

3 November 2021		ITEM: 8
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education		
Work Plan Review and Update for 2021/2022		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills		
Accountable Director: Shelia Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

A work plan for 2020-21 was agreed at the Autumn Term meeting in 2019. Members considered the non-statutory guidance on RE made links between it and the planned actions for 2019-2020, This report proposes a review of that plan and some suggestions for 2020-2021

1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:

1.1 Review the workplan for 2020-2021 and consider the recommendations for work in 2020-21

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 This workplan sets out a list of objectives for SACRE based on the responsibilities for SACRE described in the non-statutory guidance. For each of these responsibilities, there follows a set of actions and success criteria.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 The scope of work plan must take account of the current SACRE budget which comes from the CSSB (central schools services block) of funding which is allocated to each local authority.

3.2 National and local developments in RE or in education more generally may require SACRE to edit the plan during the year.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 A well designed workplan specifies objectives for a **committee**, actions to meet the objective, criteria to evaluate the success of the actions and timelines for completion of the goals.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Not applicable

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The Local Authority reviews its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education on a regular basis;
- Publishes an Annual Report of its work;
 - Offers guidance on resources and methods of teaching and in consultation with Thurrock Schools;
 - Monitors the quality of provision for RE and Collective Acts of Worship in Thurrock.

This exercise falls under the first element of this programme.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead Finance, Corporate Finance

There are no financial implications to this report since the actions recommended in this report, if approved will be conducted by the Associate RE Adviser as part of her work

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

The legal duties on the advisory council are set out in section 391 Education Act 1996. The main one is to advise the local authority on such matters connected with the religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which do not have a religious character and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed or other syllabus as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit. This report asks that the workplan is reviewed and recommendations are considered. No other decision is required.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Lee**
Community Development and Equalities Team
Manager

SACRE will continue to dedicate time for the discussion of the way in which religious education can help improve the level of community cohesion in Thurrock. The Agreed Syllabus is specific about the expected outcomes of teaching of religious education in this respect. The teaching of RE should help schools to fulfil their statutory duty to promote community cohesion and to encourage better respect and tolerance for those with different religions and beliefs.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, Health Inequalities and Impact on Looked After Children

- Not applicable

8. Appendices to the Report

- Appendix One - Developing an action plan for SACRE – second draft

Report Author:

Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for RE

Developing an action plan for SACRE – second draft

Introduction: The role and responsibility of a SACRE

From Religious Education in English Schools DCSF (2010)

A SACRE must:

- advise the LA on RE given in accordance with the agreed syllabus, and on matters related to its functions, whether in response to a referral from the LA or as it sees fit¹¹
- publish an annual report on its work and on actions taken by its representative groups, specifying any matters on which it has advised the LA, broadly describe the nature of that advice, and set out reasons for offering advice on matters not referred to it by the LA
- send a copy of the report to the DfE
- meet in public unless confidential information is to be disclosed
- make minutes of its meetings available for inspection at the LA's offices (so far as the minutes relate to the parts of meetings that were open to the public). There are also provisions about public access to the agenda and reports for meetings.

A SACRE should:

- monitor the provision and quality of RE taught according to its agreed syllabus, together with the overall effectiveness of the syllabus
- provide advice and support on the effective teaching of RE in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus; provide advice to the LA and its schools on methods of teaching, the choice of teaching material and the provision of teacher training
- in partnership with its LA, consider whether any changes need to be made in the agreed syllabus or in the support offered to schools in the implementation of the agreed syllabus, to improve the quality teaching and learning of RE
- offer advice to the LA, and through the LA to schools, concerning how an existing agreed syllabus can be interpreted so as to fit in with a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum.

A SACRE may:

- require its LA to review the agreed syllabus and, if after discussion a vote is taken on this matter, the LA group on SACRE is not entitled to cast a vote. A majority decision by the three other committees is sufficient
- decide to advise the LA on matters related to its functions to the LA – equally, an LA may decide to refer matters to its SACRE
- co-opt members who are not members of any of the four groups
 - such co-opted members may provide educational expertise, young peoples' views or religious and non-religious views that reflect a diverse multi-cultural society.
- However, on any question to be decided by a SACRE, its constituent groups each have a single vote but co-opted members do not have a vote.

- Decisions within a group do not require unanimity. Each group must regulate its own proceedings, including provision for resolving deadlock. Many SACREs have chosen to adopt a constitution to regulate their proceedings and ways of working.

SACRE WORK PLAN 2020-21 (Suggestions for addition in 2021-2022 in red)
To meet the statutory duties of a SACRE

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Date	Success criteria
1. SACRE meetings are planned and dates published annually	Agenda planning Liaison with relevant council departments Meeting preparation Report writing Meeting attendance Minute taking Publication of meeting agendas and minutes SACRE members to consider taking part in NASACRE provided online training	Clerk, Chair, Adviser LA representative, members	Termly SACRE meetings	Meetings are effective meetings with actions followed up between meetings Members have a working knowledge of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issues affecting RE in the area • the Agreed Syllabus for RE • an understanding of the responsibilities of SACRE
2. SACRE have the opportunity to consider national developments in relation to RE in Thurrock	Consider relevant material from National organisations (AREAIC, NATRE, NASACRE/RE Council/ Culham St Gabriel's Trust as well as the DfE, Ofsted and Thurrock Council departments	Adviser	As information is published	Items on the Agenda for each meeting, Attendance at relevant meetings e.g. NASACRE AGM Minutes record discussions and actions
3. Produce annual report of the work of SACRE including advice to the council.	Consider the National Association of SACREs template for annual reports Collate information, source data and draft report Ensure final report presented to LA Send copy to Department for Education and to NASACRE	Adviser to draft Chair to write introduction Clerk to circulate. Elected representative to present to council	Spring Term (to account for data publication dates)	Completed draft in time for Spring meeting Report presented to council Copies sent to all schools Copy acknowledged by DfE
4. Engage with local schools and Academy Trusts to understand how Religious Education and Collective Worship are provided in Thurrock	Invite a sample of schools to complete the RE Quality Mark Template for self-evaluation. Share with school leaders and governors to encourage completion	(SACRE members at least one per year) Associate Adviser with support from TPHA.	Up to 4 school visits - 2 per term Suggested schedule – schools to complete once every three years	Meaningful evaluation visits or discussion completed, and reports discussed at SACRE meetings.

	<p>Officers to identify schools to host virtual visits for a sample of primary and secondary schools (to be replaced by REQM template above)</p> <p>Members to hold online discussions with subject leaders and where possible with children and young people</p> <p>Committee considers school reports (REQM self-evaluations)</p>			
5. Provide information on the RE curriculum to schools including through training	<p>Update schools on current developments in RE (NATRE and other material requested by SACRE)</p> <p>Host a SACRE Youth Conference to model high quality provision to teachers of RE</p>	<p>Adviser</p> <p>Adviser and RE Today</p>	<p>Termly</p> <p>Annually – Summer Term subject to funding</p>	<p>Schools in receipt of material</p> <p>Teachers respond to material received</p> <p>Teachers raise questions to the adviser</p>
6. Monitor provision for RE and Collective Worship	<p>Source and present national and local data as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GCSE validated and unvalidated results and entries (local and national) – School workforce data (local and national) – Surveys of provision and of issues such as withdrawal, use of agreed syllabus, who teaches RE etc (local) – Review school websites – Write to schools about findings – Sample collective worship policies 	<p>Adviser</p> <p>All SACRE members</p> <p>LA representative</p>	<p>Annually</p>	<p>LA respond to advice offered on strengths of RE and collective worship, and areas in need of development</p> <p>Schools respond to feedback on their websites and policies</p>
7. Evaluate SACRE work and establish priorities	<p>Item at autumn term meeting</p>	<p>All SACRE members</p>	<p>Autumn term meeting</p>	<p>Evaluation identified success criteria are met</p>

Schedule 2021/22		
Date of meeting	Subject	Objective (note – objectives 1 and 2 apply to all meetings)
Autumn 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National developments - update • Monitoring provision via school workforce data / self-evaluation • Review of membership and attendance • Evaluation of work plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 7 • 2 • 6
Spring 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring provision via GCSE and A level results (if available) • Annual report approval/ using new template • Relationships e.g: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools and Academies ○ Teaching School Hubs ○ the Council ○ Governors ○ Communities of religion and belief ○ Thurrock work on Community Integration ○ NASACRE ○ Youth Cabinet ○ Regional Schools Commissioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 3 • 4+5
Summer 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards and Achievements in RE in schools • Review of SACRE website • Review of Collective Worship and right of withdrawal • Ofsted Framework on RE – latest reports • Spirited Arts Competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 6 • 6 • 5 • 4