

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

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| Committee/Panel: | SACRE |
| Date: | 21 February 2012 |
| Title: | SACRE Monitoring Sub- group |
| Reference: | 3679 |
| Report From: | Director of Children's Services |

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1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to inform SACRE of the findings and discussions that have taken place during the meeting of the SACRE monitoring sub-group.
- 1.2. The group viewed and discussed the GCSE RE results for the short and full courses for RE, OFSTED RE inspection reports and reports of SACRE monitoring visits.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. This paper supports the Corporate Strategy (maximising well being) by ensuring children's provision in religious education is secure.
- 2.2. The monitoring sub-group met on 23 January 2012.

3. Other key issues

- 3.1. GCSE results. A summary of the GCSE results (unverified) was provided enabling SACRE members to scrutinise the performance of RE students in individual schools. Group members identified schools to receive a letter of congratulations from SACRE, where appropriate. This latest data includes the GCSE results from the Academies (see Appendix 1) which was not available at the previous SACRE meeting. Patricia Hannam provided a commentary on the findings (Appendix 1)
- 3.2. The group looked at the data with a focus on the gender gap in performance in RE and it was suggested that this will be the emphasis for monitoring visits

in the next financial year. The group also viewed results in terms of ethnicity and students entitled free school meals. It was suggested that further analysis was required in order to identify whether there were any performance issues specifically for RE . Findings would be reported at the next monitoring sub group meeting in the summer term.

3.3. Reports of SACRE monitoring visits. Members of the SACRE have carried out monitoring visits alongside the two RE inspectors. Reports were provided following these visits to :- 1 Infant school, 2 Junior schools, 2 Primary schools and 4 Secondary schools.

3.4. The group scrutinised the reports of visits and a summary of the findings is provided below :

- In the primary phase schools the judgements made were that the RE provision in one school was satisfactory, in one school it was good, in another it was good with outstanding features and in two schools the provision was outstanding.
- Where the provision was outstanding the RE managers demonstrated great enthusiasm for the subject and confidence with its requirements. They had worked very hard to provide comprehensive support systems for all staff including lesson plans, background material, easily accessible resources and staff training. In both schools the assessment procedures are well established and RE provision is regularly monitored. In these schools the RE manager was very well supported by the schools' senior management and had been enabled to provide comprehensive training for all staff and time to develop RE support materials.. Where RE is less successful, assessment procedures are not established or not secure, planning is insufficiently clear, not well matched to the identified age range or incomplete.
- In the secondary schools the judgements made were that the RE provision was very good or outstanding.
- Quality of teaching and curriculum planning – in all the schools the requirements of *Living Difference*, including the skills of enquiry, are well in place. Higher order thinking was observed in all classes seen. However, this may not be enough to ensure high results. In 3 schools, planning is securely in place and the departments are well organised. In 1 school where the GCSE results are less strong, planning and schemes of work were not securely in place. The recommendations to the school are for that to be amended.
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) support – in all 4 schools there seems to be SLT support; however, there seems to be greater understanding of the contribution that RE makes to the whole school in some schools more than others.
- Conclusion – this small monitoring exercise reveals that success in GCSE (attainment) needs a clear combination of factors. Following the requirements of *Living Difference*, including the skills of enquiry, (teaching) plus clear planning and monitoring are all essential, together with the full support of the

senior leadership of the school, in order for progress and achievement to be maintained at GCSE (leadership and management).

- 3.5. OFSTED reports. A subject inspection for RE was carried out at a Hampshire Junior school in December 2011. The report indicated that the overall provision for RE was good.

General OFSTED inspection reports are not required to identify RE specifically but the group looked at two reports from secondary schools where RE was identified. In these schools RE was judged to be meeting the legal requirements and in one school RE was noted alongside other subjects to be providing lessons with pace and using relevant material.

4. Recommendation

- That SACRE notes the report.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Hampshire safer and more secure for all: | no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Maximising well-being: | yes |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Enhancing our quality of place: | no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

Appendix 1

Summary of GCSE results – Full Course – UNVERIFIED DATA

Candidate numbers – Full Course

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| All | 2,029 | 2,247 | 2,444 | 2,457 | 2,951 | 3,364 | 3,848 |
| Boys | 776 | 837 | 952 | 925 | 1,240 | 1,491 | 1,780 |
| Girls | 1,253 | 1,410 | 1,492 | 1,532 | 1,711 | 1,873 | 2,068 |

Candidate performance – Full Course % A* – C

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------|
| All | 76.8 | 72.1 | 69.5 | 75.5 | 76.3 | 77.0 | 73.7 |
| Boys | 68.8 | 61.5 | 60.0 | 69.1 | 69.4 | 70.6 | 67.64 |
| Girls | 81.7 | 78.3 | 75.5 | 79.3 | 81.4 | 82.2 | 78.74 |

Hampshire – Full Course % by grade

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| A* | 8.7 | 8.5 | 8.9 | 10.01 | 10.00 | 11.1 | 8.2 |
| A | 23.8 | 17.6 | 18.3 | 20.55 | 20.9 | 23.8 | 20.1 |
| B | 23.3 | 23.9 | 21.7 | 24.74 | 22.9 | 23.8 | 24.4 |
| C | 21.1 | 22.1 | 20.5 | 20.14 | 22.5 | 18.3 | 20.9 |
| A* – C | 76.8 | 72.1 | 69.4 | 75.5 | 76.3 | 77.0 | |
| D | 11.8 | 14.2 | 13.2 | 11.3 | 11.7 | 10.3 | 12.2 |
| E | 7.1 | 7.2 | 8.2 | 7.52 | 6.7 | 6.4 | 6.9 |
| F | 2.5 | 3.7 | 4.6 | 3.37 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 4.1 |
| G | 1.2 | 2.0 | 2.9 | 1.13 | 1.3 | 1.9 | 2.2 |

GCSE – Full Course results – residual analysis

The residual figures provide data about the relative performance of pupils in religious studies compared with their results in all other subjects.

| | LA subject residual | | | | | National subject residual | | | | | Adjusted LA – national residual | | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|------|-------|-------|--------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------------------------------|------|------|------|--------------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| All | 0.43 | 1.52 | 0.60 | 1.14 | -0.2 | 0.83 | 0.59 | 0.43 | 0.11 | 0.08 | -0.4 | 0.93 | 0.16 | 1.02 | -0.27 |
| Boys | -1.04 | 0.46 | -0.76 | -0.24 | -1.41 | -0.25 | -0.63 | -0.91 | -1.19 | -1.19 | -0.79 | 1.09 | 0.14 | 0.94 | -0.22 |
| Girls | 1.37 | 2.15 | 1.59 | 2.23 | 0.85 | 1.67 | 1.58 | 1.52 | 1.16 | 1.15 | -0.30 | 0.57 | 0.07 | 1.07 | -0.3 |

Summary of GCSE results – Short Course – UNVERIFIED DATA

Candidate numbers – Short Course

| | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| All | 4,905 | 4,480 | 4,096 | 4,778 | 5,159 | 4,473 | 4,322 | 3,643 |
| Boys | 2,464 | 2,238 | 2,062 | 2,408 | 2,700 | 2,302 | 2,183 | 1,863 |
| Girls | 2,441 | 2,242 | 2,034 | 2,370 | 2,459 | 2,188 | 2,144 | 1,780 |

Candidate performance – Short Course % A* – C

| | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|--------------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| All | 56.7 | 57.7 | 60.8 | 55.3 | 54.1 | 54.8 | 56.2 | 55.7 |
| Boys | 48.9 | 49.1 | 54.6 | 48.0 | 45.9 | 48.4 | 47.3 | 48.4 |
| Girls | 64.52 | 66.2 | 67.2 | 62.8 | 63.2 | 61.5 | 65.3 | 63.4 |

GCSE Short Course results – residual analysis

| | LA subject residual | | | | | | National subject residual | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|--------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| All | -0.56 | -2.00 | -2.64 | -2.03 | -2.51 | -2.40 | -1.53 | -1.87 | -2.31 | -2.46 | -2.76 | -3.38 |
| Boys | -1.79 | -3.16 | -4.06 | -3.39 | -4.03 | -3.77 | -2.66 | -2.83 | -3.45 | -3.75 | -4.08 | -4.70 |
| Girls | 0.68 | -0.83 | -1.09 | -1.09 | -0.92 | -0.97 | -0.42 | -0.91 | -1.15 | -1.15 | -1.47 | -2.04 |
| Adjusted LA – national residual | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | | | | | | | |
| 0.97 | -0.13 | -0.33 | 0.43 | 0.25 | 0.98 | | | | | | | |
| 0.87 | -0.33 | -0.61 | 0.36 | 0.05 | 0.93 | | | | | | | |
| 1.10 | 0.09 | 0.06 | 0.54 | 0.55 | 1.07 | | | | | | | |

SACRE Monitoring Sub-Group 23.01.12. Commentary prepared by Patricia Hannam

- This report offers
 - firstly, analysis of the GCSE Full and Short course results in Hampshire and
 - secondly, analysis of the findings of the four secondary monitoring visits undertaken in the autumn term. The focus for the monitoring visits this academic year was the impact of teaching pedagogy on GCSE results.

General comments regarding the GCSE

- A new Religious Studies GCSE specification was introduced in 2009. The GCSE is in general a 2 year course, 2011 was therefore the end of the first full two year cycle.
- The assessment objectives for the course (all boards) have significantly changed. The objectives for the course moved from three rather simple Assessment Objectives – Knowledge (35%) Understanding (40%) and Evaluation (25%) to TWO more complex objectives :
 - AO1 Describe, explain and analyse, using knowledge and understanding 50%
 - AO2 Use evidence and reasoned argument to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights, and differing viewpoints 50%
- The new Assessment Objectives for Religious Studies GCSE seem to lend themselves well to the pedagogy and methodology of Living Difference Revised 2011. In addition to this many Syllabus are framed round concepts facilitating planning schemes of work and sequences of lessons for GCSE

which are conceptually led rather than planned around a body of knowledge alone.

- Our hypothesis for the monitoring visits was that where GCSE teaching built on the pedagogy in *Living Difference Revised 2011* – including a focus on the skills of enquiry - enabling higher order thinking and speaking; where schemes of work were planned around systematic investigations into meaningful clusters of concepts using the Cycle of Learning, standards would be high.
- This year we are looking at attainment in RE GCSE not only in terms of the overall results but also in light of three specific groupings of young people each of which are priority areas for Hampshire. Namely, Gender, Free School Meals (FSM) and Ethnicity.
- This year full course entries (3,848) exceed short course entries (3,643) meaning that around 54% of the cohort in 2011 (13,963) undertook a GCSE level examination in RS.

Full Course GCSE Analysis:-

- **There was a rise of almost 500 Full Course GCSE entries in 2011 to an all time high of 3848 entries.** This is in line with national trend of a rising number of full course GCSE RS entries. Where teaching is strong the subject remains popular and students are continuing to choose RS as an option. In such schools, in the main, we see that the EBAC has made no difference to students' choice of RS GCSE; however we need two further year's of data to be sure of that. In some schools RS is in an option block alongside History and Geography. If the profile of the EBacc continues to rise, this may present more of a problem if students can only choose 1 humanity subject. In some schools HoDs are ensuring RS is placed in another option block, against the arts for example. This can be one way to ensure higher take up. There is another group of full course entries where ALL students are prepared for Full Course RS. This is usually in one lesson per week as a core subject. It is harder for the teachers in the reduced time available to achieve high results so these overall statistics represent significant progress with GCSE teaching in Hampshire.
- **The future for Full Course RS GCSE is promising since the reintroduction of a 'value added' measure for schools.** We have evidence from a reversal of a decision to withdraw full course GCSE as core. The subject is strong and continuing Full Course will now contribute to the school's overall 8 GCSE A-G count.
- **Performance A*-C:** A*-C in the first year of the new specification is 73.6%. This is less than the final year of the old specification for which we saw an increase year on year since 2007. RS compares well this year to History also with a new specification where 68.7% achieved A*-C. Overall this result can also be explained by normal variation and does not indicate a drop in standards.
- **Gender:** The gap between the results of boys and girls continues at around 11 percentage points. The Gap in Hampshire for History is 7 points and for English and Maths around 5 points. I propose to give this some attention in the coming year and try to identify the kinds of strategies which a school can put

in place which make a difference. I propose that this is the focus for any monitoring visits that are made in 2012.

- **FSM:** we are looking at this for the first time because we need to know that vulnerable children when they take RS are doing at least as well as their peers. We are not saying that all students who are in receipt of Free School Meals are vulnerable, but often those who are vulnerable will be receiving FSM so this is an indicator we should look consider. 143 students who sat full course GCSE RS were eligible for FMS, 55% of these student achieved A*-C. This is around 20% lower than the whole cohort. We can see that in some schools there was a high level of success for students eligible for FMS and we need to ensure that all students have quality teaching that enable tom to attain at the highest level.
- **Ethnicity:** - No glaring disparity is evidenced. School by school the numbers are small. What is more concerning is whether students from ethnic groups represented in Hampshire are proportionately represented in the GCSE cohort. It is possible that students from ethnic groups are not choosing RS GCSE. We should be monitoring this in subsequent years,

Short Course GCSE Analysis –

- **There has been a decline of around 680 short course GCSE entries this year to a total of 3643 entries.** The difference between the rise in full course and decline in short course entries (about 180 entries) could be accounted in part by the fewer number of students across the county this year (around 300). Just 2.5 fewer students in each school would explain the difference of 180 students.
- **The future for Short Course is not secure** since it will not be eligible for inclusion in data which counts towards league tables. Consequently the reasons for a school choosing to offer and pay for short course examination entries are fewer. This does not mean that it is not a useful course for the students who undertake it.
- **Performance A*-C:** The A*-C for short course in the first year of the new specification is 55.7%. There has been little variation in the county short course results over the past several years. The adjusted figure against the national data shows continuing improvement year on year.
- **Gender:** The gap between boys and girls continues at around 15 percentage points. The gender gap in both full and short course needs attention in the coming year. This will be the focus for monitoring visits in 2012.
- **FSM:** Attainment in Short Course RE is around 20% lower than for the whole cohort. This is more significant because of the larger numbers of students taking short course. There is a greater gap in those taking the exam but not achieving a GCSE pass at all. (13% compared to 4.5%). This needs further investigation as to the reasons why this may be happening and some case studies brought to the next monitoring meeting.
- **Ethnicity:** No glaring disparity is evidenced. School by school the numbers are small. What is more concerning is whether students from ethnic groups represented in Hampshire are proportionately represented in the GCSE cohort. It is possible that students from ethnic groups are not choosing RS GCSE. We should be monitoring this in subsequent years.

Overall findings from SACRE monitoring visits

All four schools visited in this cycle teach Full Course Religious Studies.

- **Pedagogy:** In all schools the skills of enquiry are well in place. Higher order thinking was observed in all classes seen. However this may not be enough to ensure high results. In three schools planning is securely in place and the departments are well organised. In one school where the GCSE results are less strong we found that planning and schemes of work were not securely in place. The recommendations to the school are for that to be amended.
- **SLT support:** In all four schools there seems to be SLT support, however there seems to be greater understanding of the contribution that RE makes to the whole school in some of the schools more than others.

Conclusion

- This small monitoring exercise reveals that success in GCSE needs a clear combination of factors. The skills of enquiry (teaching) plus clear planning and monitoring are both essential, together with the full support of the Senior Leadership of the school, in order for progress and achievement to be maintained at GCSE.