

Report of the Director of Children Services, Education and Skills

Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education Annual Report & Review of York Schools' Agreed Syllabus

Summary

1. This report provides information about the role of Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education and presents its 2014-15 Annual Report to the committee – see Annex 1. The report also provides information about the review of the agreed syllabus for Religious Education which has to be followed by all maintained schools.

Background

2. Under the provision of the 1988 Education Reform Act every local education authority has a responsibility to establish a permanent body, called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), together with an occasional body, called an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
3. The role of SACRE is as follows:
 - i. Advise the local authority on matters connected with religious education and collective worship, as the local authority may refer, or as the SACRE sees fit;
 - ii. Monitor provision and standards in religious education;
 - iii. Advise on methods of teaching, choice of materials, and provision of teacher training;
 - iv. Support schools in reviewing and self-evaluating their provision for religious education and collective worship;
 - v. Consider complaints about the provision and delivery of religious education and collective worship referred to it by the Local Authority;
 - vi. Publish an annual report of its work;
 - vii. Make a determination on collective worship when requested;
 - viii. Require the review of an agreed syllabus for religious education adopted by the council.

4. It is a statutory requirement that the work of local SACRE's is reported annually to elected members and the Director of Children's Services.

The SACRE Annual Report 2014-15

5. The Annual Report (Annex 1) indicates that Religious Education (RE) continues to be central to the curriculum in York's schools. As in 2014 the number of pupils taking accreditation at the end of KS4 continues to rise with a higher number of pupils taking the full course GCSE at the end of KS4. This indicates that the subject continues to have a place in the secondary school curriculum in York despite changes to the KS4 accountability measures and the introduction of the English Baccalaureate¹ (EBacc).
6. Ofsted reports show that schools remain compliant with the statutory provision of Religious Education.
7. The following priorities have been agreed as part of the SACRE annual plan for 2015-16:
 - Continue to raise the profile of SACRE
 - Review the agreed syllabus
 - Encourage and support the involvement of as many stakeholders in the review process through the ASCs (Agreed Syllabus Conferences) and CPD events
 - Review the York SACRE guidance on Acts of Collective Worship

Review of the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

8. RE is not part of the National Curriculum but must be taught in schools by law. The syllabus has to be produced locally and is known as the agreed syllabus. York's agreed syllabus is currently being reviewed.
9. The review of the agreed syllabus will take place in partnership with North Yorkshire SACRE and the Diocese of York. It is planned that the new agreed syllabus will be modelled on the best practice suggested by RE Today. The new syllabus will be launched at a joint RE conference in Autumn 2017. The York and North Yorkshire SACREs also plan to host a Diversity day conference for young people and will share best practice in

¹ Introduced in 2010, the **English Baccalaureate** (EBacc) is a school performance measure. It allows people to see how many pupils get a grade C or above in the core academic subjects at key stage 4 in any government-funded school.

assessment, and develop materials for teachers that will support the delivery of the agreed syllabus.

Recommendations

10. As this report is for information only there are no specific recommendations. Members are asked to note and comment on the SACRE Annual Report 2014-15.

Reason: To update the committee on the work of SACRE and the outcomes in religious education in York's schools, in line with the statutory requirement to report annually to elected members.

Author:

Mike Jory
School Improvement Adviser
supporting SACRE
Adults, Children & Education
01904 553009

Chief Officer Responsible for report:

Jon Stonehouse,
Director, Children Services, Education & Skills

Report Approved

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Wards Affected:

All



Background Papers: None

Annexes:

Annex 1: SACRE Annual Report 2014-15

Abbreviations in the Report and Annex:

ASCs - Agreed Syllabus Conferences

CPD – continuing professional development

CSGT- Culham St Gabriel's Trust.

EBacc – English Baccalaureate

GCSE – General Certificate of Secondary Education

KS4 - Key Stage 4

LA – Local Authority

NASACRE – National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education

Ofsted - Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

SIAMS - Statutory Inspections of Anglican and Methodist School

RE – Religious Education

SACRE – Standard Advisory Committee for Religious Education