

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.