.

Q. What do you think has been the legacy of your time in office as Secretary of State for International Development?

A. I was fortunate in that I had 6 years in one department. That doesn't happen often.

Development is about self interest not altruism.

We had the freedom to do it properly.

Now in the instant 24 hour news age that is not likely to happen again.

During the time of my office

- Rwanda
- Balkan crisis,
- the end of the cold war
- Nelson Mandela was freed and became the first President of South Africa in a fully representative democratic election
- the Berlin wall came down.

2000 Millennium Goals and a hope for change.

Then War on Terror and Iraq - changed the agenda.

But Education does transform lives and their country.

Particularly the education of girls.

We can advance people's opportunities.

But we are the poodle of the US - it is like being the best friend of the biggest bully in the playground.

We need to work with others for the safe good order of the world.

My biggest regret: Iraq **Chair's report: Partnerships** - In June 2009 a number of us attended a fascinating and useful conference run jointly by the Inter Faith Network UK and NASACRE, which Denise Chaplin and Michael Metcalf prepared on our behalf in partnership with Harriet Crabtree. The day itself was a huge success, with SACREs and interfaith organisations working together, sharing ideas and practice and learning much about and from each other. The resulting report,

which has recently been distributed, contains a lot of excellent thinking and practice and, in the 'key points' at the beginning, many helpful suggestions for moving this forward.

Review and renewal of the **RE Subject Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)** has been a partnership between NASACRE, NATRE (through Deborah Weston) and AREIAC (through Dave Francis). This is being piloted this term and will be available from September. As well as being helpful to schools, it will also help SACREs with their monitoring role - useful document is the RETool that Michael Metcalf, Bruce Gill and Katherine Wedell have been working on. This is a combination of the SACRE SEF and the report template. It will enable SACREs to evaluate their strengths and development needs, celebrate their successes in an individual way and report on work that they have done.

Month of celebration: March 2011 sees the first month of celebrating RE. Denise Chaplin is chairing the group and it is important that all SACREs work with their schools to raise the profile of good RE in maintained schools and Local Authorities. A main theme of this from NASACRE will be to use our 2011 Youth Forum projects as a strong link to Celebrating quality RE. This will be followed at the next AGM in 2011 with a major focus on pupil voice and participation in RE and Community Cohesion.

Agreed Syllabus Collaboration Project: A number of SACREs have been involved in a project co-ordinated by QCDA, which is seeking to find a collaborative basis for Agreed Syllabus development in the light of most recent developments in RE and the Curriculum. The approach has been to ensure that local determination enables the Agreed Syllabus to reflect the local faith communities, whilst providing a framework for planning this into national initiatives and priorities, so that pupils can experience RE that is in line with the rest of their learning. I think this is one of the major challenges facing SACREs in providing quality learning for all pupils.

Keeping in touch: Over the last two or three years we have faced the situation of having to phone and e-mail around to ask SACREs to pay their annual subscriptions and/or AGM fees, and this both is time-consuming on our resources (especially Yvonne) and has an impact on our finances. I want to stress that we can only continue to support you if we have the resources to do so and thus we do need prompt payment of subs and fees. This year, we will be checking payment of subs and fees from this and last year and those who have not paid will not be able to vote at the AGM. We do not want to go down this route unless we have to, so please do chase up and check your SACRE is up to date before you come.

Secretary's Report: was about the recruitment and training of new SACRE members and we were given a CD which we can use to train our new members and to update all of us.

Treasurer's Report: NASACRE has held the Annual Subscription at £85 for the last three years, but the Executive Committee believes that an increase to £95 is necessary in order for NASACRE to be able to sustain its support for local SACREs, and its activities on their behalf in national developments and initiatives.

Proposed Constitutional Changes Motion: That NASACRE increases the number of co-opted places on its Executive Committee from three to six - the significant increase in activity in which NASACRE has engaged, in recent years. In plain terms, there is much more work for the Executive Committee to do. Therefore it is seeking to increase its co-opted membership both in terms of

numbers, and also in terms of the range of expertise, skills and networking the Executive Committee can deploy. The EC does not consist of designated representatives of stakeholder groups. Rather, each EC member carries a responsibility to work collaboratively and inclusively to achieve the purposes of NASACRE in serving local SACREs.

A section on the *Celebrating RE* website on fundraising provides information for regional and local groups and schools who wish to apply for grants to carry out particular local projects, with suggestions for exploring the existence of local charities and trusts. This should be available in the next three weeks.

The ***Celebrating RE*** website is the hub for all *Celebrating RE* activities and includes a calendar of events (both advance planning and events during the month of March 2011), an interactive map showing regional activity, a wealth of ideas for activities by teachers and their pupils, schools linking with each other, local communities, faith communities and SACREs, involving parents, governors, politicians, the media, arts and creative groups and many others.

The *Celebrating RE* website is the main means of communicating with teachers; this will be supported by a news feed to those who sign up to the mailing list as well as by the use of social media to engage new subscribers.

Ofsted Report: The next Long Report on RE (draft title: *Transforming Religious Education*) is due for publication but was delayed once the General Election was announced. All publications go into purdah for the period of the election and the Report won't be out until late May at the earliest. The Report will summarise the main findings of the inspection evidence from 2006-2009 and will draw out a number of key themes related to:

- Enquiry-based learning in RE – in relation to on-going concerns about progression, the process of learning and creativity in RE
- The contribution of RE to community cohesion
- The effectiveness of the current statutory arrangements for RE

Among the main findings there are issues about:

- The access and provision of subject CPD
- The impact of the revised secondary curriculum on RE provision
- The quality of learning in the short course GCSE
- The narrow pattern of curriculum delivery of RE in many primary schools
- The variability in the degree to which SACREs are provided with the support they require to carry out their roles effectively

Resilience

- National RE training programme
- 700 schools
- Preventing violent extremism
 - Controversial issues

- Handling diversity
- Deepening understanding
- Roll-out September 2010 – March 2011
- Website: www.re-silience.org.uk

Questions to panel of Mark Chater (QCDA), Jacqui Wordsworth HMI, Brian Gates (RE Council) and John Keast

Humanists on SACREs – new framework could only work within the law so humanists cannot be on Committee A or vote, though they could be if they were representatives on Committees C or D. Any change would have to be tested in a court of law though European Human Rights legislation which might trump UK law. There has been humanist representation on the RE Council since 1973.

Collective worship – nothing likely to happen re-updating circular 1/94

APP – exemplars for levels 3-8 will appear in July

Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons on SACREs – if significant numbers in the area, local authority can put reps. On Committee A

Monitoring – use pupil voice

Awards – went to BANES, Bexley, Blackpool, Leicester, Newham and Warwickshire. There were lots of good ideas but many did not include enough detail on how the award money would be spent. A project has to be owned by whole SACRE.

This report was written by Katy Staples (Bristol, Swindon, South Glos. and Wiltshire SACREs) and Derek Jay (South Glos. SACRE)

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