

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
Date and Time	Tuesday 4th July 2023 at 2.00pm
Place	Ashburton Hall, Ell Court, Winchester
Enquiries to	members.services@hants.gov.uk

Carolyn Williamson FCPFA
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting may be recorded and broadcast live on the County Council's website and available for repeat viewing, it may also be recorded and filmed by the press and public. Filming or recording is only permitted in the meeting room whilst the meeting is taking place so must stop when the meeting is either adjourned or closed. Filming is not permitted elsewhere in the building at any time. Please see the Filming Protocol available on the County Council's website.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. DEPUTATIONS

To receive any deputations.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any Chairman's announcements.

6. MONITORING GROUP (Pages 11 - 16)

To receive a report on behalf of the Director of Children's Services regarding the activities and discussions of the monitoring group in relation to the monitoring of RE and the implementation of Living Difference III.

7. CONSTITUTION REVIEW TASK AND FINISH WORKING GROUP - FEEDBACK (Pages 17 - 34)

To receive the feedback from the Constitution Review Task and Finish Working Group.

8. KEY NATIONAL AND LOCAL RE MATTERS (Pages 35 - 40)

To receive a report on behalf of the Director of Children's Services on developments in relation to the work of the Religious Education Council, RE Research and other key national and local RE matters.

9. MEMBERSHIP OF SACRE

To receive a verbal update on behalf of the Director of Children's Services regarding appointments to SACRE.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

ABOUT THIS MEETING:

The press and public are welcome to attend the public sessions of the meeting. If you have any particular requirements, for example if you require wheelchair access, please contact members.services@hants.gov.uk for assistance.

County Councillors attending as appointed members of this Committee or by virtue of Standing Order 18.5; or with the concurrence of the Chairman in connection with their duties as members of the Council or as a local County Councillor qualify for travelling expenses.

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

AT A MEETING of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Tuesday
28th February 2023

Chairman:
p Councillor Elaine Still

p Councillor Christopher Donnelly
a Councillor Pal Hayre

p Councillor Wayne Irish

Father John Chandler, Roman Catholic Church
a Sheikh Fazle Abbas Dato, Muslim
p Danny Habel, Jewish Community
p Chris Hughes, Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches
a Elizabeth Jenkerson, Baha'i
a Rhian Jones, Salvation Army
Charmian Harrison, methodists
a Yasmeen Hussain, Muslim
Lisa-Marie Taylor, Buddhist
a Noel Thorpe-Tracy, Society of Friends
Harjinder Virdee, Sikh Representative

p Sue Bowen, Church of England
p Reverend Jeff Williams, Church of England
p Reverend Howard Wright, Church of England
p Maria Ackland, Church of England

p Maureen Barnes, Teachers' Liaison Panel
Graham Rowe, Teachers' Liaison Panel
p Julie Kelly, Teachers' Liaison Panel
p Carson Elday, Teachers' Liaison Panel
p Rachel Jackson, Teachers' Liaison Panel
p Jon Hamer, Teachers' Liaison Panel

Co-opted Members

Gill Heron, Academy Schools
a Rhiannon Love, Higher Education
p James Pitkin, Governors
p Alasdair Richardson, Higher Education
p Chris Robinson, Humanists

49. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies have been received from:

- Cllr Pal Hayre, Cllr Henderson was in attendance as the substitute for the Conservative group.
- Sheikh Fazle Abbas Dato
- Elizabeth Jenkerson
- Rhian Jones
- Yasmeen Hussain
- Noel Thorpe-Tracey

50. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

51. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

52. **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations received.

53. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Chris May, the new Secondary RE advisor and Adam Mori, the new SACRE Clerk from Democratic and Members Services to their first SACRE meeting.

The Chairman expressed her thanks on behalf of SACRE to Jackie Taylor, for her time as Clerk.

54. **MONITORING GROUP**

SACRE received a report from the Director of Children's Services on the discussions of the Monitoring Group at its recent meeting on Wednesday 25 January 2023. It was noted that SACRE had a statutory responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus.

Members noted a summary of the following areas discussed by the Monitoring Group:

- Hampshire's 2022 GCSE Religious Studies (RE) Examinations.
- Professional Education Opportunities.
- SACRE Monitoring Visits.
- Reports from Primary & Secondary Ofsted visits.
- Information gathered from other inspector/advisor visits.
- Teacher vacancies and ITE provision.
- Withdrawal from RE survey and monitoring collective worship.

- 2021 Census Results.

Highlights included the 9% drop in RE entries since 2019, where this had previously been consistent, however this was broadly in line with the national picture. It was also noted that the recent survey on withdrawal from RE and Collective Worship showed a very low withdrawal rate for Hampshire. Where this did occur, it was mainly due to the individual's religious beliefs.

In response to questions members found that:

- The school specific data was not yet available, so it was not known if the 9% drop in RE entries was spread evenly across Hampshire or in certain areas.
- The 'Understanding Christianity' materials, alongside others, were available to support provision in Church of England schools.

Resolved:

That the SACRE notes the Monitoring Group report.

55. **KEY NATIONAL AND LOCAL RE MATTERS**

SACRE received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of key national and local RE matters.

Members noted several initiatives funded by the Culham St Gabriel's Trust, the largest grant giving body supporting RE. Members also noted The National RE Hubs Project, a national scheme to create a central website for LAs, universities, SACREs, Museums, ITT providers, RE groups and advisors across England and Wales.

Members received an overview of the Association of University Lecturers in RE (ALURE) efforts in relation to Secondary Initial Teacher Education, noting the current issues on recruitment. Members also received an update on the National Association of SACREs, the national body representing SACREs, and received details of its upcoming Conference and AGM.

Resolved:

That the SACRE notes the report.

56. **SOUTH CENTRAL SACRE HUB**

SACRE received a verbal report from Justine Ball, County Subject Inspector on the activities of the South Central SACRE Hub, updating members on discussions from their recent meeting.

These included a discussion on approaches to diversity and on how this can be embedded and a look at the census results for each area. There was also consideration of recent 'deep dive' Ofsted inspections on RE and an ongoing exercise to improve websites, ensuring there were links to the current syllabus and online resources etc.

Resolved:

That SACRE note the verbal update on the activities of the South Central SACRE Hub.

57. **TASK AND FINISH WORKING GROUP PROPOSAL**

SACRE received a report from the Director of People and Organisation proposing the creation of a Task and Finish Working Group to review the current Constitution for the SACRE. It was noted that the review of the Constitution was currently overdue and that a smaller group to review the Constitution in detail was considered the best way for it to be updated.

This group would meet ahead of the next SACRE meeting and feedback at that time. Any proposed change to the Constitution would be agreed by the full meeting of SACRE at this point and approved by the Executive Member for Education.

In response to questions members found that:

- The Task and Finish Working Group would be fully supported by Officers of Hampshire County Council's Children's Services department, alongside members of both Democratic and Member Services and Legal Services.

SACRE adjourned for a short period to consider the recommendations in their groups, before returning to agree the recommendations with the addition of a co-opted member of SACRE to the group's membership.

Resolved:

That the SACRE initiate a Task and Finish Working Group as a sub-committee of SACRE to review the current Constitution for SACRE in line with all relevant legislation, in particular the Education Act 1996, Sections 390-397.

That the SACRE approve the Terms of Reference for this Task and Finish Working Group as set out in Annex A, with the addition of the inclusion of a co-opted member of SACRE within its membership.

That the SACRE appoint members to the Task and Finish Working Group in accordance with the Terms of Reference as follows:

Group A	Chris Hughes
Group B	Reverend Jeff Williams
Group C	Jon Hamer
Group D	Cllr Chris Donnelly
Co-Opted Members	Chris Robinson

58. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

It was noted that SACRE had been asked for volunteers to lead on a moment of reflection or prayer scheduled ahead of an upcoming meeting of the full County Council. If anyone would be interested in this, please contact Justine Ball.

59. **DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 4 July 2023 at 2:00pm. It was noted that the summer SACRE meeting has previously been at a suitable school, however the venue was still to be confirmed.

Chairman, Standing Advisory Council
for Religious Education

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
Date:	6 June 2023
Title:	Monitoring Group
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Justine Ball, County Subject Inspector

Tel: 02392 441442

Email: justine.ball@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update SACRE on the activities and considerations of the SACRE Monitoring Group.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education notes this Monitoring Group report.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to inform SACRE of the matters discussed at the SACRE Monitoring Group meeting that took place face to face on 23 May 2023.

Contextual information

4. SACRE has a statutory responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus. This group meets about 6 weeks before each full SACRE meeting in order to support SACRE in fulfilling this responsibility.
5. Those present were:

Chris Hughes (Chair)
Cllr Chris Donnelly
Alasdair Richardson
Rhiannon Love

Justine Ball
(SACRE Support Officers)
Lydia Revett (minute taker)

Apologies:
Cllr Elaine Still
Jeff Williams
Elizabeth Jenkerson

Matters discussed:

Professional Education Opportunities:

6. RE and SEND:
7. The monitoring group were advised that one of the teachers on the National Leadership Programme for RE had led a very successful training session with RE leaders on RE and SEND and this would take place twice a year going forward with specific topics being chosen for each meeting, such as assessment, visits and concepts for teaching.
8. RE CPD:
9. The advisers reported that five Primary RE networks had run each term and one secondary RE network across the County. The usual offer of courses for RE leaders had taken place, including Leading RE, RE and Ofsted and RE and Assessment. It was noted that a common query from schools related to advice on mapping the golden threads throughout the curriculum and it was suggested that an online meeting of primary and secondary teachers to look at golden threads and transition would be useful for providing advice. It was agreed that the advisers would arrange this in the Autumn term.
10. SACRE Monitoring Visits:
11. The advisers reported that there had been one SACRE visit to a primary school and one SACRE visit to a secondary school to look at planning, delivery of teaching and RE assessment. Common areas of RE focus with schools included:
 - How to update their curriculum to *LDIV*, in particular using golden thread concepts to shape progression right across the school and
 - ways to assess RE across all year groups from Reception to GCSE classes.

Reports from Primary and Secondary Ofsted Visits made since the last meeting were considered.

12. The meeting was advised about a large number of primary Ofsted reports which had mentioned RE. The reports were positive regarding RE but there was a number of reports which contained comments about SMSC, British Values, inclusion, tolerance and equality rather than RE as an academic subject. Some reports celebrated visits beyond the classroom for RE, but it has been seen on school visits that such visits will be less frequent in many schools in the next academic year due to financial constraints. Concern was therefore expressed about this in the group. There were very few RE deep dives seen in the reports that had taken place. The County Inspector was asked to conduct research on comparing deep dives in history with those in RE to see what similarities and differences could be noted between the subjects and to report back to the group in the Autumn term.

13. The group were also advised about some Ofsted reports nationally where concerns were raised by Inspectors about the failure to teach RE and where this had resulted in a downgrading for the school. It was noted that action was being taken on this and that it was viewed seriously.

Information gathered from other inspector/Adviser visits.

14. 14 primary schools had requested visits from the Advisers during the period covered by this report. All of these would have been funded through the schools Management Partnership arrangements with HIAS. It was noted that further training had been requested on Dharmic religions by some of the schools and both advisers have provided training on this for primary schools recently. SACRE members are asked to contact the advisers if they know of Dharmic faith representatives who would be interested in joining the SACRE to help provide further advice and support to schools going forward.

Update on teacher vacancies and ITE provision

15. The group were advised that the national picture for RE teacher training recruitment is very bleak, compounded by the lack of a bursary for RE PGCE's. The information was shared that teacher vacancies are higher this year than last year, with RE predicted to meet just 61% of its target nationally (taken from the National Foundation for Educational Research). It was noted though that Hampshire has largely retained its teachers, so there are relatively few vacancies in Hampshire compared to London, for example. Members also added that Hampshire is a very good Local Authority to work for, with high quality support offered for RE teachers from the SACRE, two Advisers and the RE centre.

Survey into KS 4 Provision

16. The survey was sent out in the Spring term to gain a clearer overview of secondary school provision and to attempt to identify some of the reasons for the drop in RE entry numbers this year. 42 schools responded across Hampshire and Portsmouth. The key findings were that:
- 88% of the sample will be entering students for GSCE this year, with the majority of schools following AQA as their specification.
17. GCSE entries have remained relatively stable for 45% of the schools since 2019, but have dropped for 42% of the schools surveyed. Where numbers had dropped, the main reason given for this was that the subject is not part of the Ebacc. Ebacc is a set of subjects that is one of the performance measures for schools. Currently this requires students to take Geography or History, but not RE. Key findings were that:
- Most schools expect numbers for next year to be similar to the current cohort.
 - Some schools highlighted the difficulty in recruiting specialist teachers and consistency of provision.

- Only 54% of schools offered core KS4 provision for RE with distinct lessons and 40% offered provision that combines it with another subject. This leaves 3% where the provision will need to be checked in more detail to see that RE is actually being taught.
- The group asked the Adviser to monitor this further and to identify schools who did not respond to the survey and contact them about their provision, reporting back to the group in the Autumn term.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

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

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Living Difference IV, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education has an interest in equalities at its heart. A high quality religious education taught according to Living Difference IV seeks to contribute to the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation especially and directly with regard to the protected characteristics of race and religion. Further, through experiencing a high-quality religious education taught according to Living Difference IV there is the intention to mitigate xenophobia of all kinds thus fostering good relations.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
Date:	4 July 2023
Title:	Constitution Review Task and Finish Working Group - Feedback
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Justina Hudson, Senior Legal Advisor
Adam Mori, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 0370 779 1243 **Email:** justina.hudson@hants.gov.uk
adam.mori@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide SACRE with the findings of the Constitution Review Task and Finish Working Group from its meeting on the 28 April 2023.
2. The current Constitution is included as Appendix A to this report.
3. Appendix 2 to this report is the proposed updated Constitution for SACRE to consider before presenting to a meeting of the County Council for approval.

Recommendation(s)

4. That the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education supports the proposed update to their Constitution included as Appendix 2 to this report ahead of consideration and approval by the County Council.

Constitution Review Task and Finish Working Group

5. The Constitution Review Task and Finish Working Group met on the 28 April 2023 and elected Chris Hughes to act as Chairman for the meeting.
6. The group reviewed their remit, as agreed by SACRE within their Terms of Reference and received an overview of the relevant law from the legal advisor present. It was noted that the current Constitution is in accordance with the 1996 Education Act and there had been no updates to this legislation requiring changes to the Constitution as it is currently worded.
7. Following a brief discussion, the Working Group agreed that the Constitution would benefit from an update to clarify sections to make it more accessible,

add a code of conduct for SACRE members and to clarify the compositions of the four Groups which form SACRE.

Feedback from Review of Other Authorities SACRE Constitutions

8. The Constitution Review Task and Finish Working Group then received an overview of NASACRE's guidance on the requirements for SACRE's Constitution, alongside a review of several other authorities Constitution.
9. It was noted that most Constitutions reviewed agreed with and bore many similarities to Hampshire SACRE's current Constitution. It was also noted that many SACREs were incorporating a separate 'code of conduct' for members.
10. In relation to Group A, it was observed that many Constitutions from other authorities stated the number of members who would form the Group and which parts they would represent.

Hampshire County Council's Constitution

11. The Working Group noted that Hampshire's SACRE operated within the scope of Hampshire County Council's Constitution. This provided the framework for the consideration of complaints, the policy in relation to expenses and a code of conduct for members. It was noted however, that an additional SACRE Code of Conduct would be beneficial to set out the expectations for potential and current members of SACRE more specifically.

Group A

12. The Working Group moved onto a discussion surrounding the composition of Group A. The current process for establishing how many positions were available within the Group, how they would be appointed and which groups they would represent was unclear.
13. One suggestion was to link the membership of Group A to the outcome of the Census to proportionately represent the various responses to Religious Identity. However, it was noted that the current Constitution quoted the law, stating 'Christian denominations (other than the Church of England) and other religions and denominations *as in the opinion of the Authority* reflect the principal religious traditions in its area' (emphasis added).
14. Following the meeting of the Task and Finish Group, members were advised that SACRE would receive a recommendation on the composition of Group A from Hampshire County Council Officers. This can be updated and reviewed as required.

Quoracy and Substitute Members

15. During discussion it was raised that the Current Constitution states 'In order for the SACRE to be quorate a minimum of one third of the representatives of

each constituent group must be in attendance at the meeting'. There was a concern that this was a high threshold, and with some Groups having four members the threshold was affectively one half. It was also noted that this varied from the one quarter quorum for County Council meetings as set by the Authority's Constitution. There was also the question of the quorum being one quarter of those appointed to each group, or one quarter of the maximum available vacancies on each group, as if it was the later, each Group would need the number of available seats confirmed.

16. Following the meeting of the Task and Finish Group, members were advised that SACRE could set its own quoracy rules. The proposed updated SACRE Constitution contains a suggested quorum based on the group's discussion.
17. It was also noted that the current SACRE constitution stated, 'each group shall nominate a standing substitute member who will attend any meetings in the event that a group member is unable to attend'. This is contrary to the Council's Constitution in relation to Group D (Councillors) as this allows for several substitutes for each political group. The Council's Constitution is silent on the matter for Co-opted member substitutes, and they are not usually in place.
18. Additionally, it was observed that substitutes for Groups B & C of SACRE would work as they represent a consistent group and do seem to be in place already. However, the composition of Group A means that substitutes for the group will likely not work.
19. Members of the Task and Finish Group therefore considered the possibility of substitutes for all members of the group. There was also a question of substitutes for each of the co-opted members to SACRE (i.e., those who are not part of Group A-D).
20. Following the meeting of the Task and Finish Group, members were advised that SACRE could appoint deputy members to each of its groups as desired. The proposed updated SACRE Constitution contains details of deputy members based on the group's discussion.

Conclusions

21. The following conclusions have been reached by the Constitution Review Task and Finish Working Group.
22. The existing Constitution should be largely retained, with a revision by Hampshire's Legal Services to present the document in clearer language.
23. Hampshire County Council's Constitution provides the framework for the consideration of complaints, the policy in relation to expenses and a general code of conduct for members. A specialist SACRE Code of Conduct could be written to sit alongside SACRE's Constitution to set out the specific

expectations for potential and current members of SACRE.

24. The composition of Group A should be recommended by Officers of Hampshire County Council to SACRE to agree and will be reviewed as and when required.
25. The Quorum should be updated to require 30% of SACRE voting members to be present while all four groups are represented.
26. Substitute members of SACRE can be appointed as SACRE requires.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because: N/A	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

This report provides the feedback and proposed changes to the Constitution of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education, which are largely procedural in nature and do not affect the County Council's duties in relation to equalities.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE

Constituted under the Education Act 1996, this body shall be the Hampshire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) throughout this Constitution it shall be known as “The Council” and “The Authority” shall refer to the Hampshire County Council.

2. FUNCTIONS

The broad role of the Council is to support the effective provision of religious education and collective worship in schools. The Authority will work with the Council to review existing provision of religious education, promote community cohesion and to consider any further development of that provision. In particular:

- (a) The Council shall advise the Authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in maintained schools, and religious education in maintained and voluntary controlled schools, to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus . These matters (including, in particular, methods of teaching, the choice of materials, and the provision of training for teachers) can be referred by the Authority or can be identified by the Council as requiring consideration.
- (b) On an application made by the head teacher of any community school maintained by the Authority or any foundation school which has not been designated under section 69(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 by the Secretary of State as having a religious character:
 - (i) The Council shall consider whether it is appropriate for the requirements imposed by paragraph 3(2) of Schedule 20 to the school Standards and Framework Act 1998 (requirement for collective worship) to apply in the case of the school or in the case of any class or description of pupils at the school.
 - (ii) In determining whether it is appropriate for that requirement to apply, the Council shall have regards to any circumstances relating to the family backgrounds of the pupils at the school, or of the pupils of the particular class or description in question, which are relevant for determining the character of the collective worship in their case.
 - (iii) The Council shall give the head teacher written notification of their decision on the application.

At any time on an application made by the Head teacher, and in any event not later than the end of the period of five years beginning with the effective date of the last review, the Council shall review a decision made under (b) above that the requirements imposed by paragraph 3(2) of Schedule 20 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 does not for the time being apply in the case of a school

or class or description of pupils at the school. On any such review the Council may

- (i) Confirm the determination, with or without variation, or
- (ii) Revoke it

and the Council shall give the head teacher written notification of their decision, specifying its effective date for the purposes of this paragraph.

- (c) The representative groups on the Council, other than the group consisting of persons appointed to represent the Authority, may at any time require a review of any agreed syllabus for the time being adopted by the Authority.
- (d) The Council shall publish an annual report as to the exercise of their functions and any action taken by the representative groups on the council under paragraph (c) above. This report shall:
 - (i) Specify any matters in respect of which the Council have given advice to the Authority;
 - (ii) Broadly describe the nature of the given; and,
 - (iii) Where any such matter was not referred to the Council by the Authority, give the Council's reasons for offering advice on that matter.

In addition to making the report available for public inspection, a copy shall be sent to the Authority's Executive Lead Member for Children's Services, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and to such other organisations as the Council considers appropriate.

- (e) The Council may offer advice to the Authority on matters related to the Council's function including, but not limited to, aspects of religion and diversity in the promotion of community cohesion. The advice offered by the Council has no statutory force but the Authority should give careful consideration to the advice offered.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 The Council shall comprise four groups of representative members as specified below. The members will be appointed by the Authority but may be nominated by their religious body, Officers of the Authority or others.

- (a) Group A

Christian denominations (other than the Church of England) and other religions and denominations as in the opinion of the Authority reflect the principal religious traditions in its area. The number of representatives approved under the category shall, so far as is consistent with the efficient discharge of this group's functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area.

- (b) Group B

Four representatives of the Church of England.

(c) Group C

Four teachers representing teachers' professional associations recognised by the Authority for the purposes of consultation and negotiation.

(d) Group D

Four representatives of the Authority appointed by the Authority, at least three of whom shall be elected members of the Authority.

3.2 All members shall be delegates who are interested in education in general and religious education in particular.

3.3 Each group shall nominate a standing substitute member who will attend any meetings in the event that a group member is unable to attend. The group shall ensure that any substitute member is fully informed of all issues before the Council so that they can play a full and knowledgeable role in any meetings they are required to attend.

3.4 Co-opted persons may be appointed by the members of SACRE, including teacher co-options as may be necessary to ensure adequate representation of teachers who are actively concerned with religious education in primary and secondary schools.

3.5 The Authority's Executive Lead Member for Children's services shall be entitled to attend and observe at any meeting of the Council (including confidential items) in an ex officio capacity

4. **QUORUM**

In order for the SACRE to be quorate a minimum of one third of the representatives of each constituent group must be in attendance at the meeting.

5. **VOTING**

On any questions to be decided by the Council, only the representative groups set out above have a vote and each group has a single vote.

Decisions within a Group about how that vote is to be cast do not require unanimity. Each Group is to regulate its own proceedings.

Representatives of the Authority appointed under Group D cannot vote on the question of whether to require the Authority to review the Agreed Syllabus.

In the event of a tied vote the issue would fail and similarly any new initiative will not proceed.

6. **DURATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Members of the Council shall be appointed for a period of four years.

- (a) Any member of the Council may at any time resign from office.
- (b) A member of the Council may be removed from membership by the Authority at any time if, in the opinion of the Authority, the person ceases to be representative of either the religion, denomination or association which he/she was appointed to represent on the Council, or he/she ceases to be a member of the Authority, or he/she fails to attend three consecutive meetings without good reason.
- (c) Subject to the conditions of 5(b) above, members of the Council having served the full term are eligible for re-appointment.

7. CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

- 7.1 The Authority shall appoint the Council Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Such appointment shall be for four years
- 7.2 Persons continuing to be members of SACRE are eligible for re-appointment to the position of Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
- 7.3 The SACRE may collectively nominate to the Authority an individual/s from its membership for the position of Chairman or vice-Chairman.

8. PROCEEDINGS

- (a) Meetings of the Council will be open to the public except when items of a confidential nature are to be discussed.
- (b) The validity of proceedings of the Council or of the members of the Council of any particular category shall not be affected by a vacancy in the office of any member of any of the representative groups comprised by the Council or on the ground that a member of the Council appointed to represent any religion, denomination or association does not at the time of the proceedings represent the religion, denomination or association in question.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE

- 1.1. In accordance with the Education Act 1996, Hampshire County Council “the LA” is required to establish the Hampshire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

2. ROLE

- 2.1. The broad role of the SACRE is to support the effective provision of religious education and collective worship in schools. The LA will work with SACRE to review existing provision of religious education, promote community cohesion and to consider any further development of that provision.

3. FUNCTIONS

- 3.1. The Function of SACRE is to:
- 3.2. Consider questions and provide advice to the LA on all aspects of its provision for RE in its schools, including Voluntary Aided and Voluntary controlled Schools where appropriate (including methods of teaching, the choice of materials, and the provision of training for teachers).
- 3.3. Consider questions and provide advice to the LA on Collective Worship in its schools (this does not include Voluntary Aided or Voluntary Controlled schools).
- 3.4. Consider requests from head teachers to hold Collective Worship that is not of a broadly Christian character (known as “Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Determinations”).
- 3.5. Initiate reviews and, when deemed necessary, ensure that revisions to the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education are undertaken through the formation of an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) set up by the Council.
- 3.6. Publish an annual report of its work which specifies any matters in respect of which the SACRE has given advice to the authority; broadly describes the nature of the advice given; and where, any such matter was not referred by the LA, provides the reasons for offering advice on that matter.
- 3.7. The SACRE may also:
 - advise on and monitor the provision and delivery of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education (SMSC).

- be aware of, and monitor, the uptake of external examinations in RE and religious studies and monitor or review the standards achieved.
- consider complaints about the provision and delivery of RE or Collective Worship referred to it by the LA.

Locally Agreed Syllabus and Agreed Syllabus Conference

- 3.8. The Locally Agreed Syllabus is the statutory document for RE within the LA. It sets out what should be taught to pupils in all key stages and the standards expected at the end of key stages. It is produced by an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) and must be reviewed every five years. However, if a majority of SACRE members agree, they can write to the LA to ask for it to be reviewed sooner and the LA must convene a conference.
- 3.9. An ASC is a statutory body established to produce an agreed syllabus for RE. Although it is a separate legal entity from a SACRE each group can include the same members. The LA will appoint members ensuring that the committee membership is broadly representative of the proportionate strengths of the denominations, religions, and associations in the area.
- 3.10. The LA can ask suitably skilled colleagues, who are not members of SACRE, to attend an ASC and advise on the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Collective Worship

- 3.11. The Education Act 1996 requires the SACRE to advise on matters relating to religious worship in schools where Collective Worship comes into its remit and lays down a requirement that all schools hold a daily act of collective worship and that this should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.”
- 3.12. A Headteacher of a school can apply to SACRE for an exemption known in the Education Act as a “Determination”, after consultation with governors (and parents) using Hampshire’s Determination Application and providing the listed supporting documents.
- 3.13. SACRE shall consider whether it is appropriate for the requirements imposed by paragraph 3(2) of Schedule 20 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (requirement for Christian collective worship) to apply in the case of the school or in the case of any class or description of pupils at the school.
- 3.14. In determining whether it is appropriate for that requirement to apply, SACRE shall have regards to any circumstances relating to the family backgrounds of the pupils at the school, or of the pupils of the class or description in question, which are relevant for determining the character of the collective worship in their case.

- 3.15. SACRE shall give the head teacher written notification of their decision on the application.
- 3.16. SACRE, on an application made by the Head teacher, shall review the determination decision, within five years of the previous decision and shall either:
- Confirm the determination, with or without variation, or
 - Revoke it.
- and the Council shall give the head teacher written notification of their decision.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1. SACRE shall comprise four groups of representative members as specified below. The members will be appointed by the LA but may be nominated by their religious body, Officers of the LA, or others.
- 4.2. **Group A** - Christian denominations (other than the Church of England) and other religions and denominations as in the opinion of the LA reflect the principal religious traditions in its area, which will be reviewed from time to time.
- 4.3. **Group B** - Four representatives of the Church of England.
- 4.4. **Group C** - Four teachers representing teachers' professional associations recognised by the LA for the purposes of consultation and negotiation.
- 4.5. **Group D** - Four representatives of the LA appointed by the Authority, at least three of whom shall be elected members of the Authority.
- 4.6. All members shall be interested in supporting the improvement of quality of provision of religious education and collective worship in schools in Hampshire.
- 4.7. All members shall adhere to the SACRE Code of Conduct and the LA's Code of Conduct for Members.
- 4.8. Each group/member shall have the following provision to nominate standing substitute members who will attend any meetings if a (group member/member) is unable to attend, subject to approval by the LA.
- **Group A** – each member of Group A to have a deputy.
 - **Group B** – two standing deputies.
 - **Group C** – two standing deputies.
 - **Group D** – deputy arrangements as provided for Councillors in Hampshire County Council's Constitution.
- 4.9. The group/member shall ensure that any substitute member is fully informed of all issues before the Council so that they can play a full and knowledgeable role in any meetings they are required to attend.

- 4.10. Co-opted persons may be appointed by the LA, including teacher co-options as may be necessary to ensure adequate representation of teachers who are actively concerned with religious education in primary and secondary schools.
- 4.11. The LA's Executive Lead Member for Children's services shall be entitled to attend and observe at any meeting of the Council (including confidential items) in an ex officio capacity.

5. QUORUM

- 5.1. A SACRE meeting will be deemed quorate if the following two conditions both apply:
- 30% of SACRE voting members are present and,
 - Each of the four representative groups are represented.

6. VOTING

- 6.1. On any questions to be decided by the SACRE, only the representative groups shall be entitled to vote, and each group has a single vote.
- 6.2. Decisions within a Group about how that vote is to be cast do not require unanimity. Each Group is to regulate its own proceedings.
- 6.3. Representatives of the LA appointed under Group D cannot vote on the question of whether to require the LA to review the Agreed Syllabus.
- 6.4. In the event of a tied vote the issue would fail and similarly any new initiative will not proceed.
- 6.5. On formal votes it may be necessary for the four representative groups to meet separately to determine how their collective vote will be cast. To facilitate such a vote each representative group should elect a chair. Decisions made within a group as to how their vote should be cast do not require unanimity.

7. DURATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- 7.1. Members of the SACRE shall be appointed for a period of four years.
- 7.2. Any member of the SACRE may at any time resign from office.
- 7.3. A member of the SACRE may be removed from membership by the LA at any time if, in the opinion of the LA, the person ceases to be representative of either the religion, denomination or association which he/she was appointed to represent on the SACRE, or he/she ceases to be a member of the LA, or he/she fails to attend three consecutive meetings without good reason.

- 7.4. Subject to the conditions of 7.3 above, members of the Council having served the full term are eligible for re-appointment.
- 7.5. Any faith community wishing to take part in the SACRE's work must make a written application to the Strategic Director Children & Young People.
- 7.6. The application must state:
- their ability to define themselves as a faith community.
 - why they have a legitimate interest in the work of SACRE as outlined in this constitution.
 - how their interests are not currently being adequately represented.
- 7.7. SACRE members may co-opt non-voting members for a period of two years. However co-opted members may not propose further co-options.

8. CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

- 8.1. The LA shall appoint the Council Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Such appointment shall be for four years.

9. PROCEEDINGS

- 9.1. Meetings of the SACRE will be open to the public except when items of a confidential nature are to be discussed.
- 9.2. The validity of proceedings of SACRE or of the members of the SACRE of any category shall not be affected by a vacancy in the office of any member of any of the representative groups comprised by the SACRE or on the ground that a member of the SACRE appointed to represent any religion, denomination or association does not at the time of the proceedings represent the religion, denomination, or association in question.

10. Complaints

- 10.1. Complaints are to be raised with reference to the LA's complaint procedure.

Updated July 2023

SACRE Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to each representative member of SACRE in addition to the LA's Code of Conduct for Members.

In the event of any conflict between this Code of Conduct and the LA's Code of Conduct for Members then the LA's Members Code it to be applied.

All representatives should:

- support the role of SACRE in advising on the effective provision of religious education and collective worship in schools.
- attend the meetings of the SACRE and take part in the deliberations and work of SACRE.
- participate in and review the work of the SACRE for the benefit of the whole community.
- express views and opinions openly, honestly and sensitivity, always recognising others may have views different to one's own, actively challenge and resist stereotyping.
- always assume that other members of the SACRE are honourable and concerned with the best interests of the SACRE.
- respect the rights of other members to disagree with your point of view/ listen with respect the views of other members and where a situation of disagreement occurs, disagree respectfully.

Groups A and B representatives should:

- ensure that they are adequately qualified to represent their faith community.
- be able to explain how they intend to inform and consult with their faith community.
- feel a sense of responsibility not only to the children coming from their own faith but also to all the children of Hampshire.
- provide expertise, or assist in providing access to such expertise, in matters of fact, tradition, theology and practice relating to their own faith for the benefit of the whole school population.
- represent to the SACRE the interests and concerns of their own faith community.
- endeavour to represent fairly the views and interests of the widest possible range of faith positions within their community (this is particularly relevant if they are the sole representative on the SACRE for their faith).
- follow the guidelines for visits to schools.
- recognise that stating a belief or religious tenet is not the same as advancing an argument for or against any proposal, although it may well be an overriding consideration.
- inform members of their faith community of the work of the SACRE.

For school visits faith representatives should:

- only visit a school as a SACRE faith group representative when invited.
- inform the Clerk of the SACRE of any invitation received, and visits made.

- make clear that you are speaking from the perspective of the religion or belief system that you are representing.
- ensure that you do not say or do anything, which could be viewed as denigrating any other religion or ethical belief system.
- at all times behave honourably in relation to your fellow SACRE members.

Teacher and teacher association representatives should:

- provide information and expertise in relation to teaching and the school environment.
- if appropriate provide information and expertise in relation to the teaching of religious education and the carrying out of collective worship in schools.
- represent the interests and concerns of teachers, pupils, and schools.
- consult with teaching colleagues and students.
- keep colleagues informed about the work of the SACRE.
- ensure that the welfare and education of all the children in Hampshire is the primary focus of the SACRE.

Council representatives should:

- represent the wider public interest.
- provide information and expertise to the SACRE in their capacity as an elected member of Hampshire County Council.

Code of Conduct – July 2023

To be reviewed – July 2024

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
Date:	6 June 2023
Title:	Key National and Local RE Matters
Report From:	Director of Childrens' Services

Contact name: Justine Ball, County Subject Inspector

Tel: 02392 441442

Email: justine.ball@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to enable SACRE to consider key RE developments, nationally and locally not mentioned elsewhere in this agenda.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education notes the report.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to update and inform SACRE of key national development, for example the work of the Religious Education Council (REC) and NASACRE as well as the Association of University Lecturers in Religious Education (AULRE) and initiatives being led by the Culham St Gabriel's Trust.

Contextual information

4. Culham St Gabriel's Trust initiatives:
5. Hampshire SACRE members will be interested in several initiatives that are being funded by the Culham st Gabriel's trust; the largest grant giving body supporting religious education: [Homepage - Culham St Gabriel's \(cstg.org.uk\)](http://Homepage - Culham St Gabriel's (cstg.org.uk)). These include:
 - Regular promotion of a national teacher recruitment campaign for RE. Further information on the campaign can be found below: [New RE teacher recruitment campaign kicks off as popular GCSE subject faces staff shortage - Culham St Gabriel's \(cstg.org.uk\)](#)
 - Virtual RE courses that are free to all on different aspects of RE. These are especially useful to new teachers, those teaching with no background in RE and those simply wishing to know more about the current world of RE. These can be found here: [E Learning - Culham St Gabriel's \(cstg.org.uk\)](#)

- One of the Hampshire teachers on the national RE Leadership Programme, Matt Pitcher, has written an article on the courses for Secondary RE News and this is enclosed as Appendix A to this report for SACRE members to read.
6. RE Hubs – a national update: [Explore RE in your Region \(re-hubs.uk\)](https://re-hubs.uk)
 7. This project was introduced to the SACRE last term and the website for this has just been launched. On the page for the South East, the link is given for the Portsmouth Directory of Places of Worship, together with details of all of our Hampshire primary and secondary CPD for teachers and speakers in our local area. There is the potential for a wide range of resources to be uploaded onto the website, which will be of real interest and use to the SACRE and to Hampshire teachers, including information on further places of worship across Hampshire.
 8. Sacred Texts British Library: The British Library have produced a series of resources for teachers at Key Stage 2 on a range of different religions with advice included. The resources can be accessed here: [Discovering Sacred Texts: Key Stage 2 teaching resources | The British Library \(bl.uk\)](https://www.bl.uk/learning/religious-education)
 9. The Association of University Lecturers in Religious Education (AULRE) is still leading on issues in relation to the shortages in Secondary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and the Secondary Teaching and Learning Adviser attended their national conference recently and has since spoken on this topic nationally.
 10. AULRE, in association with Culham St Gabriel's, ran a second teacher recruitment webinar on 5/6/23. This included speakers from across the RE community from university providers to current teachers, advisors and RE ECT's. Although less well attended than the first it is an example of continuing ways the RE community is working together to promote recruitment.
 11. National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). NASACRE is the national body representing and leading on SACREs interests. A regular newsletter is circulated to SACRE members through their SACRE. In addition, a series of training sessions are offered for SACRE members to attend. SACRE members are invited to note the last in series of training events this year and to contact the SACRE clerk if they wish to attend: 26 June 7-8.30 pm So you've joined your local SACRE.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>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.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Living Difference IV, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education has an interest in equalities at its heart. A high-quality religious education taught according to Living Difference IV seeks to contribute to the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation especially and directly with regard to the protected characteristics of race and religion. Further, through experiencing a high-quality religious education taught according to Living Difference IV there is the intention to mitigate xenophobia of all kinds thus fostering good relations.

Culham St Gabriel's Short Courses: a Review

Matt Pitcher

Over the past few years I have made the decision to develop my skills outside of the classroom so that they will enhance my time in it. Part of this was motivated by the time that we spent in lockdown and wanting to re-engage with the Religion and Worldviews community. For me I had become inward looking and only focusing what was happening within my department's classrooms. Now I decided to look around the community for new ideas and visions that could help me become a better practitioner but also improve the quality of our curriculum.

The subject is in an exciting position; transforming and flourishing into a subject that reaches every part of the curriculum. Part of my own learning over the past few years has been to gain an insight into other teachers' curricula and engage in the research that shapes their ideas. The widespread use of online seminars and CPD has led to teachers rubbing virtual shoulders with academics, a cross pollination of ideas, views and opinions that were not as visible in the past. One shining light in this area is the work of Culham St Gabriel's and the online short courses they have developed.

These short courses have been a great help to me when I have been trying to get my head round some of the developments in the subject. The four strands reflected in the short courses are Subject Knowledge, Curriculum, Research and Religion and Worldviews. Each course can be completed in 90 minutes, uses simple enough language to take in after a busy day teaching and planning. The fact they are free of charge is a gamechanger. Selling to Senior Leadership was the easy part.

The courses are also easy to access, another selling point. Whether offering a step-by-step guide in shaping a curriculum, planning a research project, engaging with the different forms of knowledge within the subject, each dimension as helped me gain a better understanding. This year I have gained a place on the CStG Leadership Programme and the short courses have offered invaluable guidance and direction.

I have found the Introduction to Research Course especially useful. As an emerging leader my focus is on engaging with research but sometimes this is a tricky area to navigate. Articles and blogs are written with different purposes, reflecting various biases and opinions and the research that is supporting them is compelling in its own right. The Research course presents me with two pieces of research about the same subject, coming from two very different points of view, inviting me to discern and think for myself. I have found this process particularly enlightening, showing me as a professional that I can and should make sense of research for myself, including what I choose to adopt for my own practice.

Research aside, the courses have also given me a better grasp of the debates that are going on in the Religion and Worldviews community. These courses are

Appendix A

designed not only for teachers, but anyone who is involved in our community and therefore I signpost people to these courses. They are a great tool for giving us a gateway into thinking about the purpose of the subject as it evolves.

It seems to me that although it's early days for these courses they will be with us for a long time. To be able to dig deeper into them and beyond is of great benefit to the subject in general. Go and have a look at them if you haven't done so already. I just need to find some time to look at the Primary Teacher courses. They look fascinating.....