

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

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| Committee/Panel: | Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) |
| Date: | 29 June 2021 |
| Title: | Monitoring Group Report |
| Report From: | Director of Children's Services |

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform SACRE of discussions that took place in the SACRE Monitoring Group meeting that took place virtually on 12 May 2021

Recommendation(s)

2. That SACRE thanks the Monitoring Group for their report

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to inform SACRE of significant matters discussed in the recent Monitoring Group meetings and highlight key issues regarding religious education in Hampshire.

Contextual information

4. Attendees at the meeting on 12 May: Chris Hughes (Chair), Elizabeth Jenkerson, Jeff Williams, Rhiannon Love, Alasdair Richardson, Justine Ball and Patricia Hannam
5. As requested by full SACRE meeting in March 2021, the Monitoring Group considered a draft of SACRE's 3-Year Action Plan, 2021/2022, 2022/2021, 2023/2024.

6. **Update on review of Locally Agreed Syllabus.** Monitoring Group received information regarding the progress made with the review of the locally agreed syllabus. The new syllabus, which will come to the Agreed Syllabus Conference in November, will be called *Living Difference IV*.
7. **2021 RS GCSE arrangements.** Summer examination series requires teachers to submit teacher assessments. This is fourth year of the current RS GCSE specification, which has the grading system: 9-1 - where 9 represented the highest grade. Grades awarded according to a normal distribution curve rather than criteria referenced as was the original vision for the GCSE.
8. **Withdrawal Survey.** The annual withdrawal survey had been postponed in light of Covid-19. It is planned to undertake this in the second half of the summer term when schools have been back full time for a while.
9. **HIAS Professional Education events.**
 - 9.1. A secondary RE network takes place virtually once each term, focussing on the syllabus review, leading and managing quality RE in a time of Covid-19 Pandemic as well as national developments in RE. A series of free webinars have been well attended. Topics have been in relation to Holocaust Education with Dr Alasdair Richardson and regarding raising achievement at KS4 for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Most recently the webinar on 24 May was led by Professor Farid Panjwani (former Commissioner on the Commission for RE) on Decolonisation and Muslim traditions.
 - 9.2. Primary network meetings have been held online, after school, resulting in a wider range of teachers signing up. Regular training courses for RE leaders have taken place including SMSC training for school leaders and governors, RE for SENCos, and three subject knowledge webinars on Christian and Muslim traditions with one held on Hindu traditions. A free webinar took place worldviews with Trevor Cooling from the RE Council. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and RE pack has been updated for early adopting schools of the reviewed EYFS framework and the Leadership and prophethood pack has been amended. A new KS1 pack is in development regarding Ideas about God as well as new RE resources made available in relation the Climate Crisis. There continues to be good uptake on the local authority run courses regarding Living Difference III and the resource for teaching Christianity in Church Schools: Understanding Christianity.
 - 9.3. Three training sessions on RE and Ofsted have taken place this year for primary and secondary RE leaders.
10. **SACRE Monitoring Visits.** 5 primary monitoring visits have taken place (virtually), one had to be postponed due to illness. In one school their inclusion policy was found to be excellent for example the way the school sought to diversify visitors, as well as the resources and images used in their RE. There have been no secondary monitoring visits in this period.

11. **Ofsted reports and other HIAS inspection/advisory visits.** Ofsted Section 5 (full) inspections have not been taking place due to COVID-19. Some core funding has been made available for support in three local authority secondary schools to improve RE. Other support, funded entirely by the school, is taking place in several other secondary local authority schools. However, some secondary schools remain hard to link with. It is hoped that a Secondary Governor briefing session on the new agreed syllabus ***Living Difference IV*** in October will help raise the profile of RE in senior leadership teams. in Primary RE Governor training will take place in 2 sessions in October and November 2021. Primary network meetings continue to attract good attendance and ensure good connections with primary schools.
12. **Update on NQT and other teacher appointments, vacancies, and uptake on ITE courses.** There has been little movement in secondary RE leadership positions however some posts for newly qualified teachers have been advertised. Of Winchester University's 21 current students, two thirds have teaching jobs, spread wide geographically. This year's cohort had a £9,000 bursary, whilst next year's has been reduced to 0. Sarum St Michael Trust has offered some support for 2021/22 cohort - for the first ten applicants. Eight applicants for 2021/22 course have confirmed places by the time of the monitoring meeting. The removal of the bursary, along with restrictions on the DfE subject knowledge course numbers are potentially disastrous for RE. In addition, the changes to teacher's early career framework, the early years framework and the PGCE core content framework mean that a broad subject specific input is no longer expected.
13. **National programme of leadership development for RE:** Two Hampshire teachers have been accepted onto the National RE Leadership programme funded by Culham St Gabriel's Trust, starting in September 2021. One teacher is on the stage 2 of the programme having participated in the first stage. Around 8 teachers nationally are on each stage of the programme.
14. **Information about other research projects:** Justine Ball is currently undertaking academic research on decolonising the teaching about Jesus, in a small sample of Hampshire primary schools, focussing on imagery shown in RE lessons and historical knowledge about Jesus. This for her dissertation as part of her master's degree.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

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| 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 |

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:

- (a) SACRE's core business is to ensure high quality religious education in Hampshire which, it is intended, will make a positive difference to the way young people 'think speak and act in the world' (See purpose statement of Living Difference III 2016, the agreed syllabus for religious education in Hampshire).