

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Report

<b>Committee/Panel:</b>	SACRE
<b>Date:</b>	12 November 2013
<b>Title:</b>	National RE Matters
<b>Reference:</b>	5302
<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 Matters of national concerns in relation to Religious Education and how they impact on the work of RE in Hampshire.

### 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. This paper refers to several national actions which are current in England at the moment and relevant for Hampshire SACRE.

### 3. Ofsted Report on RE: *Religious Education - Realising the Potential*

3.1. This report, published every three years, is based upon visits to 180 schools around England over the past three years. One of the secondary schools visited was in Hampshire and four of the primary schools. A Good Practice study written up and currently on the Ofsted site is also mentioned in the report. The summary of this report is attached as appendix 1.

3.2. The report is clear that Religious Education (RE) makes a significant contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. It also plays a key role in promoting social cohesion and the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. However, the potential of RE, it is argued in the report, is not being fully realised in the majority of the schools surveyed for this report.

3.3. The report identifies barriers to better RE and suggests ways in which the subject might be improved. The report is written for all those who teach RE,

for those who lead the subject, and for head teachers of primary and secondary schools.

- 3.4. Examples of good ways of teaching RE noted in the report include an enquiry cycle for learning which closely resembles the Hampshire Cycle as in the County Agreed Syllabus Living Difference revised 2011. In addition to this it is noted positively that 'using the approach of philosophical enquiry can deepen and extend pupils' investigation into religion'. We have been promoting this approach in conjunction with the Cycle of Enquiry into Concepts as in Living Difference Revised 2011 for some years in Hampshire.
- 3.5. There are recommendations for Local Authorities as well as primary and secondary schools at the end of this report and included for consideration here as Appendix (2) for discussion.

#### **4. RE Council Review of Religious Education**

- 4.1. Patricia Hannam as County Inspector for Hampshire RE and Elizabeth Jenkerson in her capacity as NASACRE executive member attended by invitation, the launch of 'A Review of Religious Education in England' produced by The Religious Education Council of England and Wales at The House of Commons on 23rd October. The RE Review report can be read here: <http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/re-review-report>
- 4.2. The RE Review, an initiative of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales, began in 2012 as part of a strategic plan for developing the subject. This was supported by the then Secretary of State for schools, although no government funding was available.
- 4.3. The main catalyst for the RE review was the extensive review of the national curriculum for schools in England, undertaken by the Department for Education (DfE) from January 2011 to July 2013. The REC was clear that a review of RE in England was needed for reasons of equity with other subjects.
- 4.4. Beyond the need for parity, a wider set of challenges for RE has arisen in the past three years mainly as the result of large-scale changes in education being made by the coalition government which have been discussed elsewhere by this SACRE. The review as published on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 aims not only to offer a non-statutory curriculum framework for RE but in other ways to enable the whole RE community to deal with challenges facing the subject.
- 4.5. The findings of the review are presented in three sections.
  1. Religious education: a national curriculum framework for RE (NCFRE) comprising of a non-statutory programme of study.
  2. Religious education: the wider context, being an analysis of current issues in RE with recommendations for future discussion and resolution.
  3. Appendices

- 4.6. It is important to remember that this document will remain non-statutory. It is intended to offer a safety net for Local Authorities who do not have the capacity to develop their own Agreed Syllabus. This does not apply to Hampshire where we have a well-established successful Agreed Syllabus Living Difference Revised 2011 with strong LA support. In this respect the RE Review does not impact on Hampshire at all. As reported to the last SACRE meeting we have evidence emerging now to show a steadily improving situation over several years with teacher confidence growing in planning for progression and assessment over time and in addition to this an improving picture for GCSE results.
- 4.7. Religious education the wider context: here the review has more for us to consider. In particular Recommendation 4 (to be found on Page 38 of the report), for the development of regional hubs which could offer a partial solution for the other issues addressed in the review. A point for discussion in this SACRE meeting is for continuing support from this SACRE for the Joint SACRE meeting, which could form the basis for a regional hub.

## **5. All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) and RE Ambassadors.**

- 5.1. The APPG for Religious Education exists to provide a medium through which parliamentarians and organisations with an interest in religious education can discuss the current provision of religious education, press for continuous improvement, promote public understanding and advocate rigorous education for every young person in religious and non-religious world views. The APPG is chaired by Steven Lloyd MP, and has four vice chairs including Fiona Bruce MP who chaired the launch of the RE Review in the House of Commons, a clear example of how the APPG initiative is helping to continue to ensure RE issues continue to be present in government circles. The Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) acts as the group's secretariat.
- 5.2. One Hampshire MP is already a member of the APPG for RE and another seems likely to be going to join.
- 5.3. The Young Ambassadors Scheme has been underway for a year and includes students from Perins School. Young people who have been involved have found they have been challenged and pushed to do things beyond their expectations and have been able to develop leadership skills to become role models for younger pupils and have developed a sense of shared experience with fellow enthusiasts for RE. Following a conference on 10th October a decision has been made to extend the YA scheme and the intention is for the young people involved in the Hampshire Youth Voice to discuss ways in which they may be able to link with the YA scheme at the next Hampshire Youth Voice meeting in December.

## **6. RE Quality Mark (REQM).**

- 6.1. Following our discussion at the last SACRE meeting the possibility of our RE Inspector Advisers for RE accessing training as REQM assessors has been explored. Further information will be presented to this SACRE meeting.

## **7. Recommendation**

- 7.1. That SACRE notes the report.
- 7.2. That the Chairman of SACRE should write to head teachers of primary and secondary schools in Hampshire alerting them to the Ofsted Report for RE, and to their statutory duty to teach RE well through all key stages.
- 7.3. That SACRE endorse Hampshire continuing to give leadership to the Joint SACRE meetings and recommends that an agenda item of the Joint SACRE is in relation to the formalisation of this group as one of the first regional hubs for RE, as recommended in the RE Review.

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

<b>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</b>	yes
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. This report impacts on equality in that it is promoting good religious education in Hampshire.

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

- 2.1. No direct impact on crime and disorder has been identified in this report, however where there is good education taking place, as promoted by the work of SACRE, there is likely to be reflective practice advancing more reflective and considerate children and young people.

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

- a) Minimum impact on carbon footprint / energy consumption is anticipated
- b) Minimum impact on our ability to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts is anticipated.