

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee/Panel:	SACRE
Date:	4 March 2013
Title:	Updates : All Party Parliamentary Group / Teaching Schools/ Academies/ RE Review
Reference:	4758
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to inform SACRE on several national developments in relation to Religious Education, and which have or may have an impact on Religious Education locally.

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. Key issues

3.1. All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG).

On Wednesday 16 January the APPG Inquiry into the Supply and Support for teachers of RE held its second evidence session. A transcript of this meeting together with power point presentations from those giving evidence can be read on the RE Council website. A wide range of evidence was heard including from Alan Brine HMI National Adviser for RE. Alan Brine's key findings over the past 3 years are

- Pupils are leaving school with a low level of 'religious literacy'
- Teaching is not good enough in 60% of provision across KS1-3.
- Teaching is better at KS4 (60% good or better), but there are wider concerns about the quality of GCSE provision.

Alan Brine noted other serious areas of concern 'behind the scene'

- Serious and growing inconsistencies in the quality of local arrangements – SACREs' Agreed Syllabuses and guidance.
- Impact of education policy on RE – academies, LA budgets, EBacc, changes in rules for short courses.

Informally he is considering recommending that SACREs have responsibility for monitoring RE in all LA schools not just maintained county schools.

3.2 In Hampshire there is high quality support from the LA in terms of support for SACRE and secondary and primary Inspector Adviser Support, although both have been diminishing in recent years in the light of budget constraints.

Hampshire SACRE is offering leadership to SACREs in the area through the Joint SACRE meetings.

3.3 Teaching Schools and the potential impact on RE

There are five new Teaching School groups in Hampshire; they are mostly in the south of the county and so cannot offer coverage to the whole county. Two key things are important to note at this stage:

- Securing the continual flow of high calibre Newly Qualified Teachers into Hampshire. At the moment we have three good University Initial Teacher Education centres nearby, Winchester, Southampton and Chichester. Allocations from government for Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) places remain positive for 2013/14. This has somewhat surprised us since the government's intention is that more teachers are trained 'on the job' through the Teaching Schools. However there is national and local concern about the government's decision to withdraw bursary funding for people wanting to train as RE teachers through a regular PGCE in an initial teacher education institution. Bursaries have been retained for other subjects.
- There is concern about this for a number of reasons, including inexperience and inconsistencies in the selection of candidates for the new courses, and different quality of engagement with educational research and theory, not just classroom practice.

So far take up in teaching schools in Hampshire to train RE teachers has not happened. The supply of good quality RE teachers into Hampshire seems secure for the moment.

3.4 End of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) Role

Changes in teacher progression structures have meant that the AST role no longer exists and there is no longer funding coming to the LA from central government to support their work. Due to astute financial management of the LA three Hampshire teachers (one primary and two secondary) have been

enabled to continue in their RE AST roles for the past year, twelve months longer than has generally been the case in the rest of the country.

Our three County RE ASTs have been a significant element of the improvement support which has been on offer. Secondary departments have benefitted from their current classroom and management expertise; our primary AST has undertaken a great deal of writing of materials and in other ways supported Primary RE development for many years. From now on the County Steering Groups will take a greater degree of responsibility for leadership support and modelling of excellent practice in the county. One of the former Secondary RE ASTs has become a Specialist Leader in Education (SLE) in general teaching and learning skills, through one of the new Teaching Schools. The County Inspector has negotiated with her Head Teacher a way to continue to utilise some of the SLE time to, for example, support the training of New Heads of Department and Newly Qualified Teachers across the county. It is important however, to note that the SLE role is not the same as the AST role.

3.5 Academies.

The rate of conversion to Academy Status has slowed down considerably although it is still taking place. Relations remain good with all schools regardless of whether they are converted academies or not. In respect of academies which have become members of academies groups there is the possibility of a new kind of relationship, however, in all cases so far little change has been noted. RS GCSE results are being monitored by SACRE in all schools regardless of status. Also schools are continuing to use the HIAS Inspector Advisers to support departments and subject leaders, where this has been needed, regardless of school status.

3.6 RE Council Review of Religious Education Curriculum

Following initial wide consultation as reported at the SACRE meeting in November 2012, the review is now entering the second stage. The intention is to further clarify the aims of RE, identify what the extent of RE curriculum should be, exemplify good practice and look at assessment, including qualifications. The review is balancing challenges with opportunities. There has been no government funding for the review, but there is considerable interest in the RE world. Phase two will have two steps: between now and April 2013, at which point work will be circulated for wider consultation, then another development phase with further consultation over the summer.

4 Recommendation

4.1 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

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. SACRE has the intention to positively impact equality in terms of access to quality Religious education for all children and young people in Hampshire to ensure high achievement for all in Religious Education no matter where they go to school.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. No impact on crime and disorder as a result of this report has been identified.

3. Climate Change:

- 3.1. How what does is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No significant impact on climate change as a result of this report has been identified, although awareness of different religious traditions' sense of the sanctity of life may raise children and young people's awareness of carbon footprint / energy consumption, and facilitate more responsible action.

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

No necessity for consideration of the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts as a result of this report has been identified.