

Implications of National Developments in Religious Education

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 15th March 2011

Author: SACRE Advisor

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To update the SACRE on national developments in relation to the provision of RE and implications for local teaching.

Recommendation

SACRE is requested -

1. To note the report .
2. To recommend that a letter is sent to all Secondary Schools in Swindon asking them about their plans in relation to the teaching of Key Stage 4 Religious Education, to continue to meet the statutory requirements and the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 The SACRE has a duty to help schools fulfil their statutory obligations with regard to religious education.

2. Detail

- 2.1 The Government's Schools White Paper was issued on 24th November 2010, announced the intention for the development of an English Baccalaureate (E Bacc). Confirmation was received at the last SACRE meeting that the Humanities requirement in the English Baccalaureate would not include Religious Education. In addition, it was understood that the national curriculum review would also not include Religious Education, and therefore it will remain locally determined. Attached at Appendix '1', for information, are extracts from a personal view on the potential implications of the changes from John Keast, is a former RE advisor to the DFSC and to the QCA.
- 2.2 Since the last meeting, there has been a great deal of public lobbying for RE to be included in the English Baccalaureate, and the Government is undertaking a consultation on the content of the E Bacc which is due to close on 8th March 2011.

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- 2.3 The implications for schools in relation to the teaching of Religious Education reported nationally is that a number of Secondary Schools are beginning to put less priority of the teaching of Religious Education at Key Stage 4.
- 2.4 In order to understand the local implications, it is recommended that the SACRE Advisor send a letter to all Secondary Schools in Swindon to ask how they will they will be seeking to deliver Religious Education in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus and statutory requirements in the next year, in the light of the development of the E-Bacc. A draft of the letter is attached at Appendix '2' for the SACRE's consideration.

Alternative Options

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

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- This report has no specific financial or procurement implications.

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 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.
- Paddy Bradley, Director of Schools and Learning.
- Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Extracts from paper by John Keast
- Appendix 2- Draft letter to Secondary Schools