

Meeting:	Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE)
Meeting date:	Friday 17 November 2017
Title of report:	draft SACRE annual report for the academic year September 2016 to July 2017
Report by:	Religious Education Consultant – RE Today

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose and summary

To approve the draft SACRE Annual Report for the academic year September 2016 to July 2017.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- a. subject to any comments by SACRE, the SACRE Annual Report 2016/17 be approved; and
- b. the clerk to SACRE be authorised to finalise the document to take account of any comments by SACRE and final proof reading, and to publish/circulate the report as necessary.

Alternative options

1. The broad role of SACRE is to support the effective provision of Religious Education and collective worship in schools. This report enables SACRE to fulfil this role therefore no alternative options are proposed.

Key considerations

2. There is a duty for SACRE to publish an annual report, ideally by the 31st December each calendar year but if necessary in the following calendar year. The report must be sent to the Secretary of State for Education as well as to key partners, including schools, teacher training institutions, libraries and councillors.
3. The annual report should hold the council to account by providing detail of the advice that SACRE has given to the council during the year and the nature of any responses, it should also include advice on religious education and collective worship in schools that are the responsibility of the council. The annual report provides the mechanism through which to hold the council to account through informing the secretary of state and partners of the advice provided by SACRE.
4. The following issues arose from the previous annual report for 2015/16:
 - concern regarding attendance at the summer primary conference; SACRE would work to address the issue and ensure the conference in summer 2017 would reach as many Herefordshire schools as possible;
 - low turnout at the secondary conference was also addressed in the annual report for the previous year. It was suggested that for 2017 there would be an attempt to combine the conference with the annual event that occurred at Bromsgrove High School;
 - a day for teachers in local special schools that would take place in October 2016; and
 - a school survey concerning the revised, agreed syllabus would be undertaken in 2016/17.

Community impact

4. The provision of Religious Education and collective worship seeks to increase understanding and tolerance of all religions in local communities.

Equality duty

5. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
6. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires the council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that 'due regard' is paid during decision making concerning the design of policies and the delivery of services. The provision of religious education seeks to contribute positively to the specific duty by increasing the understanding and tolerance of all religions in local

communities. SACRE contributes to this duty by advising the council on its arrangements for religious education.

Resource implications

7. There are no resource implications involved in the production and consideration of this report. There is no cost associated with the production of the annual report which will be published and circulated electronically.

Legal implications

8. Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 requires The Herefordshire LEA to establish a permanent body, called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), to advise them on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship.
9. SACRE's main function is to advise Herefordshire Council upon matters connected with religious worship in schools for which the LA has responsibility and with the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus. Under Section 391(6) and (7), Education Act 1996, SACRE is required to publish a report each year as to the exercise of its functions and any action taken by representative groups on the council.

Risk management

10. During the production of this report there has been an assessment of the likely risk management implications. It is not considered that risk of any significance arises from the production or contents of this report. The annual report identifies an issue of quoracy at meetings of SACRE. It reports that during 2016/17 SACRE was inquorate at one meeting. The report confirms that SACRE is seeking to address.

Consultees

11. None

Appendices

Appendix - draft SACRE Annual Report 2016/17

Background papers

None identified.