

<b>3 November 2021</b>		<b>ITEM: 6</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education</b>		
<b>Monitoring Provision for RE in Thurrock Schools</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education		
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Shelia Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
<b>This report is Public</b>		

## **Executive Summary**

In order to discharge its legal duties, SACRE monitors provision for Religious Education in its local area where RE is delivered in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus. Thurrock introduced a new Agreed Syllabus in 2016 and regularly monitors data on provision for the subject to establish how effective the new syllabus has been in meeting its aim to raise standards of RE. This report is based on two sources of information. 1: the school workforce census for secondary schools collected in November each year. 2. A tool for school self-evaluation.

### **1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:**

- 1.1 Consider the school workforce data for 2021 in the Appendix 1 and The REQM criteria for reviewing primary school provision in Appendix 2**
- 1.2 Ask the LA officer to include the following information in conversations with schools:**
  - **where good practice is identified,**
  - **where there is no evidence that the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus are met,**
  - **where there looks to be limited or no provision.**

**1.3 Consider the RE Quality Mark template for school self-evaluation and ask the Associate Adviser to circulate it to schools for completion**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

2.1 It has been possible in the past for SACRE to carry out its monitoring function using a variety of methods:

- a. School visits and lesson observations
- b. The collation of comments on RE found in Ofsted inspection reports
- c. Analysis of data

2.2 Smaller education budgets and less staff capacity mean that specific visits to schools by specialist advisers for RE are no longer possible for most local authorities, Ofsted no longer report on RE in particular and therefore SACREs around the country largely rely on data and information that schools are prepared to share from their own self-evaluative work.

## **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

3.1 A census of the school workforce is carried out annually and for secondary schools, this includes data about the number of hours of provision for each year group for each subject of the curriculum.

3.2 These methods of collective information on provision for RE cannot be used in isolation but the results should complement other data and school self-evaluation.

## **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

4.1 One of the responsibilities of a SACRE is to monitor provision for RE to be given in accordance with its Agreed Syllabus

## **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 s391 of the 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 committee considers the attached documents and further action that may be warranted. No other decision is requested.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

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

The aim of this review is to collect information about the provision for RE in Thurrock, to address concerns and to celebrate success. Higher standards in the teaching of RE will 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 - The school workforce data for 2021
- Appendix Two - The REQM criteria for reviewing primary school provision

### **Report Author:**

Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for RE

School name	School type	% year 7 hours - RE	% year 8 hours - RE	% year 9 hours - RE	% year 10 hours - RE	% year 11 hours - RE	% all hours - RE 2020	% all hours - RE 2019	Change from 2019 to 2020 in total hours of RE	Reporting issues/changes from 2019
The Hathaway Academy	Academy sponsor led	5.9	6.5	4.0	1.2	1.2	3.7	0.7	Increase	Hathaway now accurately reporting RE
Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	Academy converter	4.9	5.1	5.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	3.2	Decrease	Ortu now reporting RE 7-9 -not 10-11
Harris Academy Riverside	Free schools	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	
Harris Academy Ockendon	Academy converter	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.6	1.2	3.3	Decrease	
Orsett Heath Academy	Free schools	2.2	.	.	.	.	2.2	.	unavailable	
Thames Park Secondary School	Free schools	4.2	.	.	.	.	4.2	.	unavailable	
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	Academy converter	4.4	3.9	3.9	0.0	0.0	1.5	0.9	Increase	Harris now reporting RE 7-9. RE and Philosophy both reported
Grays Convent High School	Voluntary aided school	10.8	10.6	9.3	9.9	9.9	10.1	8.3	Increase	
William Edwards School	Academy converter	4.8	3.8	4.4	2.9	1.1	3.3	2.5	Increase	Now reporting some provision for year 11 but no whole cohort
Ortu Gable Hall School	Academy converter	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Not sure what has happened here. Looks like there has been a cut in provision or mis reporting
St Clere's School	Academy converter	5.3	5.1	2.6	0.0	0.0	2.4	2.7	Decrease	
The Gateway Academy	Academy sponsor led	3.8	4.5	10.1	9.5	0.0	5.5	5.5	Decrease	