

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee/Panel:	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)
Date:	1 March 2022
Title:	SACRE 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 update SACRE regarding the activities of the SACRE Monitoring Group.

Recommendation

2. That SACRE notes this Monitoring Group report.

Executive Summary

3. This report informs SACRE of the matters discussed at the SACRE Monitoring Group meeting that took place virtually on 25 January 2022.

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 at the meeting were:
Chris Hughes (Chair) Cllr Chris Donnelly
Jeff Williams Elizabeth Jenkerson
Patricia Hannam (Supporting Officer)
Justine Ball (Supporting Officer)

Apologies were received from: Cllr Elaine Still, Rhiannon Love and Alasdair Richardson.

6. **GCSE**

The Monitoring Group were advised that the DfE intends for there to be a full suite of examinations in the summer of 2021. An update is anticipated to schools on 7 February regarding adjustments to be made to the material to be examined. Monitoring Group discussed the difficulties faced by schools in light of Covid-19 during the last 2 years, and how this will have impacted students as they prepare for examinations in the summer of 2022. Additional professional education opportunities have been made available by HIAS for heads of department in Hampshire LA schools.

7. **Locally Agreed Syllabus: monitoring adoption and implementation**

Two large full-day launch conferences have taken place in November and January, with a further half day event planned for March. Secondary and primary school uptake on these events was exceptionally strong with almost 400 schools attending or in other ways following up the events. Updating the online support materials available for schools is now underway. A meeting was held in December to update the guidance for schools in using the resource '*Understanding Christianity*' with Living Difference IV in Church of England Schools. This guidance includes an exemplar long-term map.

8. **Collective worship**

SACRE Monitoring Group is following up SACRE's desire to monitor and exemplify best practice in Collective Worship, in both primary and secondary schools, across the authority. Training and support, especially for primary schools, in developing their Collective Worship has consistently been offered. From September 2022 monitoring visits for both primary and secondary schools will include asking about schools' Collective Worship policy. Examples of good practice will be brought to SACRE in due course.

9. **Withdrawal Survey for 2021**

124 Hampshire schools completed the survey from a range of primary, secondary and special schools. The number of children withdrawn from all or parts of RE and Collective Worship were very low indeed. They were as follows: 0.09% of children from all RE, 0.08% from parts of RE, 0.07% from parts of Collective Worship and 0.2% from all Collective Worship. The reasons were mainly due to parental personal belief.

10. **SACRE Monitoring Visits**

Dates are now being set for primary face-to-face visits to resume following some flexibility around virtual visits in recent months in light of Covid-19. A Secondary event bringing together schools where there has been limited

engagement with the Locally Agreed Syllabus in recent years is taking place in March.

11. Professional education opportunities for teachers

Many head teachers were present at the virtual Living Difference IV Launch Conferences. New head teacher briefings are being arranged through HIAS colleagues as well as other opportunities for input on Living Difference IV to area head teacher briefings. Governor training has been taking place in relation to Living Difference IV. HIAS primary RE Network meetings have taken place in January, and the CofE Diocese has also been running network meetings linking to Living Difference IV. A Secondary RE Network meeting is taking place in March.

In light of the positive reception to the cross-phase launch conferences, a further cross-phase conference bringing together primary and secondary teachers is being planned for 12 October 2022. It is hoped that this conference will be face-to-face.

12. Evidence gathered from Ofsted Inspections and other inspection/advisory visits.

In the period between the autumn Monitoring Group meeting and this Monitoring Group meeting, there had been no mention of religious education in any published Ofsted reports of inspections taking place in Hampshire. It was noted that the reports are written in such a way as to be accessed by parents and rarely give much detail, even where there have been 'deep dives' for particular subjects. It has come to the adviser's attention that a 'Deep Dive' for RE was made in a Hampshire School before Christmas, however the report for this was not published at the time of the meeting.

HIAS Primary and Secondary Advisers have been asked to make a considerable number of other advisory visits to primary and secondary schools; it is presumed this increase in requests is in light both of Ofsted's raised interest in curriculum and the launch of the new locally agreed syllabus.

13. Teacher updates

Where advisers are notified of teacher vacancies, they are able to share this with relevant colleagues in institutes of initial teacher education. Only one secondary vacancy for a new teacher is known of currently.

In the case of primary schools, Monitoring Group noted that leadership of religious education can change frequently. However, in other schools, subject leaders remain constant for several years. Decisions around subject leadership are made by head teachers.

14. Secondary PGCE Update

There is considerable concern being expressed locally and nationally about the reduction in applications for religious education PGCE courses for September 2022. The implications for this going forward are concerning in terms of fewer new teachers coming into the profession.

Following the consultation on Initial Teacher Training, which was completed in July 2021, the central recommendations regarding quality requirements has been accepted. However, the time for first delivery of these requirements has been extended until September 2024.

15. Early Career Teacher program

SACRE Monitoring Group received an update on the new process for inducting teachers into the profession – now known as Early Career Teachers. HIAS is able to offer some subject specific input to this for secondary teachers.

16. Consultation and Equalities

There is no adverse impact on equalities and no consultation is required.

17. Climate Change Impact Assessment

Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

18. Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation.

The carbon mitigation tool and climate change adaptation tools were not applicable on this occasion because the decision relates to a programme that is strategic/administrative in nature.

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:	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 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.