

National Developments in RE

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: 6th December 2011

Author: SACRE Advisor

Parish / Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To update the SACRE on National developments in Religious Education (RE).

Recommendation

SACRE is requested -

- To note the report.
- To consider any actions required as a result of the feedback from the National RE Conference and ARIEAC Conference.
- To consider the NASACRE guidance on the roles of SACRE Advisor and Clerk, and to consider if to recommend any changes to the operation of the Swindon SACRE as a result.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 The SACRE has a duty to help schools fulfil their statutory obligations with regard to religious education and to do so needs to keep up to date on the latest national developments in RE.

2. Detail

National RE Conference

- 2.1 A National RE Conference was held on 1st and 2nd October, drawing together a range of national bodies which have an interest in RE. The SACRE Advisor attended (as did Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte) and a copy of her bullet point notes of the Key Note Speech from Mr John Keast, Chair of the RE Council of England and Wales, are attached at Appendix '1'. One of the key proposals from the Conference was to discuss a new central role for the RE Council to act as the key co-ordinating national body for the promotion of Religious Education.
- 2.2 The SACRE Advisor will report back on the conference and highlight any issues of which the SACRE needs to take account. The SACRE is asked to consider:
- Does the SACRE agree with the assessment of the current threats and opportunities for RE?

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- Does the SACRE think the proposal that the RE Council should be the main central forum for the RE voice nationally is a positive step?

ARIEAC Conference

- 2.3 The SACRE Advisor has also attended a day conference with ARIEAC (Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisors and Consultants), at which the future of assessment was discussed. It was anticipated that the Government may replace the current levels of attainment with end of key stage statements in the forthcoming National Curriculum. The conference discussed if RE adopted the same approach for assessment, then what end of key stage statements could look like for the teaching of RE. The SACRE Advisor will provide further information at the meeting on the Conference and the potential implications for the teaching of RE.

Best Practice for SACREs

- 2.4 The NASACRE has issued guidance for SACREs and Local Authorities on best practice for SACRES in relation to the roles for the SACRE Advisor and the SACRE Clerk. These are attached for information at Appendix '2'. The SACRE is asked to consider if it wishes to recommend any changes to the way in which it operates in the light of these documents.

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. Any costs of support to schools from the SACRE will be met from its annual budget of £5000.

Legal / Human Rights Implications

- Any legal implications are set out within the body of the report. There are no specific 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.

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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 – Summary from the SACRE Advisor of the Key Note Speech from John Keast at the National RE Conference.
- Appendix 2 – NASACRE guidance on the roles of the SACRE Advisor and Clerk.