

**Advice to Swindon LA**

**Copied to Headteachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies**

**Religious Education in Swindon**

Swindon is proud of the high quality provision for Religious Education found in its schools. The recent annual report (enclosed), shows that in most schools, students' examination success in Religious Education contributes to an overall pattern of raising achievement in the Local Authority.

At a recent meeting of SACRE a number of concerns about the teaching of RE were raised. In particular timetable pressures and the specific desire to ensure that students are able to meet the requirements of the English Baccalaureat may mean that time allocation for Religious Education has been squeezed.

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 This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school except for those withdrawn by their parents.

SACRE also wishes to remind governors that all Academies "In accordance with their funding agreement, where an Academy has not been designated with a religious character the Academy must ensure that the religious education is given to all pupils at the academy in accordance with the requirements for the locally agreed syllabus" Religious Education Guidance for Schools 2010

In Swindon, the key document in determining the teaching of RE is the Swindon Agreed Syllabus. Schools designated as having a religious character are free to make their own decisions in preparing their syllabuses.

In relation to Key Stage 4, the recommended time allocation in the Agreed Syllabus is 45 hours per year (p3 Agreed Syllabus for Teaching RE in Swindon 2006)

Swindon SACRE would like to be informed what each secondary school in Swindon is planning in order to meet its statutory duty for Religious Education for all pupils, and in particular for students at KS4..

If you have any concerns about this matter, please use the contact details above.

Yours faithfully,

Councillor Doreen Dart

Chair

Swindon Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education