

**HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL****Report**

<b>Committee/Panel:</b>	SACRE
<b>Date:</b>	19 June 2012
<b>Title:</b>	National Association of SACREs Annual General Meeting and Conference
<b>Reference:</b>	3978
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

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## **1. Summary**

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to inform SACRE about the issues discussed at the annual general meeting and conference hosted by NASACRE (National Association of SACREs) and to consider any implications for SACRE's development plan.

## **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. On Wednesday 23 May 2012 the NASACRE AGM and Conference was held at Friends' House, Euston Road, London. It was attended by Councillor Roz Chadd, the Vice-Chairman of SACRE, Major Suryaparsad Upadhya the Hindu representative and Patricia Hannam, the county inspector/advisor for RE and History.

## **3. Key issues**

3.1. A report of the key issues of the day is provided in Appendix 1.

## **4. Recommendation**

4.1. That SACRE notes the report and considers at a later date the issues raised by the implementation of Recommendation *CM/Rec (2008)12 of the Committee of Ministers of member states on the dimension of religions and non religious convictions within intercultural education.*

**Appendix 1**

**Report of NASACRE AGM and Conference. May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012.**

**Patricia Hannam. County Inspector Adviser RE/History.**

**The keynote address** was given by Professor Robert Jackson, Professor of Religious Education, Warwick University entitled: *'RU 4 EC RE? Research and European Policy Making on religious education: taking account of young people's views in developing the subject.'* A summary of the address will be posted on the NASACRE website. The address was illuminating in placing Religious Education into a wider European context.

Key points from the address were:

- SACREs are the backbone of RE in England and Wales are an important element of local and national democracy.
- RE has a rightful place in the curriculum in state funded schools for several reasons (i) RE is intrinsically educational: a religious interpretation of life is part of human experience. (ii) There is an instrumental justification for RE in order to ensure good social and intercultural understanding in plural societies. (iii) A personal justification for RE: there is a view that RE contributes to developing character and sense of purpose and meaning in life.
- There are several research projects in relation to RE at Warwick University, including qualitative and quantitative studies exploring young people's views of religion across several European nations. This is linked with The Council of Europe. Findings show young people say RE is important, that it is the only place they have to talk about difference. Further, recognising the inner plurality of faiths, contextualised in each nation's history, is essential in RE.
- Other important projects include research on Religion and Society (2007-2012) also another with The European Wergeland Centre in Oslo and The Council of Europe. There is high level recognition that religion is a topic for public discussion and that this is imperative post 9/11.
- Considerable work is being undertaken now to look at how the Council of Europe can implement ***Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)12 of the Committee of Ministers of member states on the dimension of religions and non religious convictions within intercultural education.*** RE should develop competency for interfaith dialogue and must clarify effective teaching methods to support this. The emerging plans for implementation, called a 'Road Map', were introduced. Young people need to be helped to 'unpack the media', and there is a need for whole school policies in relation to intercultural/ interfaith matters. Questions remain about how to integrate 'non-religious worldviews' into RE.
- Questions were asked at the end of the address in relation to the involvement of parents in developing RE, RE in areas of high BNP activity and implementation of The Road Map.

**The AGM** followed the keynote address.

**Lat Blalock (RE Today Services)** and editor of RE Today, gave a personal reflection after lunch entitled '*SACRE + teachers of RE = Good Learning*'.

**National updates** were provided by Sarah Smalley (Chief Executive of The RE Council) and Alan Brine (Ofsted Senior Inspector for Religious education),

Sarah Smalley began by reminding us how this time last year the situation following various changes in government policy e.g. Academies and EBacc the picture for RE looked gloomy. She reflected on the past year and considered evidence upon which to make a judgement about the current situation. It is a mixed picture.

- **Evidence from DfE:** indicates that half of secondary schools nationally have already converted to academies and this is having an impact on SACREs and Agreed Syllabi.
- In some areas (although not Hampshire) there are consortia of academies working together to develop RE syllabi.
- DfE workforce Survey reveals RE teachers employed nationally, has increased.
- Training places for RE had initially been cut and there were concerns regarding where quality new RE teachers were going to come from. However there has now been a reversal of an earlier decision and 50 more Secondary RE trainee places have been found nationally.
- **Evidence from RE organisations:** The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) has taken a lead on some of the issues this year. Information from a survey indicate that one third of RE departments nationally have had reduction to their curriculum time for KS4 we will begin to see a reduction in the number of students taking GCSE Full Course RE nationally. The Association of RE Inspectors Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC) is seeing a reduced membership as the number of adviser posts is cut. National Association of SACRE (NASACRE) notes a greatly increased workload this year. SACREs are looking for more support. Good representation of SACREs at the conference indicate there is still good SACRE activity in the nation.
- **Other national RE developments include:**
- RE Council is introducing an RE Mark.
- RE Council has accessed funding for a review of RE in general and The Non Statutory Framework for RE in particular, to consider ways RE might be aligned with proposals for the National Curriculum. When the project manager is in place there will be extensive consultation.
- Building on the support gained by The Early Day Motion (EDM) regarding RE last year an All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for RE has been set up. It has been proposed that NASACRE members write to their MPs suggest they support or ask to join the APPG for RE.

- Sarah closed on a positive note by saying that in spite of the difficulties over the past year, the RE world has pulled strongly together and that teachers, advisers and SACREs were in a far stronger position to work collaboratively than ever before.

Alan Brine informed NASACRE members:

- That the new Ofsted Inspection framework incorporates clear reference to RE. Inspectors are expected to recognise the importance of RE. If RE is not being taught according to the Agreed Syllabus and honouring statutory responsibilities, Inspectors should ask why.
- The next long report for RE will be produced in December.
- He is not seeing whole scale melt-down of RE some predicted this time last year.
- Ofsted are NOT using the EBacc when making judgements about a schools attainment. He emphasised that the EBacc is for students not schools. It is a measure but not a *benchmark* measure.
- Alan Brine closed by saying he felt that the GCSE Short Course for RE was still a good qualification and could form the basis for a celebration of RE practice in a school. He did not see the best option for KS4 RE being that every one should take GCSE Full Course. There would be a wholesale review of GCSEs in due course and this may give some new opportunities for developing congruent practice between across the Key stages up to KS4.

**The conference closed** following announcements regarding the results of Westhill Awards to SACRE projects applications.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

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

Document

Location

None

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

1.1.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

2.1.

### **3. Climate Change:**

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?
  
- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?