

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

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| <b>Committee/Panel:</b> | SACRE                           |
| <b>Date:</b>            | 1 June 2015                     |
| <b>Title:</b>           | SACRE Youth Voice               |
| <b>Reference:</b>       | 6683                            |
| <b>Report From:</b>     | Director of Children's Services |

**Contact name:** Patricia Hannam

**Tel:** 023892 441518

**Email:** Patricia.hannam@hants.gov.uk

**1. Summary**

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to inform SACRE of the meetings of the Youth Voice to SACRE that have taken place since our last meeting.
- 1.2. The SACRE Youth Voice group met once since the last SACRE meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup> 2015.

**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 purpose of the SACRE Youth Voice is, in line with the intention of the Agreed Syllabus itself, to create a forum for young people to have an opportunity to express their views on RE in relation to the provision for RE they are experiencing. Further, to use their experiences to inform future reviews of the County Agreed Syllabus.

Youth Voice to SACRE has been meeting for three years now. The April 2015 meeting brought together year 10 students who had been attending meetings during 2014/15; the key focus was to follow up on previous concerns raised and take new issues forward as well as to plan for the July 9<sup>th</sup> SACRE Youth Voice conference.

- 2.3 It was agreed that the hand over from the existing Youth Voice students to year 9 students who will be in year 10 when on the Youth Voice to SACRE in September 2015, will take place in schools this year. The summer meeting 2015 meeting was needed to concentrate on the Conference. We hope that when the present students on Youth Voice to SACRE get back to school they will be able to hold a meeting with prospective members of Youth Voice to SACRE for 2015/16, either at the end of this term or the

beginning of the Autumn to give them an idea about the way the Youth Voice to SACRE works. Some schools are already establishing school based SACRE Youth Voice Groups to ensure good communication back and forth between school and the full Youth Voice meetings.

2.4 Seven schools are currently actively committed to bringing students to the Youth Voice meetings.

### **3. Youth Voice Concerns**

- 3.1. A key area raised by the Youth Voice to SACRE in the summer of 2014 was Religious Education in the primary School. Work has been taken forward with this. New Packs are being written for Primary Religious Education teachers in order to support subject knowledge. Some schools are considering developing model transition projects between KS2 and KS3. These projects will report to full SACRE through the Youth Voice in due course.
- 3.2. The concern that religious education in KS3 should be more topical was raised by several schools; for example to bring into the classroom issues in relation to the international situation, and looking at these issues from the perspective of religion. All students felt it was important for teenagers to be well informed about what is happening in the news. It was important to ensure that young people do not think that extremist terrorists only exist in one particular religion. The importance of young people of faith coming into school to speak to students was again considered to be very important.
- 3.3. Students raised the matter of teaching atheism and humanism. Students felt there was a problem with the perception of atheism and humanism. For example, that they may be mistakenly compared with 'Social Darwinism'. It was agreed that a KS3 unit could be written on religion in the public space. Students felt it was important not to assume that atheism was in opposition to religion but that it is simply not religion.
- 3.4. A discussion on what it actually means to live a religious life ensued. An example of a young person who may have grown up and been welcomed into a religion as a child but as they become a teenager may no longer feel close to that religion was considered. Are they or are they not religious? The group felt that sometimes religion could be taught as if being religious was somehow in opposition to being non-religious and this made it hard for a teenager to decide where they fitted in. Also sometimes religions may be taught as if they were in opposition to each other.
- 3.5. There was agreement that religious education should aim to teach about religion in a way that did not emphasise their opposition to each other. It was important to teach about where there is cooperation between religions and to bring experiences of those who are involved with interreligious dialogue into school. Further the importance of looking at extremism in many religions (and not only in relation to one) was discussed. Students felt that since in general religions teach peace, this should be emphasised and what human beings do with these things should be discussed in schools more frequently.

3.6. Two conclusions were made from this discussion:

(i) to develop a unit on 'religion in the public space' for teaching at KS3. Some teachers were interested in working on this with the inspector. This could be published and made available to all schools through the Hampshire RE Curriculum Centre in Winchester.

(ii) to reconsider a previous concern of Youth Voice to SACRE regarding training and to work quickly to bring together a team of 6th form aged students of faith and none who would be available to come into school and talk about their point of view.

#### **4. Youth Voice Conference July 9<sup>th</sup> 2015**

4.1. The draft programme was circulated and amended during the meeting. Senior County Councillors have agreed to open and close the conference. A whole group photograph will be taken at the end of the conference and the HCC publicity department will be involved.

4.2. Workshop presenters are recruited.

4.3. The conference opening and closing sessions will be facilitated by the young people. Delegates will be year 8 students, with applications invited for 4 places from each school; two boys and two girls from each school. It is anticipated that between 10 -12 schools will be involved.

4.4. It was agreed that all delegates would receive an attendance certificate and a bag to gather all things to take home.

#### **5. Recommendation**

5.1. That SACRE notes the report.

**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.)

DocumentLocation

None

## IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

### 1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. As a consequence of the effectiveness of the County Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, *Living Difference revised 2011* inter-religious understanding is advanced across the county.
- 1.2. Improved outcomes are evidenced at GCSE for all children thus contributing to advancing equality.

### 2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. No impact on crime and disorder has been identified in this report.

### 3. Climate Change:

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

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

No impact on climate change has been identified in this report.