

Thurrock: A place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish

## Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

The meeting will be held at **6.00 pm** on **16 July 2014** in **Committee Room 4, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL**

### Membership:

- Committee A:** Mrs S Lawson, Free Church Christian Member  
Mrs Shepherd, Roman Catholic Member, Vacancy  
Jewish Member, Vacancy, Muslim Member  
Mr B Gill, Sikh Member, Vacancy, Hindu Member  
Dr O Soley, Pentecostal Member
- Committee B:** Mr J Graham, Rev J Guest and a Vacancy – Church of England
- Committee C:** Ms Angela Jellicoe and 2 Vacancies – Teachers' Associations
- Committee D:** Councillors Yash Gupta (MBE), Martin Kerin and Tunde Ojetola
- Co-opted:** Vacancy

### Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 11 December 2012 and to agree the actions and recommendations of the inquorate meetings held on 6 March and 1 May; 3 July 2013; 3 December 2013 and 19 March 2014.

**5 Any Additional Items**

To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**6 Declaration of interests**

**7 Discussion of Membership**

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**Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:**

Please contact Kenna-Victoria Martin, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

Agenda published on: **8<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

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# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

## Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

## When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

**What is a Non-Pecuniary interest?** – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

### Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;
- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
- leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

### Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

**Vision: Thurrock:** A place of **opportunity**, **enterprise** and **excellence**, where **individuals**, **communities** and **businesses** flourish.

To achieve our vision, we have identified five strategic priorities:

**1. Create** a great place for learning and opportunity

- Ensure that every place of learning is rated “Good” or better
- Raise levels of aspiration and attainment so that residents can take advantage of local job opportunities
- Support families to give children the best possible start in life

**2. Encourage** and promote job creation and economic prosperity

- Promote Thurrock and encourage inward investment to enable and sustain growth
- Support business and develop the local skilled workforce they require
- Work with partners to secure improved infrastructure and built environment

**3. Build** pride, responsibility and respect

- Create welcoming, safe, and resilient communities which value fairness
- Work in partnership with communities to help them take responsibility for shaping their quality of life
- Empower residents through choice and independence to improve their health and well-being

**4. Improve** health and well-being

- Ensure people stay healthy longer, adding years to life and life to years
- Reduce inequalities in health and well-being and safeguard the most vulnerable people with timely intervention and care accessed closer to home
- Enhance quality of life through improved housing, employment and opportunity

**5. Promote** and protect our clean and green environment

- Enhance access to Thurrock's river frontage, cultural assets and leisure opportunities
- Promote Thurrock's natural environment and biodiversity
- Inspire high quality design and standards in our buildings and public space



**DRAFT MINUTES of the meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held on 11 December 2012 at 6.00pm**

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**Present:**

Committee A	Mrs S Lawson (from 6.38pm)
Committee B	Mr J Graham
Committee C	Mr J Misra
Committee D	Councillors Anderson, Healy and Ojetola

**Apologies:** Mr Gill, Ms Jellicoe and Mr Tweedle.

**In attendance:** Ms D Weston, RE Consultant (Advisor to SACRE)  
Ms V Freeman, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Gill, Ms Jellicoe and Mr Tweedle.

**2. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2012**

It was noted that minutes of the meeting held on the 22 October 2012 were correct with the exception of Item 4, Declarations of Interest, whereby Councillor Anderson declared a 'non-pecuniary interest in Item 7'. However, as the meeting was not quorate at this stage, the minutes could not be approved.

The Chair requested that the Clerk write to Ms Fuller thanking her for the time that she has invested in as a member on Thurrock SACRE and that the Diocese of Chelmsford be asked to recommend a replacement for Ms Fuller.

**3. TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY**

There were no additional items.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no such declarations made.

## 5. THURROCK SACRE – THE NATIONAL REVIEW

The RE Consultant introduced a report that provided the background about the National Religious Education Review and presented information on the review process and a summary of the recommendations. Members were requested to consider the Phase 1 Review report and the addendum and consider whether or not SACRE might contribute to the review using the questionnaire.

Members were advised that the role of the RE Subject Review for England was to defend and enhance the place of RE in the curriculum of English schools, for the benefit of learners. Along with all the subjects of the curriculum, RE should provide children and young people 4-19 with knowledge and understanding that enables them to move confidently and successfully through their education, taking into account their needs, including those who are the most able as well as those pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

The RE Consultant informed Members that the Expert Panel had made 9 recommendations and that these were outlined on page 26 of the agenda.

During questioning, Members were advised that the Phase 1 was due to be completed at Christmas and that the consultation process was due to end this week, however late data would be considered. Members were advised that Phase 2 would take place between February and April 2013 and consultation would take place subsequent to this with task groups undertaking work from May 2013, with the intention of work being completed at the end of the academic year.

Members questioned whether the current agreed syllabus addressed the minimum standards, and were advised that although there were some variations, the agreed syllabus was based on the national framework.

*The meeting became quorate at 6.38pm upon the arrival of Mrs Lawson. At this stage of the meeting, the minutes from the meeting held on the 22 October 2012, with the amendment as stated in Minute 2 above, were agreed as a correct record.*

Members expressed concern regarding the level of teacher competence and concern that teachers were more comfortable teaching their practiced religion. The RE Consultant explained that maintained and community primary schools were required to follow the agreed syllabus, however there was concern regarding secondary schools, in particular the academies as the local authority had limited authority to visit academies, although it was noted that academies were required to publish their curriculum.

The RE Consultant informed members that under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority still held the responsibility for standards across schools and that academies were encouraged to contact the local authority for expertise.

Members suggested that the academies be approached to sign up to the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus and were advised that this would be a positive action and that the DfE were preparing a publication on frequently asked questions and answers for academies.

The RE Consultant suggested that the notes from the meeting's discussion be circulated to members and that the RE Consultant share the discussion notes with the RE Review as a means of feeding back the view of Thurrock SACRE to the Review Team. Furthermore, Members agreed that they would complete the questionnaire in the agenda and email to the Clerk.

**RESOLVED: That SACRE:**

- i) Received a presentation on the RE Review – review process (Appendix A.)**
- ii) Received a presentation on the RE Review – summary of the recommendations (Appendix B).**
- iii) Considered the Phase 1 Review report (Appendix C) and Addendum (Appendix D).**
- iv) Considered whether or not members of SACRE might contribute to the review using the questionnaire (Appendix E).**
- v) Members be provided discussion notes and that the RE Consultant share the discussion notes with the RE Review as a means of feeding back the view of Thurrock SACRE to the Review Team.**
- vi) Members complete the questionnaire and return to the Clerk to SACRE.**

**The meeting ended at 7.25pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Victoria Freeman, telephone (01375) 652205,  
or alternatively e-mail VEFreeman@thurrock.gov.uk**

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**DRAFT MINUTES of the meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held on 6 March 2013 at 6.00pm**

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**Present:**

Committee A	None
Committee B	None
Committee C	None
Committee D	Councillor Anderson

**Apologies:** Mrs Stella Lawson, Mr J Misra, Councillor Healy and Councillor Ojetola.

**In attendance:** Ms D Weston, RE Consultant (Advisor to SACRE)  
Ms V Freeman, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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The meeting was declared inquorate at 6.17pm.

**The meeting was rescheduled for 1 May 2013 at 7.00pm**

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**Present:**

Committee A	Mrs Shepherd
Committee B	None
Committee C	None
Committee D	Councillor Anderson and Councillor Ojetola (from 7.26pm)

**Apologies:** Mrs Stella Lawson and Mr J Misra

**In attendance:** Ms D Weston, RE Consultant (Advisor to SACRE)  
Ms A Winstone, Early Education Improvement Officer  
Ms V Freeman, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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The meeting was declared inquorate and it was agreed that the meeting would continue informally and recommendations put to members at the next quorate meeting of SACRE.

## **1. Thurrock SACRE – Annual Report 2011-12**

The RE Consultant present a report which provided summary of the work of SACRE over the last academic year in order that a report could be published as required by statute.

It was requested that the report mentioned any progress that had been made with academies in Thurrock and were advised that this report related to the 2011-12 academic year and that it was believed that the decision to approach academies had been made more recently. The RE Consultant informed Members that previous minutes would be checked to confirm the status of when the decision by SACRE was made.

Those present recommend to the next quorate meeting of SACRE that the report be approved subject to the checking of whether the request of seeking information from academies had been in the 2011-12 academic year.

## **2. The Changing Profile of Religion and Belief in Thurrock**

SACRE were provided with factual information on the religious profile of Thurrock as evidenced by the 2011 census data.

Councillor Anderson provided those present with the following suggestions:

1. That Thurrock SACRE should adopt the following principles as guidelines when determining the composition of Committee A. In order to nominate a representative to Thurrock SACRE, a religion or belief should have:
  - a) A minimum of 500 self-identified adherents (0.3%) in the Thurrock area;
  - b) A recognisable local group meeting regularly within the Thurrock area;
  - c) A representative organisation capable of providing nominations which is willing to confirm its acceptance of and support for the aims and objectives of Thurrock SACRE.
2. That in light of the above, Thurrock SACRE should seek to identify a Buddhist member to be added to Committee A.
3. That Thurrock SACRE should consult with Christian groups within Thurrock to identify whether the current Christian members of Committee A still adequately reflect and represent the Christian groups active within Thurrock, and consider any changes at a future meeting.

4. That the Jewish representative ceases to be a permanent member of Committee A, but that the current representative be invited to continue serving SACRE as a co-opted member.

The RE Consultant was requested to provide a breakdown of the Christian faith and she agreed that she would make this request to the National Statistics Office.

Councillor Anderson requested that nominations be invited from the Buddhist denomination as it had seen an increase from 0.17% to 0.40% over the last ten years.

The issue of a Humanist representative on Thurrock SACRE was discussed and it was recommended that if the British Humanist Association was happy to confirm their acceptance of the objectives of SACRE, then a representative from this Association should be sought.

The RE consultant advised members that the legal duties on SACRE in relation to the Agreed Syllabus, mean that all six of the 'principal religions' really need to be represented and they include Judaism. She suggested the following amendment to 4 above:

"In addition to 1 above, each of the principal religions\* represented in the UK as a whole should be represented in order that an Agreed Syllabus Conference convened by SACRE can include people that are fully informed to meet the legal requirements for an RE Syllabus<sup>1</sup>"

\*Defined as Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism.

### **3. GCSE RESULTS 2012**

The RE Consultant presented a report that provided SACRE with information about the performance of the secondary schools in the council area in relation to GCSEs in 2012, during which she informed those present that she had visited the Gateway Academy.

SACRE were advised that the Department for Education had recently published guidance on RE in academies and if academies did not adopt the agreed syllabus and were inspected, they would be assessed and measured by the agreed standards.

The RE Consultant informed those present that when she had visited the Gateway Academy, she had been advised that the Academy had started to introduce GCSE RE and were heading in a positive direction. The consultant further informed SACRE that she had sent the free school materials and resources to consider when developing their curriculum.

Members expressed concern that they were not consulted on for particular policies such as the Single Equality Scheme which had been approved at Council the previous month.

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<sup>1</sup> 375(3) of the Education Act 1996. "Every agreed syllabus shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain."

It was agreed that the RE Consultant and the clerk liaise to find a means of ensuring that appropriate items are referred to SACRE by the Council.



**NOTES of the inquorate meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held on 3 July 2013 at 6.00pm**

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**Present:**

Committee A	Mrs Lawson
Committee B	None
Committee C	Mr Misra, Ms Jellicoe
Committee D	Councillor Ojetola

**Apologies:** Councillor Anderson and Mr Tweedle

**In attendance:** D Weston, RE Consultant (Advisor to SACRE)  
K-V Martin, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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The meeting was declared inquorate and it was agreed that the meeting would continue informally and recommendations put to members at the next quorate meeting of SACRE.

It was agreed that as Items 7 to 9 had been discussed at the previous meeting, that SACRE would begin their discussion at Item 10.

**1. National Religious Education Review**

The RE Consultant presented a report which explained that in summer 2012, the RE Council commenced a review of Religious Education in England to run parallel to the government's review of the National Curriculum.

Those present were informed that phase one of the review took place between May and December 2012. The RE Council's Curriculum, Qualifications and Assessment Committee was enlarged so that it could act as the project's Steering Group, where expert panel members were recruited. Following this they went out to public consultation and produced a report to give a basis for the next phase of the Review.

The RE Consultant notified members that phase two of the Review had started in January 2013 with the appointment of two Task Groups. Members were informed that the review was still in draft format and may have changed after the consultation.

Following discussions it was suggested that under Key Stage 1 the first sentence should read *"Pupils should develop their knowledge and understanding about Christianity, at least one other religion or non-religious worldview, recognising their local, national and global contexts."* Those present also suggested that under Key Stage 2 the following

should read *“Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and at least two other religions, and non-religious worldviews, recognising their local, national and global contexts”*

## **2. Report on the Inquiry into the Supply of and Support of Teachers of RE in England**

The RE consultant informed SACRE that the report, “RE, the truth unmasked” was the result of an inquiry carried out by the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE to investigate the supply and support for teachers of Religious Education.

SACRE were informed that the report drew on over 400 sources of evidence and concluded that there are some serious issues which need to be addressed, if schools were to provide high quality Religious Education for young people.

The RE consultant talked through the report which was included as an appendix (page 57 of the agenda) and the following main findings were discussed:

- a) In over half of the 300 primary schools participating in this inquiry, some or all pupils were taught RE by someone other than their class teacher. In a quarter of these schools RE was taught by teaching assistants. This is unacceptable and in many cases this has a detrimental impact on the quality of RE.
- b) About a half of primary teachers and trainee teachers lack confidence in teaching RE.
- c) Over 50% of teachers of RE in secondary schools have no qualification or appropriate expertise in the subject. This is unacceptable.

## **3. Review of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus 2009**

The RE Consultant informed those present that all Local Authorities are required to establish and support an occasional body called an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC).

It was explained that an ASC must produce and recommend to the Local Authority an agreed syllabus for RE which is educationally sound and meets legal requirements.

The RE Consultant further informed Members of SACRE that under Schedule 31 to the Education Act 1996 the locally agreed syllabus was a statutory syllabus of RE and it must be followed in maintained schools. SACRE queried as to whether Academies had to follow the same agreed syllabus and as this was something the Local Authority had to pay for, would Academies have to pay towards the syllabus also. The RE Consultant explained that Academies could use the same syllabus as the Local Authority; however they may have to contribute to the funding. That was yet to be decided.

SACRE Members were notified that once the agreed syllabus had been adopted by the Local Authority, the syllabus would set out what pupils should be taught and could include the expected standards of pupils' performance at different stages.

SACRE members present raised their concerns that this was the second inquorate meeting of the Committee.

**The meeting finished at 7.15pm.**

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**NOTES of the inquorate meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held on 3 December 2013 at 6.00pm**

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**Present:**

Committee A Mr Gill, Dr Soleye and Mrs Shepherd

Committee B None

Committee C Ms Jellicoe

Committee D Councillor Ojetola

**Apologies:** Councillor Anderson, Rev. Guest and Mrs Lawson

**In attendance:** D. Weston, RE Consultant (Advisor to SACRE)  
A. Winstone, Education Improvement Officer  
V. Freeman, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
A. Ahmed, Thurrock Faith Matters

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The meeting was declared inquorate and it was agreed that the meeting would continue informally and recommendations put to members at the next quorate meeting of SACRE.

The current Chair was not in attendance at the meeting therefore Members agreed that Councillor Ojetola would Chair this inquorate meeting only.

**1. Appointment of Chair of SACRE**

In the absence of Mr Misra, the current Chair of SACRE, Members requested that the appointment of Chair of SACRE for the next academic year be discussed at the next meeting.

**2. Appointment of Vice Chair for Committee A, B, C and D**

During discussion of this item, it was noted that Ruth Juett, the Jewish Member on Committee A was no longer a resident of Thurrock, and Members requested that the Clerk confirm whether the individual could continue to be a member on SACRE when she no longer worked or resided in the borough.

The Clerk informed those present she had written to Ms Juett on a number of occasions but had not received a response, however Ms Juett's four year appointment to SACRE was shortly up and that she would write to the nominating body requesting a replacement for Ms Juett.

Mrs Shepherd was informally nominated to be the Vice Chair of Committee A and for this to be formally agreed at the next quorate meeting.

With respect to nominations for Vice Chair of Committees B, C and D, Members requested that these appointments be discussed at the next quorate meeting.

### **3. Minutes**

Members were unable to comment on the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2012 or the notes of the inquorate meetings as they were not present at the meetings.

However, it was noted that the Members expressed their appreciation to Councillor Ojetola for presenting the Annual Report of SACRE to the meeting of Full Council.

### **4. Additional Items of Business**

There was none.

### **5. Declaration of interests.**

There were none.

### **4. Review of Membership and Terms of Reference of SACRE**

The Clerk to SACRE presented a report which sought Members views on the membership of Thurrock SACRE and which recommended changes to the membership and the terms of reference as necessary.

Councillor Ojetola questioned the Clerk on a number of aspects of the report including the possibility of having a humanist member on the committee, upon which the RE Consultant advised that this was not permitted legally as the membership of Committee A must be a representative of a religion or denomination and that humanists were neither. However, if Members wished, a humanist representative could be invited to be a co-opted member.

It was suggested that Councillor Yash Gupta be invited to be nominated to become a member as a representative of Committee A representing the Hindu vacancy and be invited to the next meeting to observe.

During discussion, Ms Admed was invited to become a member of SACRE representing the Muslim denomination, upon which Ms Admed agreed upon receipt of her nomination from the Thurrock Islamic Education & Cultural Association.

### **5. Academy Responses to the Local Agreed Syllabus**

The RE Consultant introduced the report which provided members with a background for a discussion about the development of a new Agreed Syllabus in Thurrock.

Members were advised that if a voluntary aided school opted not to follow the Agreed Syllabus or an alternative syllabus, then SACRE would have no jurisdiction, on the basis that SACRE look only at community schools, however these schools would be encouraged to allow their subject leaders to be involved in the Agreed Syllabus working group as part of their continuous professional development.

Ms Jellicoe took the opportunity to invite SACRE to hold the next Agreed Syllabus Conference at St Clare's School.

The RE Consultant explained the proposed timeline for the New Agreed Syllabus as outlined on page 39 of the agenda and advised the she would write to members of SACRE requesting that:

- They agree an outline programme of review for the syllabus and;
- Agree the membership of a small Agreed Syllabus Review Group.

Ms Weston informed members that she would ask all schools to allow their subject leaders to be involved in the Agreed Syllabus Working Group.

Councillor Ojetola challenged that although there was an estimated budget of £10,000 over the two financial years, as stated in the appendix to the report, there were no financial implications contained within the body of the report; and that he would discuss this with the Head of Finance informally outside of the meeting.

Members agreed that the recommendations would be recommended to the next quorate meeting of SACRE.

## **6. The OfSTED Report 2013 – Realising the Potential**

The RE Consultant presented the report which provided the background for a discussion about the recommendations of the OfSTED report: Realising the Potential, during which the key findings of the report were highlighted.

It was noted that Deborah Weston, in consultation with Andrea Winstone, was to work with Mike Peters, the Interim Strategic Lead, School Improvement, to carry out the recommendations of the Commission's report.

The RE Consultant took the opportunity to thank Elle Gregory for her assistance with the Youth Conference.

Members agreed that the recommendations would be recommended to the next quorate meeting of SACRE.

## **7. Secondary Religious Education & Provisional GCSE Results 2013**

Members decided to take Item 10 and Item 11 on the agenda together.

A document was tabled at the meeting which listed the syllabus followed by secondary schools in Thurrock and broke down the number of RE teaching staff, hours taught by year group and exam entries.

Ms Jellicoe expressed concern that the figures stated for St Clere's were inaccurate.

It was noted that Ormiston Park Academy had not reported any teaching of RE to the Department of Education and members were advised that if they were found to be in serious breach of their funding agreement, the Department for Funding Agency could withhold funding as a last resort. However, Ms Weston advised that she would contact the Academy directly to explain the implications of not teaching RE, however if members wished to complain to the Funding Agency they could.

Councillor Ojetola expressed concern that children were leaving school without the understanding of beliefs of others in their communities and advised that he would raise this with the Leader and the Portfolio Holder of Education and would try to raise the concerns at Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In discussing ways to ensure that schools in Thurrock prioritised religious education, it was suggested that the issue could be raised in Full Council by way of a motion.

Members agreed that the recommendations would be recommended to the next quorate meeting of SACRE.

**The meeting finished at 7.45pm.**



**NOTES of the inquorate meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 6.00pm**

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**Present:**

Committee A        None

Committee B        Rev. Guest

Committee C        None

Committee D        Councillor Ojetola and Councillor Anderson

**Apologies:**        Mrs Lawson, Mrs Shepard, Dr Soleye, Ms Jellicoe and Mr Misra

**In attendance:**    Deborah Weston, RE Consultant (Advisor to SACRE)  
Andrea Winstone, Education Improvement Officer  
Kenna-Victoria Martin, Democratic Services Officer

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The meeting was declared inquorate and those present informally discussed the Membership of the Committee and suggestions to improve attendance at future meetings.

It was discussed that the Clerk to the Committee had emailed, chasing and reminding organisations of the written confirmation of nomination that was required, in order for her to contact nominated members with an acknowledgement and welcome letter.

Rev. Guest said that he would discuss the Committee at the next Faith Matters meeting. The Clerk agreed to chase organisations again leading up to the new municipal year.

**The meeting finished at 6.50pm.**

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<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 8</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education</b>	
<b>Thurrock SACRE – Annual Report 2011-2012</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Vivien Cutler –Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is public.</b>	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents the Annual Report to members of SACRE for approval.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**1.1 That SACRE accept this report as an accurate record of its work in the year 2011-2012.**

**2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

2.1 It is a legal requirement that SACRE submit an annual report of its activities to the local authority.

**3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

3.1 Members are requested to accept, amend or reject the report.

**4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

4.1 The recommendations arise from the legal responsibilities of SACRE set out in 2 above.

**5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 Not applicable.

**6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

6.1 None.

**7. IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**  
**01375 652466**

There are no financial implications to this report.

**7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Email: **Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

S391 of the Education Act 1996 requires Thurrock SACRE to publish an annual report on its activities.

**7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652472**  
**Sdealyn@Thurrock.gov.uk**

This report has implications for the Council's approach to Diversity and Equality. If, as the data suggests, a number of local schools are not making provision for Religious Education for all of its students, there is a risk that children and young people leaving school in Thurrock may not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of religion and belief to be fully equipped to take their place in a diverse society.

**7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- Report 2 for SACRE : GCSE results 2012 <http://goo.gl/T6yJC>

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

Appendix A: Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Annual Report – 2011-2012

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education



# Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

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## **ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12**

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## **The Functions of SACRE**

The Education Reform Act 1988 places a duty on every Local Authority to constitute a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

Thurrock SACRE has four main functions:

1. To advise the LA upon matters connected with school worship in community schools and religious education to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus. These matters can be referred by the Authority or may be determined by the Thurrock Council. Matters such as teaching methods, teaching materials and teacher training are mentioned in the Act. SACRE is an advisory council and advice offered carries no statutory force.
2. To receive and determine whether applications from Governors to vary the requirement for worship of a broadly Christian nature, for the whole school or for groups of pupils, are appropriate.
3. To publish an annual report on its work. This should outline advice given by SACRE to the LA
4. To require the LA to set up a statutory conference to review the Agreed Syllabus every five years and if, in the opinion of the SACRE, this becomes necessary, sooner.



## Officer's Statement

This has been a year of significant change for Thurrock SACRE, especially as most of the secondary schools in the authority made the transition to Academy status and are no longer being maintained by the local authority. Academies have different requirements in relation to Religious Education and Acts of Worship. They are not obliged to follow the local Agreed Syllabus but are still required to make provision for RE for all students. Early indications are that the Thurrock Academies are choosing to continue to use the published syllabus and standards. The council has met twice during the academic year; the third meeting was postponed until the start of the Autumn term for administrative reasons.

A number of appointments were made to support the efficient management of SACRE meetings. Mr Misra (a teacher representative) was appointed as Chair of SACRE. Chairs of committees were also appointed: Mr Gill (the representative of the Sikh Community) for Committee A; Ms Taylor (a representative of the Church of England) for Committee B and Mr Griffiths (a teacher representative) for Committee C and Councillor Anderson for Committee D.

The third annual Thurrock SACRE Youth Conference was held in November 2011. The event aimed to encourage pupils to find out about people's religions and beliefs through a mixture of lively discussion, creative activities and quiet reflection and was well attended by students from 20 Thurrock primary and secondary schools.

The event was planned again to coincide with the National Interfaith Week. SACRE produced a press release and the event was reported on the website of the Interfaith Network UK. More than 80 young people attended from year 5 in primary school and year 8 in secondary schools and their teachers. This event was led by RE Today advisers Lat Blaylock and Deborah Weston supported by members of SACRE including representatives of local communities of religion and belief and teachers. Grants towards the conference were secured from the RE Council of England and Wales and the St Gabriel's Trust.

Members were involved in supporting religious education by inviting schools to pay visits to places of worship or by speaking in the classroom and helping children to understand their religion or belief.

I would like to express my gratitude to each member of SACRE for so generously giving of their time to support the teachers and others involved in the delivery of Religious Education in Thurrock.

**Ruth Brock**

Principal Officer, Pupil Achievement

## Achievement and Standards

<b>GCSE entries</b>	2010 % Roll Short Course Entries	2010 % Roll Full Course Entries	2011 % Roll Short Course Entries	2011 % Roll Full Course Entries	2012 % Roll Short Course Entries	2012 % Roll Full Course Entries	2010 % Roll Entries Total	2011 % Roll Entries Total	2012 % Roll Entries Total
Grays Convent High School	2%	90%	2%	95%	2%	93%	93%	97%	96%
Grays School Media Arts College	91%		95%		95%		91%	95%	95%
Ockendon Academy		92%		94%		99%	92%	94%	99%
St. Clere's	79%	7%	45%	43%	6%	81%	86%	89%	86%
William Edwards School and Sports College				28%		39%		28%	39%
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred		17%		13%		14%	17%	13%	14%
Gable Hall School				4%		4%		4%	5%
Hassenbook						8%			8%
Ormiston Park Academy					1%				1%
The Gateway Academy									
Total number of entries	362	309	265	389	182	580	671	654	762

Authority wide, the entries for GCSE RE have increased by 17% from 2011 and 14% from 2010, this is particular pleasing since entries in 2011 fell from 2010 by 3% so the trend has reversed.

Furthermore, there has been a significant shift from Short Course to Full Course RE, in 2010 46% of all entries were Full Course, in 2011, 59% and in 2012 76%.

Significant factors contributing to these trends are:

- the appearance of entries for William Edwards School and Sports College over the past two years, now at 39% of the cohort taking GCSE RE Full Course
- the shift in emphasis from Short Course to Full Course RE at St Clere's School, where the percentages of students taking each course have reversed since 2010
- the take-up of GCSE RE Full Course at Gable Hall this year and at Hassenbrook this year and last year

GCSE results	2010	2010	2011	2011	2012	2012
	% Short Course A*-C	% Full Course A*-C	% Short Course A*-C	% Full Course A*-C	% Short Course A*-C	% Full Course A*-C
Grays Convent High School		81%	50%	86%	33%	89%
Grays School Media Arts College	53%		44%		32%	
Ockendon Academy		47%		56%		64%
St. Clere's	52%	100%	47%	55%	9%	42%
William Edwards School and Sports College				43%		26%
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred		77%		95%		96%
Gable Hall School				67%	100%	100%
Hassenbrook						75%
Ormiston Park Academy					100%	
The Gateway Academy						

Although these trends are positive for the subject area, it should not be overlooked that in five out of ten schools within the authority which we have data for, the number of students taking GCSE RE in any form is either zero or negligible.

When considering GCSE attainment the picture is similarly mixed.

Grays Convent High School for example continues to achieve excellent results for Full Course RE whilst attainment at Short Course has declined. However, it should be borne in mind that a tiny percentage of students at this school take Short Course.

It is possible that students who were not able, for a particular reason to complete the full course, were entered for the short as an alternative and were therefore less likely to achieve a high grade.

Grays School Media Arts College is also an area for concern, as despite consistently high percentages of entries for Short Course RE, standards of attainment are declining year on year. The pattern is broadly similar at St Clere's where attainment has declined for both Short and Full Course.

Although the fact that William Edwards has increased entries quite significantly is positive, it should be noted that this year's results have declined from 2011.

On a more positive note, attainment at the Ockendon Academy continues to rise year on year for Full Course RE with practically the whole cohort being entered. The Harris Academy and Gable Hall also continue to attain excellent results however it should be noted that the percentage of the cohort taking the exam is limited, very much so in the case of the latter school.

The attainment of the small number of students entered for GCSE at Hassenbrook's is also excellent, particularly in light of the fact that of the last three years this is the first where there have been any entries at all.

#### GCSE A Level Palmers' College

2010 AS Level Entries		2010 A Level Entries		2011 AS Level Entries		2011 A Level Entries		2012 AS Level Entries		2012 A Level Entries	
14		8		7		9		16		11	
2010 AS Level A* - B	2010 AS Level A* - E	2010 A Level A* - B	2010 A Level A* - E	2011 AS Level A* - B	2011 AS Level A* - E	2011 A Level A* - B	2011 A Level A* - E	2012 AS Level A* - B	2012 AS Level A* - E	2012 A Level A* - B	2012 A Level A* - E
7%	64%	25%	100%	14%	86%	22%	100%	6%	69%	64%	100%

A level entries at Palmers college have increased from 2011 after a decrease in that year from 2010. Of those entries, A\*-B attainment continues to rise for A level whilst the same measurement for AS level displays a decline from 2011 and also marginally from 2010.

**Deborah Weston**  
Associate Adviser for RE – Thurrock

## **SACRE Advice**

As in previous years, SACRE has provided advice to the Council and to schools. A number of senior leaders requested advice on matters to do with RE and Collective worship, especially in relation to the change to Academy Status. Some of this advice relates to questions about the curriculum, resources for the classroom, schemes of work but also includes questions about contentious issues in the classroom and how to respond to children's' queries. The number of schools requesting advice and support on Religious Education has continued to increase again this year.

A number of training sessions were offered, continuing to support the introduction of the Agreed Syllabus. Separate group sessions were organised for subject leaders in primary schools including those supporting RE in the Early Years Foundation Stage and teachers of RE in secondary schools.

SACRE has provided schools with advice on matters to do with Religious Education and Collective worship by sharing information and published material on subjects such as the National Religious Education Review and the RE Quality Mark. Schools have received regular newsletters and information about opportunities for professional development as well as new RE Guidance from the Department for Education and publications related to RE from NATRE (The National Association of Teachers of RE).

## **Collective worship**

SACRE received a presentation about Collective Worship from Ms Rosemary Privett; a Church of England Representative and this led to a collection of material being sent to schools as advice on how they might meet this requirement in a flexible way.

No schools applied for a determination to waive the requirement for Acts of Worship to be wholly or mainly of a broader Christian character.

Governors interested in determination should follow the procedures outlined in the SACRE constitution. A copy of the constitution is available on the SACRE website.

## Membership of SACRE

<b>Committee A</b>	
Free Church Christian	Mrs S Lawson
Roman Catholic	Mrs M Shepherd
Jewish	Ms R Juett
Muslim	Ms N Quereshi
Sikh	Mr J Jasset
Hindu	Vacancy
Pentecostal	Dr O Soleye
<b>Committee B</b>	
Church of England	Ms R Privett
	Mrs C Fuller
	Ms M Taylor
<b>Committee C</b>	
Teachers	Mr P Griffiths (until December 2011 – Vacancy thereafter)
	Mr J Misra
	Ms A Jellicoe
<b>Committee D</b>	
Council*	Mr Ojetola
	Mr P Anderson
	Mr M Healy

\* Cllrs Anderson, Ojetola and Healy were appointed in June 2010 for a term of 4 years.

Thurrock SACRE is supported by:

Mrs D Weston, RE Consultant (Advisor to SACRE)  
 Ms V Freeman, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
 Ms Ruth Brock - Principal Officer, Pupil Achievement

<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 9</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education</b>	
<b>The Changing Profile of Religion and Belief in Thurrock</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Vivien Cutler –Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is public.</b>	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents a comparison between the 2001 and 2011 census data on religious affiliation. It will allow SACRE to discuss the changing religious profile of the area in order to inform discussions about the support SACRE provides to schools and also the membership of SACRE.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1.1 SACRE should consider the membership of committee A and decide whether or not it appropriately reflects the principal religious traditions in the area.**
- 1.2 That should SACRE wish to amend the membership list, it should advise the local authority in order that the terms of reference be amended.**

**2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

**2.1** S390 of the Education Act 1996 requires that a Local Authority shall constitute a standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE). The SACRE must consist of such groups of persons appointed by the Authority as representative members, as required by subsection 4. The SACRE may also included co-opted members. Subsection 4 specifies that the representative groups that are to constitute membership of the SACRE are:

- (a) a group of persons to represent such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;

- (b) except in the case of an area in Wales, a group of persons to represent the Church of England;
- (c) a group of persons to represent such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area; and
- (d) a group of persons to represent the authority.

In order to form its opinion the Local Authority must therefore be informed about the religious profile of its residents. .

### **3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 The non-Christian populations in Thurrock are small and SACRE needs to be confident that a suitable representative of that community can be found with the interest and capacity to serve SACRE.
- 3.2 SACRE may wish to consider that given the number of people who might consider themselves to have a non-religious world view, that a member of the British Humanist Association be invited to serve SACRE, as a co-opted member. It is increasingly common for SACREs to include a member of the British Humanist Association. The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion OR belief.

### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- 4.1 The recommendations arise from the legal responsibilities of SACRE set out in 2.1 above

### **5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

### **6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 6.1 There are none.

### **7. IMPLICATIONS**

#### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no financial implications to this report.



## 7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

The legal basis for widening membership of SACRE is included in the text of this report.

## 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652472**  
**sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**

The publication of the 2011 Census has clear implications for the Council's approach to Diversity and Equality issues. With regards to the different groups identified in this report there are implications based on the information about religion for the way that the diversity of the population of Thurrock is reflected in the provision for Religious Education in local schools.

## 7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

There are none.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- None.

### **APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

- Appendix 1: Excerpt from SACRE terms of reference
- Appendix 2: Analysis of 2001 and 2011 census data

### **Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education



## **Appendix 1: Excerpt from the SACRE terms of Reference**

Committee A Christian denominations and other religious and religious denominations representative of the local community

7 members:

1 Free Church Christian member nominated by the Free Church Federal Council;

1 Roman Catholic member nominated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood;

1 Jewish member nominated by the Board of Deputies of British Jews;

1 Muslim member nominated by the Muslim Teachers' Association;

1 Sikh member nominated by the Committee of the local Gurdwara;

1 Hindu member;

1 Pentecostal

## The changing profile of Thurrock in relation to affiliation to religions and beliefs

Table one sets out the results of the census in 2001 and 2011 comparing the percentage of the population in terms of their answer to the question about their religion or belief

Table 1

Faith in Thurrock	Thurrock 2001 Census	Thurrock 2011 census	UK 2001	UK 2011
Christian	75.09%	63.30%	71.10%	59.30%
Buddhist	0.17%	0.40%	0.30%	0.40%
Hindu	0.55%	0.70%	1.10%	1.50%
Jewish	0.17%	0.10%	0.50%	0.50%
Muslim	1.07%	2.00%	3.00%	4.80%
Sikh	0.70%	0.80%	0.60%	0.80%
Other	0.21%	0.30%	0.30%	0.40%
No religion	15.51%	26.00%	14.80%	25.10%
Religion not stated	6.52%	6.30%	7.70%	7.20%

Green=greater than the national average Yellow=reflects national average Blue-smaller than the national average

Points to note:

1. The percentage of the population that identified themselves as Christians fell approximately around 12% in Thurrock and in the UK overall. There are more Christians in Thurrock than the national average
2. The Buddhist population increased by 0.23% in Thurrock and 0.1% in the UK overall. The Thurrock increase was therefore greater. The number of Buddhists in Thurrock reflects the national average
3. The Hindu population increased by 0.15% in Thurrock and 0.4% in the UK overall. The Thurrock increase was therefore greater. There are approximately half as many Hindus in Thurrock as the national average
4. The Jewish population fell by 0.07% in Thurrock and remained the same in the UK overall. The Thurrock decrease was therefore higher. The number of Jewish people in Thurrock is 20% of the national average.
5. The Muslim population increased by 0.93% in Thurrock and 1.8% in the UK overall. The Thurrock increase was therefore lower. The number of Muslims in Thurrock is around 40% of the national average
6. The Sikh population increased by 0.10% in Thurrock and 0.2% in the UK overall. The Thurrock increase was therefore lower. The number of Sikhs in Thurrock reflects the national average
7. The number of people identifying themselves as members of other religions, e.g. Baha'i, Jain, Zoroastrian in Thurrock increased by 0.09% and 0.10% in the UK overall so almost reflects the national average. The number of members of other religions in Thurrock is 25% fewer than in the UK overall.
8. The number of people who stated that they had no religion in Thurrock increased by 10.5% in Thurrock and 10.3% in the UK overall so Thurrock reflects national trends in this respect.

Table 2:

<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 11</b>
<b>Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education</b>	
<b>National Religious Education Review</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston: Associate RE Adviser	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Vivien Cutler –Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Religious Education Council of England and Wales has initiated a review of RE to run in parallel with the review of the National Curriculum. This report introduces a consultation on the programme of study which forms part of this review.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**1.1 That SACRE respond to the review**

**2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

2.1 In summer 2012, the RE Council initiated a review of religious education in England to run parallel to the government's review of the National Curriculum, as part of its strategic plan.

2.2 Phase One of the Review took place between May and December 2012. The REC sought funding from grant giving trusts and member organisations to enable the work to take place; no government funding was made available. A Project Manager was appointed, the REC's Curriculum, Qualifications and Assessment Committee was enlarged so that it could act as the project's Steering Group, Expert Panel members were recruited, assembled evidence from a wide range of contributors and research sources, consulted with the Reference Group. Following this they went out to public consultation and produced a report to give a basis for the next phase of the Review.

2.3 Phase Two of the Review started in January 2013 with the appointment of two Task Groups. The first group had the remit of drafting a preliminary version of

an RE curriculum to harmonise with material produced for the National Curriculum Review for other subjects. The second was to look at the wider context in which RE operated, including RE networks, links with government and the qualifications system. Both groups would produce one or more working papers to inform the work of a writing group in Phase Three

**3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

3.1 Phase 2 of the review is currently entering an important stage of consultation and SACRE are invited to read and discuss the draft programme of study (appendix 1) that has been proposed for RE based on extensive work by Task Group 1 for the RE review and the project's Steering Group

3.2 SACRE may elect to complete the questionnaire online during the meeting and/or as individuals

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ConsultationREReview2013>

**4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

4.1 The RE Review represents a national consultation on a non-statutory programme of study for RE which will influence work in the subject area around the country. It is therefore important that members make their views on the material known.

**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 purpose of SACRE is to advise the council on matters connected to Religious Education. By taking part in the review of RE, SACRE will be better informed to carry out its statutory functions

**7. IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no financial implications to this report.



## 7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **07971316599**  
**Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

Under s390 of the Education Act 1996 SACRE has an advisory role in relation to the Authority. The report seeks agreement for SACRE to respond to a review of RE. There are issues of equality because religion and belief is a protected characteristic, and the Council is under a duty by virtue of s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA 2010.
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This involves having due regard to the needs to:
  - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
  - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it and
  - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding

## 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
Telephone and email: **sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**  
**01375 652472**

SACRE is committed to supporting the Council's policies of social and community cohesion. In responding to this review, members will consider the changing religious and ethnic profile of Thurrock in this respond and respond accordingly.

7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

Not applicable

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- The Religious Education Council website:  
<http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk>

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

- Appendix 1: Draft Programme of Study for RE

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education

## Draft Programme of Study for RE

### Purpose of Study

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God or ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and non-religious worldviews. It should enable pupils to develop their own views, values and identity. It should develop an aptitude for dialogue in pupils and the capacity to participate positively as members of a diverse society and a globalising world. Pupils should learn how to study religions and non-religious worldviews systematically and to an increasing level of complexity and depth. They make progress by reflecting with increasing sophistication on the impact of religions and non-religious worldviews on contemporary life; and develop skills of interpretation and the capacity to evaluate evidence through this process. They learn to articulate clear and coherent accounts of their personal beliefs, opinions, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to have different views, values and ways of life.

### Aims

The curriculum for religious education aims to ensure that pupils:

- know and understand a range of religions and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:
  - describe, explain and analyse religious and non-religious beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between individuals and communities;
  - identify and investigate the questions posed and the responses offered by the world's religions and non-religious worldviews;
  - appraise the nature and significance of religion and non-religious worldviews;
  - appreciate the impact of faith, beliefs and values on individuals and communities.
- know and understand a range of responses to questions of meaning, purpose and truth
- develop the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:
  - describe them, interpret text, consider, analyse, and appraise evidence critically;
  - explain some of the key concepts that underpin them; and
  - articulate beliefs and values clearly in order to explain the reasons why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

## **School curriculum**

RE is a statutory subject on the school curriculum of maintained schools. Academies and Free Schools are normally required to make provision for the teaching of RE through the terms of their funding. RE promotes pupils' spiritual, cultural, social and moral development in distinctive ways. RE lessons should offer a structured and safe space during curriculum time for reflection. Teaching in RE should engage pupils in discussion, dialogue and debate which enables them to make their reasoning clear and which supports their cognitive and linguistic development. Teaching in RE lessons should also allow for timely and sensitive responses to be made to unforeseen events of a religious, moral or philosophical nature, whether local or global.

## **Subject content**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Pupils should encounter religions and non-religious world views through special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They should listen to and talk about stories, may be introduced to subject specific words and use their senses to explore beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of and wonder at the world in which they live.

From the EYFS Profile 2013:

\*Through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity, pupils should have the opportunity to:

- listen to stories from religions and non-religious sources and respond with relevant comments, questions or actions (elg: communication and language)
- answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences in response to religious and non-religious stories or events (elg: communication and language)
- talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable (elg: communication and language; personal, social and emotional development)
- show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships (elg: personal, social and emotional development)
- recognise, create and describe some religious and non-religious patterns (elg: mathematics)
- know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among religious and non-religious families, communities and traditions (elg: understanding the world)
- explore, observe and find out about religious and non-religious places and objects (elg: understanding the world)

- represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through role play and stories (elg: expressive arts and design)

*\*based on the prime and specific areas of the early learning goals*

### **Key Stage 1**

Pupils should develop their knowledge and understanding about Christianity and at least one other religion or non-religious worldview, recognising their local, national and global contexts. They should use basic subject specific vocabulary. They should raise questions and begin to express their own views in response to the material they learn about.

More specifically in relation to the programme of study, pupils should be taught to:

- name and recount some religious and moral stories, sacred writings and sources, exploring and discussing them with reference to the tradition they came from
- name and describe religious and non-religious beliefs and practices, including celebrations, worship, rituals and ways of life, in order to investigate the meaning and purpose behind them
- understand that links can be made when beliefs and practices, symbols, stories and actions are compared within and between religions and non-religious worldviews
- understand that many people have a clearly defined sense of identity, shaped by their beliefs and practices and ways of belonging
- observe and describe expressions of religion and non-religious worldviews within and outside the classroom
- investigate questions of meaning and purpose which religious and non-religious people ask themselves and begin to express their own opinions in response
- investigate questions of right and wrong which religious and non-religious people ask themselves and begin to express their own opinion.

### **Key Stage 2**

Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and at least two other religions or non-religious worldviews, recognising their local, national and global contexts. They should be introduced to an extended range of sources and subject specific vocabulary. They should be encouraged to be curious and to ask increasingly challenging questions about religion, belief, values and human life. Pupils should learn to express their own views in response to the material they engage with, giving reasons and relevant information to support those views.

More specifically in relation to the programme of study, pupils should be taught to:

- describe and make links between features of particular religions and non-religious world-views; begin to understand the context which they come from and recognise recurring themes that are distinctive to that tradition

- understand the connection between these stories and key practices within the traditions under investigation, paying particular attention to celebrations and festivals and worship, including those rituals which mark important points in life
- understand that there is diversity in the interpretation of symbol and action within and between religions and non-religious worldviews as well reasons for this diversity
- observe and describe examples of religion and non-religious worldviews within and outside the classroom in ways that demonstrate understanding of their meaning and significance to other people
- understand why belonging to a community of faith or belief is valued, and also the challenges such commitment brings, both in their own lives and within those communities being studied
- discuss their own and others' views on challenging questions about life's meaning and purpose, including religious and non-religious truth claims, and articulate their own ideas in response
- discuss their own and others' views on ethical questions, including ideas about right and wrong, justice and fairness, and articulate their own ideas in response.

### **Key Stage 3**

Pupils should extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and at least two religions or non-religious worldviews, recognising their local, national and global context. Building on their prior learning, they begin to appreciate them in systematic ways. They should draw on a wide range of subject specific language confidently and flexibly, so that they can apply these when they encounter expressions of religions and non-religious worldviews. They should understand how religious and non-religious beliefs influence the values and lives of both individuals and groups, and how they impact on current affairs. They should be able to appraise religious and non-religious practice and belief with an increasing level of discernment based on interpretation, evaluation and analysis, developing and articulating well-reasoned positions.

More specifically in relation to the programme of study, pupils should be taught to:

- interpret teachings, sources, authorities and ways of life in order to understand religions and non-religious worldviews as coherent systems
- interpret the influence that religious history and culture and the history and culture of non-religious worldviews have exercised on the lives of individuals and communities, including celebrations, rituals and rites of passage; to consider reasons why some people question these interpretations
- understand that individuals and cultures express their beliefs and values in many different forms and to explore the variety, difference and relationships that exist within and between them.
- explain those religions and non-religious worldviews which they encounter within and outside the classroom clearly and coherently; evaluate them, drawing on a range of introductory level approaches recognised in the study of religion or theology

- explore the impact of religions and non-religious worldviews on people's lives, particularly those for whom their worldview exercises a strong influence on their sense of identity and belonging; recognise that commitment to a religion or non-religious worldview is expressed in a variety of ways and consider why such commitment is valued by some people and questioned by others
- explore some of the ultimate questions that are raised by human life in ways that are well-informed and which invite personal response, drawing on a range of examples including philosophy, art, music and poetry
- explore significant moral and ethical questions posed by being human in ways that are well-informed and which invite personal response, using reasoning which may draw on a range of examples from real life, fiction or other forms of media.

### **Attainment Targets\***

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

*\* The wording of the attainment targets for RE is provisional and in this draft document simply follows the same form of words contained in the proposals for all other National Curriculum subjects*

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<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 12</b>
<b>Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education</b>	
<b>Report on the Inquiry into the Supply of and Support of Teachers of RE in England</b>	
<b>All Party Parliamentary Group on RE</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston: Associate RE Adviser	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Vivien Cutler –Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The report, “RE, the truth unmasked” is the result of an inquiry carried out by the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE to investigate the supply of and support for teachers of religious education. The report draws on over 400 sources of evidence and concludes that there are some serious issues which need to be addressed if schools are to provide high quality religious education for every young person. A number of findings in the inquiry have direct implications for Thurrock which should be discussed by SACRE

### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**1.1 That SACRE consider what investigations in might be made to determine whether or not the findings of the report apply to Thurrock**

### **2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

**2.1** An All Party Parliamentary Group is a group which exists to support a particular cause and has membership from across the political spectrum.

**2.2** The focus of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education is on safeguarding the provision of RE in our schools and exploring how the subject can continue to deliver a valuable dimension to the education of all children and young people.

2.3 The aims of the APPG are to:

- promote the highest possible standards of religious education in schools, colleges, universities and academies,
- press for continuous improvement in religious education,
- promote a clear, positive image, and public understanding of religious education and
- advocate that every young person experiences a personally inspiring and academically rigorous education in religious and non-religious worldviews.

### **3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

3.1 Members are invited to discuss the findings of the inquiry and to respond.

### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

4.1 The APPG inquiry has identified some serious short comings in the supply and support for teachers of RE and it is important to consider whether or not these apply to Thurrock and if so to try to address them.

### **5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 Not applicable

### **6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

6.1 SACRE ensures that:

- 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.

By considering this report, SACRE members will be better informed and therefore more able to support the statutory remit.

### **7. IMPLICATIONS**

#### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no financial implications to this report.

## 7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **07971316599**  
**Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

The Council is under a duty by virtue of s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This involves having due regard to the needs to:
  - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
  - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it and
  - encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding.

This report concerns matters that relate to the protected characteristics of religion and belief and race.

## 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
Telephone and email: **sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**  
**01375 652472**

There are no diversity implications noted in this report.

## 7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

Not applicable

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

The Religious Education Council website:  
<http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg>

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

- Appendix 1: Summary of the APPG report

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education

# RE: THE TRUTH UNMASKED

## The supply of and support for Religious Education teachers



An Inquiry by The All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education

## MAIN FINDINGS

### 1 Supply of primary RE teachers

- In over half of the 300 primary schools participating in this inquiry, some or all pupils were taught RE by someone other than their class teacher. In a quarter of these schools RE was taught by teaching assistants. This is unacceptable and in many cases this has a detrimental impact on the quality of RE.
- About a half of primary teachers and trainee teachers lack confidence in teaching RE.
- About a half of subject leaders in primary schools lack the expertise or experience to undertake their role effectively.
- There is a wide variation in the extent of initial teacher training in RE and too many trainee teachers have little effective preparation for teaching the subject.

### 2 Supply of secondary teachers

- Over 50% of teachers of RE in secondary schools have no qualification or appropriate expertise in the subject. This is unacceptable.
- The inclusion of non specialists in the total number of RE teachers given by the DfE gives the false impression that we have enough RE teachers and skews the statistics regarding the need to train more RE specialists.
- Secondary RE trainees on school based routes are not guaranteed places in schools where the RE staff have sufficient expertise to provide training.
- Applications for secondary RE teacher training courses are currently 143 down on the same time last year. The loss

of bursaries for RE is among the reasons for this reduction in applicant numbers for 2013/14.

### 3 Support for teachers of RE

- In nearly 40% of schools RE teachers have inadequate access to continuing professional development.
- RE teachers, particularly non specialists, in schools without a religious character have particularly limited access to CPD.
- The ability of SACREs to provide support for teachers of RE at a local level has been dramatically reduced by local authority funding decisions and the impact of the academisation programme.
- Teachers' access to CPD is a postcode lottery; it depends on the resources of their local SACRE or diocese, proximity to training and the priority given to RE in schools.

### 4 Contributory factors

- A range of government policies, notably those relating to the EBacc and GCSE short courses, are contributing to the lowering of the status of RE in some schools leading to a reduction in the demand for specialist teachers.
- Recent reductions and changes in teacher training have resulted in the closure of some outstanding university providers with a loss of opportunities for RE CPD.
- The combined effect of inadequate supply and inadequate access to support is that whatever their level of commitment, many teachers struggle to reach the levels of subject competence expected in the DfE's own teaching standards.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### The DfE should:

- revise the methods by which it gathers information about the number of RE teachers in secondary schools and present full time equivalent totals, and use these as the basis of the department's calculation of teacher training targets
- introduce a system which requires all secondary teachers to receive some training in any subject they teach
- restore bursaries for RE trainees
- restore the inclusion of results for the GCSE short course for RE to school league table points
- require academies to use the local agreed syllabus
- publish the outcomes of SACREs' monitoring of teacher supply and CPD
- ensure that SACREs have the resources to carry out their statutory responsibilities

### All schools should:

- ensure that all teachers of RE meet the Teaching Standards and develop their confidence and expertise in teaching RE
- make proper provision for continuing professional development for teachers and others

### Primary schools should:

- review the widespread practice of using staff other than the teacher to teach RE
- provide regular opportunities for RE subject leaders to train their colleagues in subject knowledge and planning and assessing RE

### Secondary schools should:

review as a priority the

practice of using non specialist teachers to teach RE

- ensure that the same teachers teach the subject every year rather than fill gaps with any teacher
- ensure that all non specialists receive training

### ITE training providers should:

- improve the quality of RE training for primary trainees
- monitor carefully all secondary trainee RE placements

### LAs should ensure sufficient resources are made available to enable SACREs to:

- provide high quality RE support
- monitor the quality of the provision and staffing of RE
- develop networks to share good practice in RE

### Those involved in providing CPD for RE teachers should:

- consider providing an on-line subject knowledge booster course
- encourage teachers and school leaders to become better informed about RE CPD opportunities

### Ofsted should:

- require inspectors to report on non-compliance with statutory requirements
- continue to monitor the quality of RE provision, through subject inspections

### The Teaching Agency should:

- review the capacity of training schools to provide subject specific training for RE

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<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 13</b>
<b>Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education</b>	
<b>Review of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus 2009</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston: Associate RE Adviser	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Vivien Cutler –Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Purpose of this report is to explain to SACRE members:

- the function of an ‘agreed syllabus conference’ (ASC);
- the legislative requirements for the make-up of an ASC
- how the Thurrock ASC fits into the overall process of revising the current Thurrock Agreed Syllabus.

### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1.1 That SACRE advise the Council that the syllabus is due for review and resolve to discuss the budget required for such a review**

### **2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1** Guidance on the role and operation of an ASC from the latest RE guidance “Religious Education in English Schools (2010)”

#### **The role and responsibility of an ASC**

- 2.2** Every LA is required to establish and support an occasional body called an agreed syllabus conference (ASC).

- 2.3** An ASC must:

- produce and recommend to the LA an agreed syllabus for RE which is educationally sound and meets legal requirements – as indicated earlier,

this process should take account of the illustrative primary programme of learning and secondary programme of study but is in no way bound by them

- with any sub-committee it may appoint, meet in public, subject to exceptions in relation to confidentiality
- unanimously recommend a syllabus for adoption by the LA (each committee having a single vote) - there are provisions for the Secretary of State to become involved where an ASC is not unanimous
- include on any sub-committee at least one member of each of its constituent committees.

2.4 An ASC may specify what must be taught through the locally agreed syllabus. In recommending a syllabus the ASC may not specify the amount of curriculum time that must be allocated to RE by schools, but they may provide an estimate of how much time their syllabus would require, to help schools to plan their timetable.

*16 Section 391(3), Education Act 1996*

*17 Section 391(3), Education Act 1996*

*18 Section 390(3), Education Act 1996*

*19 Section 390(7) and Section 391(4), Education Act 1996*

*20 Schedule 31(6), Education Act 1996*

*21 Regulation 3, S1 1994/1304*

*22 Schedule 31(10), Education Act 1996*

### **Membership of an ASC**

2.5 An ASC is required to be made up of four committees

- Committee A – Christian denominations and such other religions and religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;
- Committee B - the Church of England
- Committee C - teacher associations
- Committee D - the LA.

2.6 There is no legal provision for an ASC to include co-opted members, but it can seek the advice it considers appropriate from those it considers appropriate, to inform the development of effective RE provision in its area.

### **The agreed syllabus**

2.7 The locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus of RE prepared under Schedule 31 to the Education Act 1996 and adopted by the LA under that schedule. It must be followed in maintained schools without a designated denomination.

2.8 Once adopted by the LA, the agreed syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught and can include the expected standards of pupils' performance at different stages.



- 2.9 Every locally agreed syllabus must reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. The law does not define what the principal religions represented in Great Britain are. ASCs can decide which are the principal religions represented in Great Britain, other than Christianity, to be included in their agreed syllabus.
- 2.10 Agreed syllabuses in any community school and any foundation, voluntary aided or voluntary-controlled school without a religious character cannot require RE to be provided by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of a particular religious denomination.
- 2.11 This prohibition does not extend to the study of catechisms and formularies.

### **The make-up of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus Conference**

- 2.12 Given that the four committees of an ASC match exactly those of a SACRE, it is proposed that
- SACRE is reconvened as an ASC for the purpose of reviewing the local agreed syllabus;
  - SACRE considers whether additional co-opted members are required.
  - SACRE consider the implications of inviting representatives of local Academies to be involved in the review process

23 Section 390(2) Education Act 1996; Schedule 31, para 4, Education Act 1996

24 Section 375, Education Act 1996

25 Para 3 of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

- 2.13 Prior to the convening of the ASC, marking the formal' stage of agreed syllabus review, there will be an 'informal' stage during which a small 'Agreed Syllabus Review Group' (consisting of teachers, a consultant and SACRE members) that will review the current agreed syllabus in order to prepare recommendations and draft material for consideration by the ASC.
- 2.14 Once the ASC is convened and begins to review recommendations and draft material, the Agreed Syllabus Review Group will carry on working in order to prepare material to support the new agreed syllabus.

### **3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 Costs to be agreed with council. This process needs to take account of the level of support within the Academy Sector for continuing to follow this syllabus

### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- 4.1 Legal requirements

## 5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Not applicable

## 6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

6.1 SACRE ensures that:

- 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.

## 7. IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

Estimated costs of the review, in addition to standard costs of managing Religious Education in Thurrock, are in the region of £10,000 over two financial years. This includes 15 days additional consultancy work for the process at £7,500. The costs reported will be taken from agreed School Improvement Budgets.

### 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **07971316599**  
**Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

The statutory framework is incorporated into the body of the report at section 2 above. The Council is under a duty by virtue of s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EqA 2010.
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This involves having due regard to the needs to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it and
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This includes having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding.

This report concerns matters that relate to the protected characteristics of religion and belief and race.

### 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
 Telephone and email: **sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**  
**01375 652472**

The review and revision of the syllabus will take on board conclusions from last SACRE meeting about increased religious and ethnic diversity of Thurrock.

### 7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

Not applicable

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

The Religious Education Council website:  
<http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg>

### **APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

- Appendix 1: Proposed timeline

### **Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston  
 Associate Adviser for Religious Education



**New Agreed Syllabus: Draft timeline for discussion**

<p><b>Summer Term 2013</b></p>	<p><b>Initial discussions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deborah Weston and Ruth Brock agree an outline budget for the review of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus</li> <li>• Estimate a budget of £10,000 over two financial years</li> </ul>
<p><b>Autumn Term 2013</b></p>	<p><b>SACRE meeting Initial review stage</b></p> <p><b>Plan Pupil voice conference – for Autumn 2014</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SACRE to agree an outline programme of review for the syllabus</li> <li>• SACRE agree membership of small Agreed Syllabus Review Group</li> <li>• draft and execute questionnaire to consult with teachers about their views on the revision</li> <li>• Questionnaire to all schools – via ‘survey monkey’ – RE Today services will develop this.</li> <li>• consult students about Religious Education in Thurrock</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spring Term 2014</b></p>	<p><b>Establishing review group</b></p> <p><b>First meeting of Review Group Initial drafting</b></p> <p><b>Report to SACRE summer term meeting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a group of 6-8 excellent Thurrock teachers of RE, including teachers from 4-11, 11-16 and SEN settings to join the AS Review Group</li> <li>• Identify dates for meetings, and call first meeting.</li> <li>• Consultants from RE Today propose a timeline,</li> <li>• Draft contents page for the syllabus in detail (this commissions the consultants writing and guides the process, via SACRE and the AS Review Group)</li> <li>• Agreed Syllabus Review Group considers questionnaire responses and other guidance documents to evaluate the possible directions and developments of the syllabus.</li> <li>• Making RE local – development of ways to do this more practically and for wide use, e.g. relating to faith trails in Thurrock, and the wide diversity of the LA area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summer Term 2013</b></p>	<p><b>Second meeting of AS Review group</b></p> <p><b>First and</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AS Review Group considers report from the National RE Review (to be published in September 2013 alongside final National Curriculum documents. Make recommendations to SACRE</li> <li>• Consultants to draft initial materials – possible</li> </ul>

	<b>second Autumn Term SACRE meetings</b>	<p>contents page, sifting and merging of current requirements, working group commissions consultants to write requirements for KS 1, 2, 3, FS, SEN and 14-19 sections to be drafted and considered by working group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft assessment ideas that take account of APP, 8 levels and “I can...” work as new assessment and accountability processes to be finalised by the DfE</li> <li>• Discuss illustration of the syllabus: photography, pupils work, local religion</li> <li>• Support materials to be considered: how far down the road to creating a more helpful / detailed scheme of work can we get?</li> </ul>
<b>Spring Term 2014</b>	<b>Third meeting of AS Review group</b>  <b>Spring Term SACRE meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil voice conference to take place* (see below)</li> <li>• Agreeing texts for each section of the syllabus</li> <li>• Assessment issues: what support, guidance, instruction is needed?</li> <li>• 4-19 check</li> <li>• Keeping abreast of DfE policy and guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Summer Term 2014</b>	<b>Final meeting of AS review group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check all draft materials and agree final versions</li> <li>• Consider production issues and consider advantages and disadvantages of online versus hard copy –decide on budget allocation</li> <li>• Plan launch and implementation programme</li> </ul>
<b>July / September 2014</b>	<b>Syllabus approvals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SACRE / ASC to approve the syllabus</li> <li>• Senior education staff to approve – e.g. education cabinet member.</li> <li>• Production and printing</li> </ul>
<b>October / November 2014</b>	<b>Syllabus launch and implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan to maximise the impact of the syllabus on quality and standards</li> <li>• Event to launch the syllabus</li> <li>• CPD for primary and secondary colleagues</li> <li>• Guidance for SIPS, Governors, HTs and teachers of RE</li> </ul>

<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 14</b>
<b>Thurrock Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education</b>	
<b>Provisional GCSE Results 2013</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston: Associate RE Adviser	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Mike Peters, (Interim) Strategic Lead for School Improvement, Learning and Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1.1 SACRE should consider making an investigation in relation to academies that appear not to be making provision for RE in accordance with their funding agreement.**
- 1.2 If that investigation concludes that there appears to be no appropriate provision, then SACRE should consider informing the Education Funding Agency of its findings.**

**2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1 SACRE has a statutory duty to monitor provision for RE to be given in accordance with its agreed syllabus. It might be argued that where an academy has made the decision to follow that Agreed Syllabus that SACRE should therefore provision in Academies also.
- 2.2 Thurrock SACRE has taken the view that it has a concern for the Religious Education of all the children and young people in Thurrock irrespective of the type of school they attend and will therefore offer support and advice as far as it is able.

In addition, the following guidance can be found on the DfE website:

“An LA does not have any such direct responsibilities for the performance of successful academies. In terms of standards in academies (and holding sponsors to account for this), the lead responsibility sits with the Department

and the Schools Commissioner. Despite this, local authorities retain a legal responsibility for performance in the area as a whole, under the 1996 Education Act. They also have a considerable pool of expertise available that can help academies to drive up standards.

Therefore, if there is a local academy which is struggling to achieve the expected level of performance, the local authority may wish to offer its support to help raise standards. Although there is no requirement for the academy to work with the local authority, it should consider carefully whether or not to accept any such offer of support.”

<http://www.education.gov.uk/a0063423/local-authorities-faqs#faq6>

### **3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

SACRE must decide whether or not it can and should respond to any concerns it may have about the provision for RE in academies given their status.

#### GCSE Results

- 3.1. See appendix 1 for tabulated GCSE entries and results 2011-13.
- 3.2 As in previous years, there are four schools in the authority where entries for GCSE RE remain very high, almost the whole year group in fact; these are Grays Convent High School, Grays School Media Arts College (now the Hathaway Academy), the Ockendon Academy and St Clere’s School.
- 3.3 For the Grays Convent and the Ockendon there is no significant change in entries with almost all being for full course GCSE.
- 3.4 For Grays School Media Arts College entries have shifted almost entirely from short course to full course RE this year.
- 3.5 For St Clere’s, where overall entries have risen from 86% in 2012 to 95% in 2013, these are divided more equally between full and short course reversing a trend at that school toward a much larger proportion of full course entries in 2012.
- 3.6 Results for Grays Convent remain outstanding and those for the Ockendon Academy are improving year on year. At Grays School Media Arts College attainment, while much lower has improved significantly in the last year with the change to full course RE. The situation at St Clere’s is more worrying with a dip in attainment for both courses this year.
- 3.7 Aside from these four schools, there appears to be a far more limited degree of engagement with RE in Thurrock.
- 3.8 At the Harris Academy entries, which are entirely for full course, have doubled this year to 30% of the year group and whilst attainment has slipped a little



from that of previous years it is still very good with 85% of pupils attaining A\*-C. Overall this is a positive picture.

- 3.9 At William Edwards school the trend for entries is the opposite of this, they have halved in 2013 over 2012, down to 19% of the year group, however attainment has risen drastically to the points where 100% of pupils entered achieved A\*-C. So a worrying picture for entries but a very positive one for results.
- 3.10 Another minor positive development has been the take up of RE at Ormiston Park which although limited to 13% of the year group is an improvement on zero or practically zero in previous years. Attainment is rather poor though with only 22% of the year group achieving A\*-C.
- 3.11 Finally Hassenbrook and Gable Hall whilst entering only 9% and 4% respectively for RE (full course) are achieving excellent results for those pupils with 93% and 100% in the respective schools attaining A\*-C.
- 3.12 Overall the picture authority wide remains broadly similar to previous years with the same schools engaging a significant proportion of their pupils in RE and a much more limited degree of engagement in the rest of the authority. Whilst there are some changes there is no identifiable broad trend, either positive or negative and it would seem that to encourage the former more direct engagement with and support of individual schools is likely to be needed.

#### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- 4.1 The recommendation recognises that SACRE does not have a statutory responsibility for the provision for RE in Academies but SACRE may consider action within its powers in order to maintain standards of religious education in the area as a whole.
- 4.2 The recommendation arises from the evidence set out in this report that some children and young people may be leaving secondary education in Thurrock without the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding that represent a proper religious education.

#### **5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 None.

#### **6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 6.1 None.

## 7. IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no financial implications to this report.

### 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

Section 80 of the Education Act 2002 imposes a duty on every *maintained* school in England to provide a basic curriculum that includes provision for religious education for all registered pupils at the school, in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Chapter 31). However, the section does not apply to academies or free schools, because they are not maintained by the Local Authority, so there is no statutory requirement to provide religious education in accordance with Sch. 19 to the SSFA 1998. The model *Funding Agreement*, however, requires the academy trust to 'make provision for the teaching of religious education and for a daily act of collective worship at the academy 'for every maintained school in England.

By the duty imposed by s390 of the Education Act 1996 every local authority (in England and in Wales) must constitute a SACRE.

The functions of a SACRE are listed at s391 of the same Act, as follows:

- (a) to advise the [local authority] on such matters connected with—
- (i) religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools that do not have a “religious character” and
  - (ii) the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed or other syllabus in accordance with Schedule 19 to that Act,

In addition, SACRE has a duty to publish annual reports about the exercise of their functions (in particular about any advice given) and any action taken by groups as above, and send a copy to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Because Academies do not provide religious education in accordance with Schedule 19 of the Schools Standard and Framework Act it is not a function under the Education Act 1996 for SACRE to advise the Local Authority about the religious education provided at such establishments. However, SACRE may chose to do so. The Local Authority may act on information it receives

when discharging its duties and in fulfilment of the strategic role it retains for education within its area.

### 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
Telephone and email: **01375652472**  
**Sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**

This report has implications for the Council's approach to Diversity and Equality. If, as the data suggests, a number of local schools are not making provision for Religious Education for all of its students, there is a risk that children and young people leaving school in Thurrock may not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of religion and belief to be fully equipped to take their place in a diverse society.

### 7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

None.

### **APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

Appendix 1 – analysis of GCSE results 2011-2013

### **Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education

## Appendix 1 – analysis of GCSE results 2011-2013

GCSE Results	2011 A*-C Full Course	2012 A*-C Full Course	2013 A*-C Full Course	2011 A*-C Short Course	2012 A*-C Short Course	2013 A*-C Short Course
Gable Hall School	67%	100%	100%		100%	
Grays Convent High School	86%	89%	85%	50%	33%	40%
Grays School Media Arts College			46%	44%	32%	
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	95%	96%	85%			
Hassenbrook Academy		75%	93%			
Ormiston Park Academy			22%		100%	
St. Clere's School	55%	42%	35%	47%	9%	7%
The Ockendon Academy	56%	64%	67%			
William Edwards School	43%	26%	100%			

GCSE Entries	2011 % of roll entered Full Course	2012 % of roll entered Full Course	2013 % of roll entered Full Course	2011 % of roll entered Short Course	2012 % of roll entered Short Course	2013 % of roll entered Short Course	2011 % of roll entered GCSE total	2012 % of roll entered GCSE total	2013 % of roll entered GCSE total
Gable Hall School	4%	4%	4%				4%	4%	4%
Grays Convent High School	95%	93%	95%	2%	2%	4%	97%	96%	99%
Grays School Media Arts College			98%	95%	95%	1%	95%	95%	99%
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	13%	14%	30%				13%	14%	30%
Hassenbrook Academy		8%	9%					8%	9%
Ormiston Park Academy			13%		1%			1%	13%
St. Clere's School	43%	81%	40%	45%	6%	54%	89%	86%	95%
The Ockendon Academy	94%	99%	97%				94%	99%	97%
William Edwards School	28%	39%	19%				28%	39%	19%

<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 15</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education</b>	
<b>Review of Membership and Terms of Reference of SACRE</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Victoria Freeman, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Mike Peters, Interim Strategic Leader, School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is public.</b>	

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Members of Thurrock SACRE were recently provided with factual information on the religious profile of Thurrock as evidenced by the 2011 census data and Members suggested changes to the membership of the committee.

Whilst considering amendments to the membership of the committee, it was found that parts of the constitution were out of date and therefore the decision was taken by officers to amend the terms of reference to bring them up to date.

### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**That SACRE:**

- 1.1 Approve the amended membership of Committee A of Thurrock SACRE, as listed in paragraph 2.8.7 of the report.**
- 1.2 Agree the revised Constitution of Thurrock SACRE as set out in Appendix C.**

### **2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1** A report was published on the agenda for the meeting of SACRE on the 6 March 2013, which requested members consider the membership of Committee A and decide whether or not it appropriately reflected the principal religious traditions in the area and that, if SACRE wished to amend the membership list, it should advise the local authority in order that the terms of reference could be amended.

2.2 It was clear that a review of the membership of the Committee needed to be undertaken to determine whether it reflected the changing profile of religions and belief in Thurrock.

### 2.3 Legal Background

2.4 S390 of the Education Act 1996 requires that a Local Authority shall constitute a standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE). The SACRE must consist of such groups of persons appointed by the Authority as representative members, as required by subsection 4. The SACRE may also include co-opted members.

2.5 Subsection 4 specifies that the representative groups that are to constitute membership of the SACRE are:

- a) A group of persons representing such religions and denominations other than the Church of England as, in the opinion of the authority will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.
- b) A group of persons to represent the Church of England.
- c) A group of persons to represent such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area.
- d) A group of persons to represent the Local Authority.

2.6 Statutory provisions state, in addition to the requirement that the composition of Group A be broadly representative of the proportionate strengths of the denominations and religions in the area, that the representative groups represent such religions as, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriate reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.

### 2.7 Current Membership of Thurrock SACRE

The current membership of Thurrock SACRE is, as follows:

#### i) Committee A

Christian denominations and other religious and religious denominations representative of the local community:

7 members:

- 1 Free Church Christian member nominated by the Free Church Federal Council;
- 1 Roman Catholic member nominated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood;

- 1 Jewish member nominated by the Board of Deputies of British Jews;
- 1 Muslim member nominated by the Muslim Teachers' Association;
- 1 Sikh member nominated by the Committee of the Local Gudwara;
- 1 Hindu member
- 1 Pentecostal member

(ii) Committee B

The Church of England – 3 members nominated by the Diocese of Chelmsford.

iii) Committee C

Teachers' Associations – 3 members nominated by the Professional Associations group representing as far as is practicable, primary, secondary and special schools.

iv) Committee D

The Local Education Authority – 3 members nominated by Council.

## 2.8 Proposed Membership

2.8.1 At the inquorate meeting of SACRE on 1 May, Members considered a table setting out the results of the census in 2001 and 2011 which compared the percentage of the population in terms of the answer to the question about their religion or belief. A copy of this table can be found at Appendix A.

2.8.2 The outcome of the discussion was that Members recommended that Thurrock SACRE adopt the following principles as guidelines when determining the composition of Committee A:

In order to nominate a representative to Thurrock SACRE, a religion or belief should have:

- a) A minimum of 500 self-identified adherents (0.3%) in the Thurrock area;
- b) A recognisable local group meeting regularly within the Thurrock area;
- c) A representative organisation capable of providing nominations which is willing to confirm its acceptance of and support for the aims and objectives of Thurrock SACRE.

- 2.8.3 That Thurrock SACRE should consult with Christian groups within Thurrock to identify whether the current Christian members of Committee A still adequately reflect and represent the Christian groups active within Thurrock, and consider any changes at a future meeting.
- 2.8.4 That Thurrock SACRE should seek to identify a Buddhist member to be added to Committee A, as the Buddhist denomination in Thurrock had seen an increase from 0.17% to 0.40% over the last ten years.
- 2.8.5 The issue of a Humanist representative on Thurrock SACRE had previously been discussed and it was recommended that if the British Humanist Association were happy to confirm their acceptance of the objectives of SACRE, then a representative from this Association should be sought.
- 2.8.6 That the Jewish representative should cease to be a permanent member of Committee A, but the current representative be invited to continue serving SACRE as a co-opted member. However, legal duties on SACRE in relation to the Agreed Syllabus, meant that each of the principal religions should be represented in the UK (defined as Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism) as a whole in order that an Agreed Syllabus Conference convened by SACRE could include people that are fully informed to meet the legal requirements for an RE Syllabus.
- 2.8.7 The proposed membership of Thurrock SACRE is, as follows:

i) Committee A

Christian denominations and other religious and religious denominations representative of the local community:

9 members:

- 1 Free Church Christian member nominated by the Free Church Federal Council;
- 1 Roman Catholic member nominated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood;
- 1 Jewish member nominated by the Board of Deputies of British Jews;
- 2 Muslim member nominated by the Muslim Teachers' Association;
- 1 Sikh member nominated by the Committee of the Local Gudwara;
- 1 Hindu member
- 1 Pentecostal member



1 Buddhist member

ii) Committee B

The Church of England – 4 members nominated by the Diocese of Chelmsford.

iii) Committee C

Teachers' Associations – 6 members nominated by the Professional associations group representing as far as is practicable, primary, secondary, special schools and academies.

iv) Committee D

The Local Education Authority – 3 members nominated by Council.

2.9 Terms of Reference

2.9.1 There have been no legislative changes that have required the Thurrock SACRE constitution to be amended and / or updated. However Circular 1/94, Religious Education and Collective Worship issued in 1994 has since been replaced by Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010 (appendix B) which replaced the elements of Circular 1/94 that related to RE.

2.9.2 The proposed revised terms of reference of Thurrock SACRE are attached at Appendix C.

2.9.3 Any Constitutional changes may be made at a meeting of a quorate SACRE. The Local Authority can also alter the terms of reference, however SACRE must be consulted upon before doing so.

**3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

3.1 Members may wish to suggest alternative membership and amendments to the revised term of reference and this can be done at the meeting.

**4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

4.1 Members are invited to consider the information in appendix 1 and consider the current SACRE membership with regard to the overall number of members and /or the number of members representing any particular religion, denomination or association.

4.2 The composition of the SACRE should reflect its prime purpose, to support, in the best way possible, the teaching and development of the Agreed Syllabus for RE in schools.

**5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 None.

**6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

6.1 Not applicable.

**7. IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no financial implications to this report

**7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **07971 316599**  
**Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

Legal comments are incorporated into the body of the report. .

**7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Teresa Evans**  
Telephone and email: **Teresa.evans@lbbd.gov.uk**

There are implications based on the information about religion for the way that the diversity of the population of Thurrock is reflected in the provision for Religious Education in local schools, therefore there are implications on the different groups identified in this report.

**7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

There are none.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

None.

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

Appendix A - The changing profile of Thurrock in relation to affiliation to religions and beliefs

Appendix B – Current Thurrock SACRE Constitution

Appendix C - Revised Thurrock SACRE Constitution

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Victoria Freeman

Democratic Services Officer

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## The changing profile of Thurrock in relation to affiliation to religions and beliefs

Table one sets out the results of the census in 2001 and 2011 comparing the percentage of the population in terms of their answer to the question about their religion or belief

Table 1

Faith in Thurrock	Thurrock 2001 Census	Thurrock 2011 census	UK 2001	UK 2011
Christian	75.09%	63.30%	71.10%	59.30%
Buddhist	0.17%	0.40%	0.30%	0.40%
Hindu	0.55%	0.70%	1.10%	1.50%
Jewish	0.17%	0.10%	0.50%	0.50%
Muslim	1.07%	2.00%	3.00%	4.80%
Sikh	0.70%	0.80%	0.60%	0.80%
Other	0.21%	0.30%	0.30%	0.40%
No religion	15.51%	26.00%	14.80%	25.10%
Religion not stated	6.52%	6.30%	7.70%	7.20%

Green=greater than the national average Yellow=reflects national average Blue-smaller than the national average

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# STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

## 1. Terms of Reference

- 1.1 To advise the Local Authority upon such matters connected with collective worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus (including methods of teaching, choice of teaching material and the provision of training for teachers) as the Local Authority may refer to SACRE or as SACRE may see fit.
- 1.2 To advise on the effective and creative implementation of the collective worship requirements of the Education Act 1996 and to consider requests by schools for determinations.
- 1.3 To encourage the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and in this regard to monitor the production of teaching resources and support material.
- 1.4 To support the Local Authority in reviewing provision for religious education and collective worship in county schools within the Borough.
- 1.5 To disseminate an understanding of the educational role of religious education and collective worship and to encourage the active involvement of local religious groups and organisations.
- 1.6 To keep under review the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Agreed Syllabus until such time (and no later than five years after the publication of the last agreed syllabus) it decides to require the Local Authority to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to institute a formal review.
- 1.7 To publish an annual report on its work specifying any matters on which it has advised the Local Authority, broadly describing the nature of that advice, and setting out the reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the Local Authority.
- 1.8 To send its annual report to the Qualifications and Curriculum by 30 December each year as well as to local schools and other persons and organisations as it sees fit.

## 2. **Membership of SACRE**

2.1 SACRE shall comprise four committees, whose members are appointed by the Local Authority, as follows:

Committee A Christian denominations and other religious and religious denominations representative of the local community

7 members:

- 1 Free Church Christian member nominated by the Free Church Federal Council;
- 1 Roman Catholic member nominated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood;
- 1 Jewish member nominated by the Board of Deputies of British Jews;
- 1 Muslim member nominated by the Muslim Teachers' Association;
- 1 Sikh member nominated by the Committee of the local Gurdwara;
- 1 Hindu member
  
- 1 Pentecostal member

Committee B The Church of England

- 3 members nominated by the Diocese of Chelmsford

Committee C Teachers' Associations

- 3 members nominated by the Professional Associations Group representing as far as is practicable, primary, secondary and special schools.

Committee D The Local Education Authority

- 3 members nominated by Council

2.2 Members of Committees A, B C and D are appointed for a period of four years, but shall thereafter be eligible for renomination by their nominating bodies.

2.3 Any member of SACRE may at any time resign his/her office and a replacement be sought from the relevant nominating body.

2.4 SACRE shall have the right to co-opt additional non-voting members who shall remain co-opted for as long as SACRE deems necessary or until such time as the co-opted member resigns.



- 2.5 In accordance with Circular 1/95, Section 115 and as approved by the Local Authority, SACRE shall appoint a Chair of from amongst its members.
- 2.6 Each of the Committees A, B, C and D on SACRE shall elect a chair to hold office for one year. The chairs of these committees shall act as vice-chairs of SACRE and will meet with the Chair of SACRE and the Director or his representative to form a SACRE agenda-planning group.
- 2.7 The Clerk to SACRE shall be the Director of Education or his representative.

### **Decision-making**

- 2.8 Voting at SACRE shall be on the basis of one vote per Committee and formal resolutions to the Local Authority shall be passed only if all four Committees are in agreement. Within each Committee, voting shall be by simple majority.

### **Attendance at Meetings**

- 2.9 The membership of any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without good cause shall lapse and a replacement or reinstatement be sought from the relevant nominating body.
- 2.10 SACRE meetings are to be considered quorate if one-third of members of SACRE are in attendance, rounded up to the nearest whole number, with at least one member from each of Committees A,B,C and D.
- 2.11 Meetings of SACRE and its sub-groups shall be open to the public except under those circumstances where matters under discussion are considered by SACRE to be confidential.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

- 2.12 There will normally be 3 SACRE meetings held each academic year. They will be convened by the Local Authority and serviced and advised by the Director of Education or his representative.

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**THURROCK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**(SACRE)**

**CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

THURROCK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

(SACRE)

CONSTITUTION

REVISED SEPTEMBER 2013

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In accordance with the Education Act 1996 and circular 1/94, Religious Education and Collective Worship, the Local Authority (“LA”) has a duty to establish and set up a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (“SACRE”) and an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- 1.2 If there is a conflict between these Terms of Reference and the law, the SACRE shall comply with the law.

**2.0 Functions and Responsibilities**

- 2.1 To advise the Local Authority upon such matters connected with 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 the Agreed Syllabus. This may include, in particular, methods of teaching, choice of teaching material and the provision of training for teachers.
- 2.2 To publish an annual report on its work specifying any matters on which it has advised the Local Authority, broadly describing the nature of that advice, and setting out the reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the Local Authority.
- 2.3 To publish its annual report by the end of the academic year and send to local schools and other persons and organisations it sees fit.
- 2.4 To encourage the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and in this regard to monitor the production of teaching resources and support material.
- 2.5 To support the Local Authority in reviewing provision for religious education and collective worship in schools within the Borough.
- 2.6 To disseminate an understanding of the educational role of religious education and collective worship and to encourage the active involvement of local religious groups and organisations.
- 2.7 To keep under review the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Agreed Syllabus until such time (and no later than 5 years after the publication of the last agreed syllabus) it decides to require the Local Authority to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to institute a formal review.

### **3.0 Membership and composition of SACRE**

3.1 SACRE will comprise members of four representative groups appointed by the Local Authority as follows:

**Group A** 9 members

1 Free Church Christian member (nominated by the Free Church Federal Council)

1 Roman Catholic member (nominated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood)

1 Jewish member (nominated by the Board of Deputies of British Jews)

2 Muslim members (nominated by the Muslim Council of Britain)

1 Sikh member (nominated by the Local Gurdwara)

1 Hindu member (nominated by the National Council of Hindu Temples)

1 Pentecostal member (nominated by the Local King's Family Centre)

1 Buddhist member (nominated by the Buddhist Society)

**Group B** Church of England

4 members nominated by the Diocese of Chelmsford

**Group C** Teachers Associations

6 members nominated by the Professional Associations Group representing as far as is practicable, primary, secondary, special schools and academies.

**Group D** The Local Authority

3 members nominated by Council.

### **3.2 Co-Opted Members/Attendees**

3.3. SACRE shall have the right to co-opt additional non-voting members who shall remain co-opted for as long as SACRE deems necessary or until such time as the co-opted member resigns.

- 3.4 Co-opted members may resign at any time and may be removed by the representative groups at any time or the LA.
- 3.5 It shall be open to SACRE to invite people of expertise or special interests to attend on an occasional basis.

#### **4.0 Term of Office**

- 4.1 Members of Committees A, B, C and D are appointed for a period of four years, but shall thereafter be eligible for re-nomination by their nominating bodies.
- 4.2 A member shall cease to be a member of SACRE if:
- a) They reach the end of their term of office
  - b) They write to the SACRE or the Clerk and tender their resignation;
  - c) They were appointed by virtue of being representative of the religion, denomination or associations which they were appointed to represent, but in the opinion of the LA, they cease to be such a representative, or to be representative of the authority;
  - d) The other members of their representative group notify the LA that the member should no longer act as one of its representatives on the SACRE and the LA agrees to their removal;
  - e) The LA determine, on reasonable grounds, that the member is unable, unwilling or an unsuitable person to continue these duties.
- 4.3 Any member of SACRE may at any time resign his/her office and a replacement be sought from the relevant nominating body.
- 4.4 The SACRE shall review the membership annually at their Autumn Term meeting.

#### **5.0 Chair and Vice Chair**

- 5.1 The Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE shall be appointed by Members in attendance at the first meeting of each Academic Year, or any meeting during the year when the position is vacant. The voting will be by a simple majority.
- 5.2 Each of the representative groups A, B, C and D shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair for the respective representative group. Each representative member having one vote. These chairs will be appointed annually at the Autumn Term meeting (or first meeting of the Academic Year).
- 5.3 In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson will take the chair and in the absence of both of these a member will be elected for one meeting.
- 5.4 The Chair will be responsible for:
- a) The management of meetings;
  - b) Representing the SACRE to other bodies;

- c) Such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.

5.5 The Vice-Chair will be responsible for:

- a) Deputising for the Chair as required;
- b) Representing the SACRE to other bodies in the absence of the Chair or by agreement with the Chair;
- c) Such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.

5.6 The LA shall appoint a Clerk to:

- a) Attend the meetings of SACRE
- b) Take appropriate minutes and notes at meetings;
- c) Maintain and update the records of SACRE and its meetings;
- d) Perform any other necessary administrative duties; and
- e) Provide a copy of the minutes to the Members of the SACRE and LA.

## **6.0 Vacancies**

6.1 In the event of a vacancy on the SACRE the Clerk shall:

- a. Advise the relevant appointing body of the vacancy;
- b. Where appropriate, refer any nomination to the LA; and
- c. Where such nominations are agreed, record the person as a member of SACRE.

6.2 In the absence of nominees from a representative group, the LA may nominate and appoint any person that it considers to be representative of that group and it deems appropriate, to fill the vacancy.

## **7.0 Arrangements for Meetings**

7.1 Meetings will be convened by the Local Authority.

7.2 Special meetings may be called by the Chair and the Local Authority acting jointly.

7.3 There will be 3 meetings of SACRE held each academic year, normally one per academic term, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Chair.

7.4 Matters for the Agenda of any meeting shall be sent to the Clerk at least 21 days in advance of the meeting.

7.5 The draft minutes of the previous meeting shall be circulated to Members no later than one week before the next meeting takes place.

7.6 The Clerk will no later than 5 working days before the meeting, circulate the agenda and supporting papers to the SACRE members.

## **8.0 Attendance at meetings**

8.1 The membership of any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without good cause will be considered to have resigned their position from SACRE and a replacement or reinstatement be sought from the nominating body.

## **9.0 Quorum**

9.1 For the purposes of meetings, the SACRE will be deemed quorate when at least one member of three representative groups are represented and not less than a third of the total membership are present.

9.2 If the meeting is not quorate, either business shall not be transacted or the meeting could continue but decisions would have to be ratified at the next SACRE meeting.

## **10. Voting Rights**

10.1 Each representative group within SACRE shall have one vote. Groups are to determine their own internal voting arrangements. Decisions within a group about how that vote is to be cast do not require unanimity. Individual representative members cannot vote separately. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote. Each group is to regulate its own proceedings including provision for resolving deadlock.

10.2 A proposal shall not be deemed to be carried unless it has been approved by at least three of the representative groups unless otherwise required by law or guidance.

10.3 In the interests of achieving consensus SACRE should only take a vote of the four groups when it is necessary to make a formal record of a decision, or if there are opposing views.

## **11.0 Access to meetings and documents**

11.1 Meetings of the SACRE will be held in public and members of the public will be encouraged to attend meetings as observers except where matters under discussion are considered by SACRE to be confidential. Members of the public cannot take part in discussions nor have any voting rights.

11.2 Copies of agendas and reports for meetings of SACRE will be made available for inspection on the Committee Management Information System found on the Local Authority's website.

## **12.0 Constitutional Change**

12.1 The Local Authority can alter these terms of reference but must consult SACRE before doing so.



<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 16</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education</b>	
<b>Academy Responses To The Local Agreed Syllabus</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston, RE Consultant	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Mike Peters, (Interim Strategic Lead) School Improvement, Learning & Skill	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is</b> public.	

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report was commissioned in order to identify the level of demand for the local Agreed Syllabus in the Academies in Thurrock. It shows that the majority of Academies who have a choice over whether or not to adopt the local Agreed Syllabus for RE have chosen to do so. This means that SACRE can expect a good level of commitment and support for the revision to the Agreed Syllabus.

### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**That SACRE:**

- 1.1 Ask all schools to allow their subject leaders to be involved in the Agreed Syllabus working group.**
- 1.2 Continue to make its Agreed Syllabus and supporting materials available to all schools in Thurrock whether or not they are academies.**
- 1.3 Agrees to begin the process of revising its Agreed Syllabus using the timeline in appendix 1 as a starting point.**

### **2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1** In order to prepare for the revision of the Agreed Syllabus, SACRE asked the Associate Adviser to survey the Academies in Thurrock to determine the level of support for the Agreed Syllabus. The following 18 academies responded:

Herringham Primary Academy	TAS
Quarry hill Academy	TAS
Abbots Hall Primary Academy	TAS
Benyon Primary School	TAS
The Ockendon Academy	TAS
Beacon Hill Academy	Own syllabus
William Edwards	Own syllabus
Gable Hall school	TAS
THE HATHAWAY ACACEMY	TAS
Stanford -le - Hope as part of St Cleres Multi Academy Trust	TAS and own syllabus
St Cleres	TAS with some adaptation
Belmont Castle	TAS
Woodside Academy	TAS
The Gateway Academy	Own Syllabus
Harris Primary Academy Chafford Hundred	TAS
Thameside Primary School	Essex
West Thurrock Academy	TAS
Shaw Primary Academy	Own syllabus

### **3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

As shown in appendix 2, the majority of academy schools in Thurrock (68.4%) have chosen to follow the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus. It might be predicted that a similar pattern would continue in the 11 that did not respond.

SACRE has a legal responsibility to recommend an Agreed Syllabus to the council. SACRE needs to decide what kind of support for this project it might expect from the academies. That contribution might be financial though that carries certain risks or it might be 'in kind' in the form of support from the schools by teachers in the work surrounding the revision and follow up activities.

### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- 4.1 The recommendations are made in order to fulfil the responsibility of a SACRE to establish an Agreed Syllabus Conference to revise its Agreed Syllabus once every five years.

### **5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

### **6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 6.1 None.

### **7. IMPLICATIONS**

### 7.1 **Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no financial implications to this report

### 7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

The Authority is under a duty imposed by s390 of the Education Act 1996 (the Act) to constitute a standing advisory council on religious education. Schedule 31 of the Act imposes a duty to convene a conference for the purpose of reconsidering the syllabus.

### 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
Telephone and email: **01375652472**  
**Sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**

Academies must make provision for RE for all pupils according to the terms of their funding agreements. Where an academy has chosen to follow the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus, the review and revision of the syllabus will take on board conclusions previous SACRE meetings about increased religious and ethnic diversity of Thurrock. Where a different syllabus has been chosen or the school has chosen to devise its own, it is not clear whether or not that is the case and whether children in those schools will receive sufficient knowledge and understanding of the diverse traditions of religion and belief in Thurrock.

### 7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

N/A.

#### **Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston  
Associate Adviser for Religious Education



## APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- Appendix 1: Proposed timeline – this may need to be adapted since the inquorate meeting last term will cause some delay.

### New Agreed Syllabus: Draft timeline for discussion

<b>Summer Term 2013</b>	<b>Initial discussions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deborah Weston and Ruth Brock agree an outline budget for the review of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus</li> <li>• Estimate a budget of £10,000 over two financial years</li> </ul>
<b>Autumn Term 2013</b>	<b>SACRE meeting Initial review stage</b>  <b>Plan Pupil voice conference – for Autumn 2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SACRE to agree an outline programme of review for the syllabus</li> <li>• SACRE agree membership of small Agreed Syllabus Review Group</li> <li>• draft and execute questionnaire to consult with teachers about their views on the revision</li> <li>• Questionnaire to all schools – via ‘survey monkey’ – RE Today services will develop this.</li> <li>• consult students about Religious Education in Thurrock</li> </ul>
<b>Spring Term 2014</b>	<b>Establishing review group</b>  <b>First meeting of Review Group Initial drafting</b>  <b>Report to SACRE summer term meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a group of 6-8 excellent Thurrock teachers of RE, including teachers from 4-11, 11-16 and SEN settings to join the AS Review Group</li> <li>• Identify dates for meetings, and call first meeting.</li> <li>• Consultants from RE Today propose a timeline,</li> <li>• Draft contents page for the syllabus in detail (this commissions the consultants writing and guides the process, via SACRE and the AS Review Group)</li> <li>• Agreed Syllabus Review Group considers questionnaire responses and other guidance documents to evaluate the possible directions and developments of the syllabus.</li> <li>• Making RE local – development of ways to do this more practically and for wide use, e.g. relating to faith trails in Thurrock, and the wide diversity of the LA area.</li> </ul>
<b>Summer Term 2013</b>	<b>Second meeting of AS Review group</b>  <b>First and second Autumn Term SACRE meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AS Review Group considers report from the National RE Review (to be published in September 2013 alongside final National Curriculum documents. Make recommendations to SACRE</li> <li>• Consultants to draft initial materials – possible contents page, sifting and merging of current requirements, working group commissions consultants to write requirements for KS 1, 2, 3. FS, SEN and 14-19 sections to be drafted and considered by working group</li> <li>• Draft assessment ideas that take account of APP, 8 levels and “I can...” work as new assessment and accountability processes to be finalised by the DfE</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss illustration of the syllabus: photography, pupils work, local religion</li> <li>• Support materials to be considered: how far down the road to creating a more helpful / detailed scheme of work can we get?</li> </ul>
<b>Spring Term 2014</b>	<b>Third meeting of AS Review group</b>  <b>Spring Term SACRE meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil voice conference to take place* (see below)</li> <li>• Agreeing texts for each section of the syllabus</li> <li>• Assessment issues: what support, guidance, instruction is needed?</li> <li>• 4-19 check</li> <li>• Keeping abreast of DfE policy and guidance</li> </ul>
<b>Summer Term 2014</b>	<b>Final meeting of AS review group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check all draft materials and agree final versions</li> <li>• Consider production issues and consider advantages and disadvantages of online versus hard copy –decide on budget allocation</li> <li>• Plan launch and implementation programme</li> </ul>
<b>July / September 2014</b>	<b>Syllabus approvals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SACRE / ASC to approve the syllabus</li> <li>• Senior education staff to approve – e.g. education cabinet member.</li> <li>• Production and printing</li> </ul>
<b>October / November 2014</b>	<b>Syllabus launch and implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan to maximise the impact of the syllabus on quality and standards</li> <li>• Event to launch the syllabus</li> <li>• CPD for primary and secondary colleagues</li> <li>• Guidance for SIPS, Governors, HTs and teachers of RE</li> </ul>

1. Which option for making provision for RE have you chosen for your academy?

	Response Percent	Response Count
<b>1. To adopt the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus for RE</b>	<b>68.4%</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2. To adopt a different Agreed Syllabus for RE (please specify below)</b>	5.3%	1
<b>3. To adopt your own syllabus for RE which meets the same legal requirements for RE as those above.</b>	26.3%	5

2. How many teaching staff at the Academy teach RE for the main part of their timetable?

	Percent	Count
<b>0</b>	<b>40.0%</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1</b>	10.0%	2
<b>2</b>	15.0%	3
<b>3</b>	10.0%	2
<b>4</b>	5.0%	1
<b>5</b>	0.0%	0
<b>6</b>	0.0%	0
<b>7</b>	0.0%	0
<b>8</b>	0.0%	0
<b>9</b>	0.0%	0
<b>10</b>	0.0%	0
<b>More than 10</b>	20.0%	4

3. How many teaching staff at the Academy teach RE in total?

	Response Percent	Response Count
0	0.0%	0
1	0.0%	0
2	0.0%	0
3	5.3%	1
4	10.5%	2
5	5.3%	1
6	5.3%	1
7	15.8%	3
8	5.3%	1
9	5.3%	1
10	5.3%	1
<b>More than 10</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>8</b>



<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 17</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education</b>	
<b>The OFSTED Report: Realising The Potential</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston, RE Consultant	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Mike Peter, (Interim Strategic Lead) School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is public.</b>	

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Report summary - Religious education: realising the potential**

Religious education (RE) should make a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world.

The past 10 years have seen some improvements in RE in schools. More pupils recognise its value and nearly two thirds of them left school with an accredited qualification in the subject in 2012. The range and quality of resources to support teaching in this subject are much better than they were.

However, evidence from the majority of schools visited for this survey shows that the subject’s potential is still not being realised fully. Many pupils leave school with scant subject knowledge and understanding. Moreover, RE teaching often fails to challenge and extend pupils’ ability to explore fundamental questions about human life, religion and belief.

Ofsted’s previous report on RE in 2010, *Transforming religious education*, highlighted key barriers to better RE and made recommendations about how these should be overcome. The current survey found that not enough has been done since 2010.

The structures that underpin the local determination of the RE curriculum have failed to keep pace with changes in the wider educational world. As a result, many local authorities are struggling to fulfil their responsibility to promote high-quality religious education. In addition, other changes to education policy, such as the introduction in

2010 of the English Baccalaureate (the EBacc), have led to a decline in RE provision in some schools.

Part A of this report discusses eight major areas of concern:

- low standards
- weak teaching
- problems in developing a curriculum for RE
- confusion about the purpose of RE
- weak leadership and management
- weaknesses in examination provision at Key Stage 4
- gaps in training
- the impact of recent changes in education policy.

Part B of this report provides examples of effective practice in using enquiry as a basis for improving pupils' learning, high-quality leadership and management in primary and secondary schools, and effective approaches in special schools. Overall, however, such good practice is not sufficiently widespread.

The report is based on evidence drawn from 185 schools visited between September 2009 and July 2012. It also draws on evidence from a telephone survey of a further 30 schools, examination results, other reports published by Ofsted, extended discussions with teachers, members of standing advisory councils on religious education (SACREs) and other RE professionals, and wider surveys carried out by professional associations for RE. The sample of schools did not include voluntary aided schools or academies with a religious designation, for which separate inspection arrangements exist.

### **Key findings**

- Weaknesses in provision for RE meant that too many pupils were leaving school with low levels of subject knowledge and understanding.
- Achievement and teaching in RE in the 90 primary schools visited were less than good in six in 10 schools.
- Achievement and teaching in RE in the 91 secondary schools visited were only good or better in just under half of the schools. The picture was stronger at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form than at Key Stage 3.
- Most of the GCSE teaching seen failed to secure the core aim of the examination specifications: that is, to enable pupils 'to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion'.
- The provision made for GCSE in the majority of the secondary schools surveyed failed to provide enough curriculum time for pupils to extend and deepen their learning sufficiently.
- The teaching of RE in primary schools was not good enough because of weaknesses in teachers' understanding of the subject, a lack of emphasis on

subject knowledge, poor and fragmented curriculum planning, very weak assessment, ineffective monitoring and teachers' limited access to effective training.

- The way in which RE was provided in many of the primary schools visited had the effect of isolating the subject from the rest of the curriculum. It led to low-level learning and missed opportunities to support pupils' learning more widely, for example, in literacy.
- The quality of teaching in the secondary schools visited was rarely outstanding and was less than good in around half of the lessons seen. Common weaknesses included: insufficient focus on subject knowledge; an over-emphasis on a limited range of teaching strategies that focused simply on preparing pupils for assessments or examinations; insufficient opportunity for pupils to reflect and work independently; and over-structured and bureaucratic lesson planning with a limited focus on promoting effective learning.
- Although the proportion of pupils taking GCSE and GCE examinations in RE remains high, in 2011 nearly 250 schools and academies did not enter any pupils for an accredited qualification in GCSE.
- Around half of the secondary schools visited in 2011 and 2012 had changed, or were planning to change, their curriculum provision for RE in response to changes in education policy. The impact of these changes varied but it was rarely being monitored carefully.
- Assessment in RE remained a major weakness in the schools visited. It was inadequate in a fifth of the secondary schools and a third of the primary schools. Many teachers were confused about how to judge how well pupils were doing in RE.
- Access to high-quality RE training for teachers was poor. Training had a positive impact on improving provision in only a third of the schools visited; its impact was poor in a further third. Many of the schools surveyed said that support from their local authority and SACRE had diminished.
- Leadership and management of RE were good or better in half the schools visited; however, weaknesses were widespread in monitoring provision for RE and in planning to tackle the areas identified for improvement.
- The effectiveness of the current statutory arrangements for RE varies considerably. Recent changes in education policy are having a negative impact on the provision for RE in some schools and on the capacity of local authorities and SACREs to carry out their statutory responsibilities to monitor and support it.

**Main report published 6 October 2013**

[www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130068](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130068)

## **1 RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**That SACRE:**

### **1.1 Accept this report at the termly meeting.**

- 1.2 Agree to inform schools that the long report has been published by OfSTED.**
- 1.3 Advise the local authority and schools of the recommendations as follows:**
- (i) Local authorities, in partnership with SACREs and agreed syllabus conferences, should:**
- ensure that sufficient resources are available for SACREs and agreed syllabus conferences to carry out their statutory functions with regard to RE and provide schools with high-quality guidance and support
  - review their expectations about arrangements for RE, particularly at Key Stage 4, to ensure that schools have sufficient flexibility to match their provision more effectively to pupils' needs
  - work in partnership with local schools and academies to build supportive networks to share best practice.
- (ii) All schools should:**
- ensure that learning in RE has a stronger focus on deepening pupils' understanding of the nature, diversity and impact of religion and belief in the contemporary world
  - improve lesson planning so that teaching has a clear and straightforward focus on what pupils need to learn and engages their interest.
- (iii) Primary schools should:**
- raise the status of RE in the curriculum and strengthen the quality of subject leadership by improving the arrangements for developing teachers' subject expertise, sharing good practice, and monitoring the quality of the curriculum and teaching
  - improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum to increase opportunities for pupils to work independently, make links with other subjects and tackle more challenging tasks.
- (iv) Secondary schools should:**
- ensure that the teaching of RE at GCSE level secures good opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on their learning, and extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

- ensure that the overall curriculum provision for RE is challenging and has greater coherence and continuity
- improve their monitoring of RE to ensure that any changes in provision are carefully evaluated in terms of their impact on pupils' progress and attainment.

**1.4 Instruct the adviser to send a discussion document about the report to all subject leaders in Thurrock (see appendix A).**

**2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

This report evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of religious education (RE) in primary and secondary schools and discusses the key issues at the heart of RE teaching today. It is based principally on evidence from visits to primary and secondary schools in England between 2009 and 2012. The sample of schools represented a cross-section, including voluntary controlled schools, but did not include voluntary aided schools, for which there are separate inspection arrangements.

**3 ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

Making schools aware of this report will:

- 3.1 Support council priorities to improve the guidance it provides to schools on Religious Education.
- 3.2 Support the council's policies on community cohesion.

**4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- 4.1 The recommendations are made in order to fulfil the responsibility of a SACRE to support high quality provision for RE.

**5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

**6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 6.1 None.

## 7. IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@btinternet.com**

There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

### 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

This report does not require any decisions to be made. The basis for its recommendations are contained within it.

### 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
Telephone and email: **01375652472**  
**Sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**

SACRE is committed to supporting the Council's policies of social and community cohesion. In responding to this review, members will consider the changing religious and ethnic profile of Thurrock in this respond and respond accordingly.

### 7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental

None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- OfSTED report on Religious Education 2013: Realising the potential

#### **Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education

**The OfSTED report has been described as ‘a gift for RE’.**

**What use have you made of its publication in your school and networks?**

Ten Suggestions:

1. Have you put a copy of the report, with executive summary on top in your Headteacher and line manager’s pigeon hole? Are they aware of the new guidance offered to OfSTED inspectors? <http://tinyurl.com/omxf9ka>
2. Maintained Schools: Have you asked your SACRE about what advice they plan to offer to the local authority as a result of the publication of the report?
3. Academies in a chain or other partnership: Have you asked the management group what advice they plan to offer to the schools in the chain or partnership?
4. Do you have a supportive Head/ Principal who might be prepared to put the report on the Agenda of a local Head’s Consultative Group?
5. Is the report on the Agenda of a NATRE affiliated local group or other meeting of teachers of RE? Can you share ideas about how to improve RE on the basis of the recommendations?
6. If you work with an examination board, have you asked how they plan to respond to the report in the review of their specifications and how you can help?!
7. How will you incorporate the recommendations and main messages of the report into your next subject/departamental/faculty development plan?
8. Put the topic on the agenda for a staff/ departamental/management/governors’/ faculty meeting. Present the findings and discuss the following:
  - a. Primary focused question: To what extent do each of the elements in finding 6 apply to our school?
    - i. The teaching of RE in primary schools was not good enough because of weaknesses in teachers’ understanding of the subject, a lack of emphasis on subject knowledge, poor and fragmented curriculum planning, very weak assessment, ineffective monitoring and teachers’ limited access to effective training.
  - b. Secondary focused question: To what extent do each of the elements in finding 7 apply to our school?
    - i. The quality of teaching in the secondary schools visited was rarely outstanding and was less than good in around half of the lessons seen. Common weaknesses included: insufficient focus on subject knowledge; an over-emphasis on a limited range of teaching strategies that focused simply on preparing pupils for assessments or examinations; insufficient opportunity

for pupils to reflect and work independently; and over-structured and bureaucratic lesson planning with a limited focus on promoting effective learning.

9. Write to your MP to ask why there has been no Department for Education response to the previous (2010) OfSTED report and urge them to take action in response to this 2013 report? Encourage them to make contact with the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE (Stephen Lloyd MP)  
<http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg>
10. Encourage your union to campaign on RE. See e.g. here from ATL  
<http://www.atl.org.uk/policy-and-campaigns/policies/curriculum-re.asp> Draft an article for their magazine that highlights good practice in RE.  
<https://www.facebook.com/NATREupdate>



<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 18</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education</b>	
<b>Secondary Religious Education</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston, RE Consultant	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Mike Peters (Interim Strategic Lead) School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is</b> public.	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents detailed evidence gathered from a range of sources that the children and young people attending the secondary schools in Thurrock may not all be receiving their entitlement to Religious Education and that where provision is being made, some academies are not employing specialists and this is having a negative impact on standards in RE.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**That SACRE:**

- 1.1 Receives this background paper and discusses the different sets of data.**
- 1.2 Writes to the principal/headteacher of each of the academies concerned to:**
  - (i) Ask for further information and explanation about why they are not making provision for all pupils.**
  - (ii) Draw attention to OfSTED’s findings on the impact of over use of non-specialists and to ask for their comments.**
  - (iii) Recommend that where non-specialists are being used to teach RE that those teachers be directed to attend subject specialist training.**

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 One of the key aims of SACREs around the country is to ensure that children and young people in their area are properly educated in Religious Education. Academies must make provision for RE for all their students according to their funding agreements and it is within the legal remit of a SACRE to agenda any matter concerned with RE.

The model funding agreement which forms the basis of almost all non-faith Academies legal contract states the following:

- a) subject to clause 27, the Academy Trust shall ensure that provision shall be made for religious education to be given to all pupils at the Academy` in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph 2(5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, [and having regard to the requirements of the QCDA's national framework for religious education in schools]

- 2.2 The Department of Education have been consulted on the interpretation of this section of the paragraph and they were pleased to inform us that it means that ALL students in ALL year groups must be taught Religious Education. This means that all students must study RE at KS4 also.

## 3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

### 3.1 Level of provision in relation to timetable time:

The provision for RE in some of the Academies in Thurrock appears to be low in relation to the amount of timetable time dedicated to the subject. See data from the last Annual Report in Appendix C. If students are not receiving their legal entitlement to Religious Education, what impact might this have on the degree to which they are able to take their place in a plural society?

According to this data, the academy schools highlighted are not making provision for RE for all pupils as required by their funding agreement.

RE teaching in Thurrock local authority area academies in a typical week in November 2012, hours taught by year group.								
	Year Group							Total
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Hours
Gable Hall School	7	6	3	3	0	0	0	19
Gateway	No data received							
Grays Convent	8	8	8	12.5	12.5	0.0	0	49
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	0	0	2	0	4	6	6	17
Hassenbrook School								
Specialist Technology College	6	0	0	3	3	0	0	11
The Hathaway	No data received							

The Ockendon Academy	13	12	10	13	10	0	0	<b>58</b>
Ormiston Park	<b>No data received</b>							
St Clere's School	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	<b>12</b>
William Edwards School	0	9	9	6	10	0	0	<b>34</b>
Source: School Workforce Census 2012								

### 3.2 Level of provision in relation to specialist staffing

According to the recently published OfSTED report on Religious Education, the over use of non-specialist teachers to teach RE is having a negative impact on standards in the subject.

44% of the hours of RE taught in in Thurrock in the secondary phase are being taught by teachers with no post A level qualification in the subject.

In some cases this will be teachers who have become specialists in RE through experience and further professional development and who teach RE for most of their timetable.

In other cases, these will be teachers who spend most of their timetable teaching another subject and where they have further capacity, they are filled with RE lessons.

<b>Total hours taught in Religious Education, academies,<sup>1</sup> in Thurrock local authority area, by year group and post A level qualification in the subject, November 2013,<sup>2</sup>.</b>								
	<b>Year Group</b>							<b>Total</b>
	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	
Level of qualification								
Degree or Higher	29%	38%	40%	53%	54%	61%	38%	64
B'Ed	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
PGCE, <sup>3</sup>	20%	10%	24%	0%	20%	39%	62%	27
Certificate in Education	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
Other Post A level qualification	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
Non UK qualification	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0
No post A level qualification recorded in Religious Education	44%	49%	37%	47%	27%	0%	0%	58
Unknown <sup>4</sup>	6%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3
<b>Total</b>	32	33	24	24	26	6	6	152

Information available on staffing levels for RE in academies is as follows:

Name of Academy	How many teaching staff teach RE for most of their timetable?	How many teaching staff at the Academy teach RE in total?
Gable Hall	1	4*
The Gateway Academy	1	7
Grays Convent	No data received to date	
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	No data received to date	
Hassenbrook School Specialist Technology College	No data received to date	
Hathaway Academy	4	5
Ockendon Academy	3	7
Ormiston Park	No data received to date	
St Cleres	2	8**
William Edwards	2	4

\* "2 teachers really teach RE. The 2 other teachers share a class with me."

\*\* 1 staff member is an experienced teacher of RE with some specialism whereas the other main teacher is a teacher of CPD who focuses on KS3 RE. GCSE RE is taught by the head of RE and 5 other non-specialist teachers

3.3 According to the data received to date, it would appear that with the exception of the Hathaway, schools in Thurrock are not giving sufficient priority to employing specialist RE teachers. The OfSTED report, "Meeting the potential" 2013, warns schools against the overuse of non-specialists whose main teaching time is in another subject as their evidence suggests that it reduces the effectiveness of RE and leads to lower standards than might otherwise be the case.

#### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

4.1 The recommendations are made in order to fulfil the responsibility of a SACRE to monitor provision for RE.

#### **5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 Not applicable.

#### **6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

6.1 None.

## 7. IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no additional direct financial implications arising out of this report.

### 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

There are no further legal comments to make to this report. The basis on which there is a requirement for academies to teach RE is explained within the report.

### 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
Telephone and email: **01375652472**  
**Sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk**

This report has implications for the Council's approach to Diversity and Equality. If, as the data suggests, a number of local schools are not making provision for Religious Education for all of its students, there is a risk that children and young people leaving school in Thurrock may not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of religion and belief to be fully equipped to take their place in a diverse society.

### 7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental

None.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- OfSTED report on Religious Education 2013: Realising the potential
- A survey of the provision of RE in Thurrock Academy conducted by the associate adviser between September and November 2013 using an online survey tool
- The School Workforce Survey 2013: Published by the Department for Education

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education

<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 19</b>
<b>Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education</b>	
<b>Annual Report 2012-2013</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston: Associate RE Adviser	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Mike Peters (Interim Strategic Lead) School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is</b> Public	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents the Annual Report to members of SACRE for approval

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1.1 That SACRE accept this report as an accurate record of its work in the year 2012-2013.

**2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1 It is a legal requirement that SACRE submit an annual report of its activities to the local authority.

**3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 Members are requested to accept, amend or reject the report.

**4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:** In order that SACRE fulfils its statutory duty to publish an annual report.

**5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 Not applicable

## **6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

### **6.1 SACRE ensures that:**

- 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.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no direct financial implications to this report.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **079071 316599**  
**Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

SACRE is asked to accept, reject or amend the report. S391 of the Education Act 1996 requires SACRE to publish a report as to the exercise of its functions and any action taken by representative groups on the council during the last year. The sections states that “The council’s report shall in particular—

- (a) specify any matters in respect of which the council have given advice to the authority,
- (b) broadly describe the nature of the advice given, and
- (c) where any such matter was not referred to the council by the authority, give the council’s reasons for offering advice on that matter.”



### 7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652486**  
**NWarren@thurrock.gov.uk**

Although there are no direct diversity implications, the Annual Report demonstrates how the work of SACRE continues to promote an understanding of different religion in education therefore promoting cohesion.

### 7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

Not applicable

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

Minutes of SACRE meetings 2012-13

### **APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

**Appendix A - SACRE Annual Report 2012-13**

### **Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education

# Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

(S.A.C.R.E)

**ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13**

## **The Functions of SACRE**

The Education Reform Act 1988 places a duty on every Local Authority to constitute a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

Thurrock SACRE has four main functions:

1. To advise the LA upon matters connected with school worship in community schools and religious education to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus. These matters can be referred by the Authority or may be determined by the Thurrock Council. Matters such as teaching methods, teaching materials and teacher training are mentioned in the Act. SACRE is an advisory council and advice offered carries no statutory force.
2. To receive and determine whether applications from Governors to vary the requirement for worship of a broadly Christian nature, for the whole school or for groups of pupils, are appropriate.
3. To publish an annual report on its work. This should outline advice given by SACRE to the LA
4. To require the LA to set up a statutory conference to review the Agreed Syllabus every five years and if, in the opinion of the SACRE, this becomes necessary, sooner.

## **Officer's Statement**

Thurrock SACRE made two particularly significant decisions at the start of this year. The first of these was to actively engage with schools that had converted to Academy status in the area. Even though there is no legal requirement for Academies to follow the requirements of the local agreed syllabus, it was the view of members that most schools would continue to do so and it seemed that the needs of the local area would be best served, if all efforts to maintain community cohesion through a common syllabus were maintained. A survey of local schools found that 76% of Academies had opted to follow the local Agreed Syllabus. The second decision followed an analysis of local census data and the conclusion that as the religion and belief profile of the council had changed over the ten years since the previous census, that a Buddhist and Humanist representative should be sought for SACRE.

The fourth annual Thurrock SACRE Youth Conference was held in November 2012. The event explored how issues related to identity and belonging could be explored through religious education and was well attended by students from 15 Thurrock primary and secondary schools. The students were treated to a visit from a group of Ambassadors of Religion and Belief from Redbridge and Havering who answered their questions about their own experience of faith and belief. The event was planned again to coincide with the National Interfaith Week.

This event was led by RE Today advisers Lat Blaylock and Deborah Weston supported by members of SACRE including representatives of local communities of religion and belief and teachers. Grants towards the conference were secured from Culham St Gabriel's Trust.

Members were given a greater insight into the work of Thurrock teachers of RE and their students by a presentation from Ms Angela Jellicoe of St Clere's Academy. Members were also invited to visit the school.

An area of concern was raised by a Sikh member who reported that the number of visits to the temple had declined. Teacher representatives agreed with this as a general point since they had found it more difficult to gain permission to arrange visits out of school.

SACRE continued to enjoy a close working relationship with Thurrock Faith Matters (TFM). There are several members who belong to both groups and the officer of TFM made an interesting presentation to SACRE during the year. SACRE was able to use its contacts with local schools to publicise TFM events.

Thurrock took part in the consultation on the National RE Review and a lively debate was held in relation to the nature and aims of Religious Education.

I would like to express my gratitude to each member of SACRE for so generously giving of their time to support the teachers and others involved in the delivery of Religious Education in Thurrock.

**Ruth Brock**

Principal Officer, Pupil Achievement

## Achievement and Standards

### Appendix 1 – analysis of GCSE results 2011-2013

#### 3.1 GCSE Results

As in previous years, there are four schools in the authority where entries for GCSE RE remain very high, almost the whole year group in fact; these are Grays Convent High School, Grays School Media Arts College (now the Hathaway Academy), the Ockendon Academy and St Clere's School.

For the Grays Convent and the Ockendon there is no significant change in entries with almost all being for full course GCSE.

For Grays School Media Arts College entries have shifted almost entirely from short course to full course RE this year.

For St Clere's, where overall entries have risen from 86% in 2012 to 95% in 2013, these are divided more equally between full and short course reversing a trend at that school toward a much larger proportion of full course entries in 2012.

GCSE Entries	2011 % of roll entered Full Course	2012 % of roll entered Full Course	2013 % of roll entered Full Course	2011 % of roll entered Short Course	2012 % of roll entered Short Course	2013 % of roll entered Short Course	2011 % of roll entered GCSE total	2012 % of roll entered GCSE total	2013 % of roll entered GCSE total
Gable Hall School	4%	4%	4%				4%	4%	4%
Grays Convent High School	95%	93%	95%	2%	2%	4%	97%	96%	99%
Grays School Media Arts College			98%	95%	95%	1%	95%	95%	99%
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	13%	14%	30%				13%	14%	30%
Hassenbrook Academy		8%	9%					8%	9%
Ormiston Park Academy			13%		1%			1%	13%
St. Clere's School	43%	81%	40%	45%	6%	54%	89%	86%	95%
The Ockendon Academy	94%	99%	97%				94%	99%	97%
William Edwards School	28%	39%	19%				28%	39%	19%

Results for Grays Convent remain outstanding and those for the Ockendon Academy are improving year on year. At Grays School Media Arts College attainment, while

much lower has improved significantly in the last year with the change to full course RE. The situation at St Clere's is more worrying with a dip in attainment for both courses this year.

Aside from these four schools, there appears to be a far more limited degree of engagement with RE in Thurrock.

At the Harris Academy entries, which are entirely for full course, have doubled this year to 30% of the year group and whilst attainment has slipped a little from that of previous years it is still very good with 85% of pupils attaining A\*-C. Overall this is a positive picture.

At William Edwards school the trend for entries is the opposite of this, they have halved in 2013 over 2012, down to 19% of the year group, however attainment has risen drastically to the points where 100% of pupils entered achieved A\*-C. So a worrying picture for entries but a very positive one for results.

Another minor positive development has been the take up of RE at Ormiston Park which although limited to 13% of the year group is an improvement on zero or practically zero in previous years. Attainment is rather poor though with only 22% of the year group achieving A\*-C.

Finally Hassenbrook and Gable Hall whilst entering only 9% and 4% respectively for RE (full course) are achieving excellent results for those pupils with 93% and 100% in the respective schools attaining A\*-C.

Overall the picture authority wide remains broadly similar to previous years with the same schools engaging a significant proportion of their pupils in RE and a much more limited degree of engagement in the rest of the authority. Whilst there are some changes there is no identifiable broad trend, either positive or negative and it would seem that to encourage the former more direct engagement with and support of individual schools is likely to be needed.

GCSE Results	2011 A*-C Full Course	2012 A*-C Full Course	2013 A*-C Full Course	2011 A*-C Short Course	2012 A*-C Short Course	2013 A*-C Short Course
Gable Hall School	67%	100%	100%		100%	
Grays Convent High School	86%	89%	85%	50%	33%	40%
Grays School Media Arts College			46%	44%	32%	
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	95%	96%	85%			
Hassenbrook Academy		75%	93%			
Ormiston Park Academy			22%		100%	
St. Clere's School	55%	42%	35%	47%	9%	7%
The Ockendon Academy	56%	64%	67%			
William Edwards School	43%	26%	100%			

## The School Workforce

Following a survey monkey questionnaire, SACRE discussed the following table of information about Thurrock Secondary schools and academies and expressed concerns about the allocation of teaching staff to the teaching of RE. OfSTED had expressed concerns about the impact on standards of schools using non-specialists to deliver RE, especially when teachers who spent most of their timetable delivering another subject, were asked to deliver a small number of RE lessons. Members expressed concerns about the ability of such teachers to be able to answer students' questions, about whether their subject knowledge was secure and if they had training in RE-specific pedagogies.

	Syllabus	Number of staff teaching RE for most of their timetable	Number of staff teaching RE total
Gable Hall School *	TAS	1	4
Grays Convent (not Academy)			
Hathaway Academy	TAS	4	5
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	TAS	1	4
Hassenbrook School Spec. Tech. Coll.	Own Syllabus	1	2
Ockendon Academy	TAS	3	7
Ormiston Park Academy			
St Cleres **	Adapted TAS	2	8
William Edwards	Own Syllabus	2	4

**Deborah Weston**

**Associate Adviser for RE – Thurrock**



## **SACRE Advice**

As in previous years, SACRE has provided advice to the Council and to schools. A number of senior leaders requested advice on matters to do with RE and Collective worship, especially in relation to the change to Academy Status. Some of this advice relates to questions about the curriculum, resources for the classroom, schemes of work but also includes questions about contentious issues in the classroom and how to respond to childrens' queries. The number of schools requesting advice and support on Religious Education has continued to increase again this year.

SACRE has provided schools with advice on matters to do with Religious Education and Collective worship by sharing information and published material on subjects such as the publication of the latest OfSTED report on RE: Realising the potential, National Religious Education Review, the All Party Parliamentary Group on the inquiry into the supply and support of teachers of RE in England and the new non-statutory framework on RE. Schools have received regular newsletters and information about opportunities for professional development as well as new RE Guidance from the Department for Education on spiritual, moral and social development and publications related to RE from NATRE (The National Association of Teachers of RE).

## **Collective worship**

No schools applied for a determination to waive the requirement for Acts of Worship to be wholly or mainly of a broader Christian character.

Governors interested in determination should follow the procedures outlined in the SACRE constitution. A copy of the constitution is available on the SACRE website.

## Membership of SACRE

<b>Committee A</b>	
Free Church Christian	Mrs S Lawson
Roman Catholic	Mrs M Shepherd
Jewish	Ms R Juett
Muslim	Ms N Quereshi
Sikh	Mr J Jasset
Hindu	Vacancy
Pentecostal	Dr O Soleye
<b>Committee B</b>	
Church of England	Ms R Privett
	Mrs C Fuller
	Ms M Taylor
<b>Committee C</b>	
Teachers	Mr P Griffiths (until December 2011 – Vacancy thereafter)
	Mr J Misra
	Ms A Jellicoe
<b>Committee D</b>	
Council*	Mr Ojetola
	Mr P Anderson
	Mr M Healy

\* Cllrs Anderson, Ojetola and Healy had been appointed in June 2010 for a term of 4 years.

Thurrock SACRE is supported by:

Mrs D Weston, RE Consultant (Advisor to SACRE)  
 Ms V Freeman, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
 Ms Ruth Brock - Principal Officer, Pupil Achievement

**Thurrock SACRE Youth Conference 2012 –  
The Culver Centre, Thurrock, Essex**

Some evaluations of the conference.

What I will do:  
I'll start thinking about my future

What I will do:  
Well the ambassador told me to ignore people that are rude to me so I will do so. I will go home and write everything I learnt

What was good?  
I think this has made me think about being equal with people from other religions

What was good?  
We liked the art work and working with each other. We liked learning about different religions from the ambassadors. Liked thinking about my identity on post it notes

Do more?  
Questioning at the beginning

Do more?  
Give more time for crafts

I liked ...  
I liked doing the creative poster  
Playing games and meeting people from different religions

I liked?  
We enjoyed everything but our favourite part was construction our sculpture to do with our thoughts and feelings and identity

<b>16 July 2014</b>	<b>ITEM: 20</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education</b>	
<b>Thurrock SACRE – Secondary Religious Education</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston, RE Consultant	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Mike Peters (Interim Strategic Lead) School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
<b>This report is public.</b>	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents detailed evidence gathered from a range of sources that the children and young people attending the secondary schools in Thurrock may not all be receiving their entitlement to Religious Education and that where provision is being made, some academies are not employing specialists and this is having a negative impact on standards in RE.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**That SACRE:**

- 1.1 receives this background paper and discusses the different sets of data**
- 1.2 writes to the principal/headteacher of each of the academies concerned to:**
  - 1.2.1 ask for further information and explanation about why they are not making provision for all pupils**
  - 1.2.2 draw attention to OfSTED’s findings on the impact of over use of non-specialists and to ask for their comments**
  - 1.2.3 recommend that where non-specialists are being used to teach RE that those teachers be directed to attend subject specialist training**

## **2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1** One of the key aims of SACREs around the country is to ensure that children and young people in their area are properly educated in Religious Education. Academies must make provision for RE for all their students according to their funding agreements and it is within the legal remit of a SACRE to agenda any matter concerned with RE.

The model funding agreement which forms the basis of almost all non-faith Academies legal contract states the following:

- a) subject to clause 27, the Academy Trust shall ensure that provision shall be made for religious education to be given to all pupils at the Academy` in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph 2(5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, [and having regard to the requirements of the QCDA's national framework for religious education in schools]
- 2.2** The Department of Education have been consulted on the interpretation of this section of the paragraph and they were pleased to inform us that it means that ALL students in ALL year groups must be taught Religious Education. This means that all students must study RE at KS4 also.

## **3 ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:**

### **3.1 Level of provision in relation to timetable time:**

The provision for RE in some of the Academies in Thurrock appears to be low in relation to the amount of timetable time dedicated to the subject. See data in Appendix C of the last Annual Report. If students are not receiving their legal entitlement to Religious Education, what impact might this have on the degree to which they are able to take their place in a plural society?

According to this data, the academy schools highlighted are not making provision for RE for all pupils as required by their funding agreement.

RE teaching in Thurrock local authority area academies in a typical week in November 2012, hours taught by year group – see Appendix A

### **3.2 Level of provision in relation to specialist staffing**

According to the recently published OfSTED report on Religious Education, the over use of non-specialist teachers to teach RE is having a negative impact on standards in the subject.

44% of the hours of RE taught in in Thurrock in the secondary phase are being taught by teachers with no post A level qualification in the subject.

In some cases this will be teachers who have become specialists in RE through experience and further professional development and who teach RE for most of their timetable.

In other cases, these will be teachers who spend most of their timetable teaching another subject and where they have further capacity, they are filled with RE lessons.

<b>Total hours taught in Religious Education, academies,<sup>1</sup> in Thurrock local authority area, by year group and post A level qualification in the subject, November 2013,<sup>2</sup>.</b>									
	<b>Year Group</b>								<b>Total</b>
	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>		
Level of qualification									
Degree or Higher	29%	38%	40%	53%	54%	61%	38%		64
B'Ed	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		0
PGCE, <sup>3</sup>	20%	10%	24%	0%	20%	39%	62%		27
Certificate in Education	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		0
Other Post A level qualification	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		0
Non UK qualification	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		0
No post A level qualification recorded in Religious Education	44%	49%	37%	47%	27%	0%	0%		58
Unknown <sup>4</sup>	6%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		3
<b>Total</b>	32	33	24	24	26	6	6		152

Information available on hours taught for RE in academies is provided in Appendix A – secondary and Appendix B - primary

According to the data received to date, it would appear that with the exception of the Hathaway, schools in Thurrock are not giving sufficient priority to employing specialist RE teachers. The OfSTED report, “Meeting the potential” 2013, warns schools against the overuse of non-specialists whose main teaching time is in another subject as their evidence suggests that it reduces the effectiveness of RE and leads to lower standards than might otherwise be the case.

#### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

4.1 The recommendations are made in order to fulfil the responsibility of a SACRE to monitor provision for RE

#### **5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 Not applicable.

## 6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

6.1 None.

## 7. IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652466**  
**kgoodacre@thurrock.gov.uk**

There are no direct financial implications to this report.

### 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
Telephone and email: **07971 316599**  
**Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk**

The legal basis for SACRE taking action in relation to academy schools is outlined within the body of the report.

### 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**  
Telephone and email: **01375 652486**  
**NWarren@thurrock.gov.uk**

If, as the data suggests, a number of local schools are not making provision for Religious Education for all of its students, there is a risk that according to the standards applied by the Department of Education, that children and young people leaving school in Thurrock may not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of religion and belief to be fully equipped to take their place in a diverse society.

### 7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental

None.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- OfSTED report on Religious Education 2013: Realising the potential
- A survey of the provision of RE in Thurrock Academy conducted by the associate adviser between September and November 2013 using an online survey tool



- The School Workforce Survey 2013: Published by the Department for Education

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education

Appendix A: Secondary Schools, Teaching and GCSE Result Data 2013

	Syllabus	Number of staff teaching RE for most of their timetable	Number of staff teaching RE total	RE teaching in a typical week in November 2012, hours taught by year group							2013 A*-C Full Course GCSE (% of exam entry)	2013 A*-C Short Course GCSE (% of exam entry)	2013 % of roll entered Full Course	2013 % of roll entered Short Course	
				7	8	9	10	11	12	12					Total
Gable Hall School *	TAS	1	4	7	6	3	3				19	100%		4%	
Grays Convent (not Academy)				8	8	8	12.5	12.5			49	85%	40%	95%	4%
Hathaway Academy	TAS	4	5									46%		98%	1%
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	TAS	1	4			2		4	6	6	18	85%		30%	
Hassenbrook School Spec. Tech. Coll.	Own Syllabus	1	2	6			3	3			12	93%		9%	
Ockendon Academy	TAS	3	7	13	12	10	13	10	0	0	58	67%		97%	
Ormiston Park Academy												22%		13%	
St Cleres **	Adapted TAS	2	8	6	6						12	35%	7%	40%	54%
William Edwards	Own Syllabus	2	4		9	9	6	10			34	100%		19%	

Notes: \* "2 teachers really teach RE. The 2 other teachers share a class with me."

\*\* "I staff member is an experienced teacher of RE with some specialism whereas the other main teacher is a teacher of CPD who focuses on KS3 RE. GCSE RE is taught by the head of RE and 5 other non-specialist teachers!"

## Appendix B: Primary Academies Teaching Data

	Syllabus	Number of staff teaching RE for most of their timetable	Number of staff teaching RE total
Abbots Hall Primary Academy	TAS	0	7
Beacon Hill Academy	Own Syllabus	0	10
Belmont Castle	TAS	more than 10	more than 10
Benyon Primary Academy	TAS	0	9
Dilkes Academy	TAS	more than 10	more than 10
East Tilbury Infant School & East Tilbury Junior School	TAS	0	more than 10
Gateway Academy	Own Syllabus	1	7
Graham James Primary Academy	Own Syllabus	8	8
Gateway primary academy chafford hundred	TAS	0	more than 10
Hassenbrook Academy	Own Syllabus	1	2
Hathaway Academy	TAS	4	5
Herringham Primary Academy	TAS	0	more than 10
Kenningtons Primary Academy	TAS	0	more than 10
Lansdowne	TAS	10	10
Purfleet primary Academy	TAS	0	more than 10
Quarry Hill Academy	TAS	more than 10	more than 10
Shaw Primary Academy	Own Syllabus	0	more than 10
Stanford Le Hope (as part of St Clere's Multi Academy Trust)	TAS and Own Syllabus	0	10
Thameside Primary School	Essex	more than 10	more than 10
West Thurrock Academy	TAS	0	16
Woodside Academy	TAS	more than 10	more than 10

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