

Provision of RE in Schools

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

17 July 2012

Author: SACRE Advisor /
Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To update the SACRE on representations to be made to Swindon Schools in relation to RE.
- 1.2 The SACRE has a duty to help schools fulfil their statutory obligations with regard to the provision of religious education and Collective Worship.

2. Recommendations

The SACRE is recommended to:

- 2.1 Welcome the endorsement of the Swindon Children's Trust Board to its work and proposal to write to schools in relation to the provision of Religious Education.
- 2.2 Request that the Chair of SACRE, in conjunction with the Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment and SACRE advisor, write to all Secondary Schools in the Borough to highlight Religious Education results and support statutory teaching of Religious Education.
- 2.3 The SACRE Advisor invite all schools in the Borough to provide information to the SACRE of how in the widest sense they are teaching the Locally Agreed Syllabus and providing collective worship, via a survey on the basis of that set out at Appendix '2' subject to any amendments that the SACRE wishes to make.

3. Detail

- 3.1 As part of reviewing its Annual Report, and RE results in the Borough at the last meeting, the SACRE asked for Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment (at that time the Director of Teaching and Learning) to report to the Children's Trust Board on the SACRE's concerns about how access to RE in the Borough, and include a copy of the SACRE Annual Report.
- 3.2 In addition, the SACRE requested that a letter go out to Secondary School Head teachers, copied to the academy trusts where appropriate, highlighting the requirement to teach RE, quoting from the letter received from the Minister for Education on the importance of RE, referring to the specific results for the school, and asking for information on how pupils were being access to RE.

Provision of RE in Schools

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

17 July 2012

-
- 3.3 The letter to schools was deferred until the Children's Trust Board had had the opportunity to consider the matter at its meeting on 14th June 2012. A copy of the minutes from this meeting are attached at Appendix '1'. The Children's Trust Board appreciated the work of the SACRE and its concerns regarding access to Religious Education in the Borough. It supported the SACRE's proposal to write to all schools in the Borough regarding the teaching of RE but requested that the enquiry be made in the widest possible context recognising that the locally agreed syllabus could be taught in various ways and under a variety of subject headings.
- 3.4 It is recommended that the SACRE ask the Chair of the SACRE to write to the schools on the basis of its previously recommendation, but include the opportunity for each school to advise how it has chosen to teach the locally agreed syllabus, recognising that the syllabus can be taught as a discrete or integrated subject.
- 3.5 A copy of questions which could be included in such as survey are set out at Appendix '2', for the SACRE to consider.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The alternative options for the SACRE are set out in detail section of this report.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications relating to this report.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Under Education Act 1996, the School Standards Framework Act 1998 and RE Guidance in English Schools 2010 – Non Statutory Guidance, the SACRE must give advice to schools on the teaching of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, monitor schools provision for RE and collective worship and advise the Locality Authority on matters relating to RE and training available to teachers.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 No other implications have been identified.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The work of the SACRE supports Theme 5 of the Community Strategy, for Swindon to be a place where high aspirations are supported by superb education provision for all ages.

Provision of RE in Schools

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

17 July 2012

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report, as it does not relate to a specific policy or strategy change.

Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no risk management factors which have been identified in relation to this report.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 - Extract of Minutes of the Children's Trust Board on 14th June 2012
- 8.2 Appendix 2 – Sample Survey Questions for Schools.