

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee:</b>	SACRE
<b>Date:</b>	19 June 2012
<b>Title:</b>	Academies and the provision of RE
<b>Reference:</b>	3977
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

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#### 1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to update SACRE about the number of Hampshire schools that have converted to academy status and the implications for the provision and monitoring of RE.

#### 2. Contextual information

- 2.1. This paper supports the Corporate Strategy (maximising well being) by ensuring children's provision in religious education is secure.

#### 3. Other key issues

- 3.1. The current figures indicate that there are 30 Hampshire secondary schools, 1 special school and 4 primary phase schools that are now academies. Most of these schools, including one Catholic primary school, have opted for and sought their academy status, albeit for different reasons. However the other 3 primary and 2 of the secondary schools have not volunteered to become academies but have been required to take on academy status by order of the Secretary of State. There are several schools currently seeking academy status, however, it is clear that the rate of change and interest in voluntary conversion to academy status has slowed considerably. An association of local authority schools is being formed. These are schools that have made a positive choice to work together and remain within the authority.
- 3.2. The Ofsted Senior Inspector for RE has indicated that, although the guidance from the DfE (Department for Education) is ambiguous, his interpretation is that academies should follow *an* agreed syllabus for RE, but that it need not necessarily be the locally agreed syllabus. The syllabus should reflect 'that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main,

broadly Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain’.

- 3.3. Faith academies have different arrangements. A faith academy is an academy with a faith designation order. Faith academies must provide religious education to all pupils at the academy in accordance with the tenets of the academy’s faith as set by its faith body. Faith academies may also apply a faith qualification in appointing their teachers and give priority to children of their faith in their admissions arrangements
- 3.4. A local authority has no responsibility for the RE provision within academies and SACRE has no direct means of monitoring the provision aside from continuing development of good relationships and fostering of good will. However, the local authority now has access to GCSE results data from academies for all subjects including RE. There is an expectation that the local authority will keep a ‘watchful eye’ on the results of all schools. Any concerns would be expressed to central government via the Secretary of State in respect of academy schools rather than to the local SACRE and local authority. Hampshire local authority, SACRE and the academies have a shared interest in the continuation of a broad and balanced RE curriculum for Hampshire children and young people. The County Inspector/Adviser for RE is continuing to develop good relationships with all secondary heads of RE regardless of status of the school, in the interests of all children and young people in the county. It is proposed, therefore, to invite a member of an academy to join SACRE as a co-opted member to ensure a secure understanding of professional development in the new academies as well as continued cross-fertilisation of ideas and development of the subject.

#### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1. That SACRE endorses the proposal to invite a representative from an academy school to SACRE meetings as a co-opted member.

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. *SACRE working in consultation with schools with Academy status will provide cross fertilisation of ideas for effective RE for Hampshire children and young people which enables pupils/students to consider and discuss issues to do with inclusion of all pupils and discussions to promote positive attitudes towards equality.*

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

2.1. *SACRE working in consultation with schools with Academy status will provide cross fertilisation of ideas for effective RE for Hampshire children and young people which enables students to consider and discuss issues to do with moral and ethical issues.*

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

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

*SACRE working in consultation with schools with Academy status will provide cross fertilisation of ideas for effective RE for Hampshire children and young people which enables students to consider and discuss issues to do with stewardship and their personal impact on the world's resources.*

b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

*As above*