

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 **15 October 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; Miss A Ahmed, Muslim Member
Mr A Rashid, Muslim Member; Mr B Gill, Sikh Member
Vacancy, Hindu Member; Dr O Soley, Pentecostal Member
Mr P Anderson, Free Church Representative
- Committee B:** Mr J Graham, Rev J Guest, Mrs M Taylor and Mr D Bates – Church of England
- Committee C:** Ms A Jellicoe, Ms H Gillman, Mr R Epps, Mr P Griffiths and Ms N Fawell – Teachers' Associations
- Committee D:** Councillors: Yash Gupta, Martin Kerin and Tunde Ojetola - Local Authority
- Co-opted:** Vacancy

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

- | | Page |
|---|---------------|
| 1 Apologies for Absence | |
| 2 Minutes | 5 - 10 |
| To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education Meeting held on 16 July 2014. | |
| 3 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.

4	Declaration of Interests	
5	National Religious Education Review	11 - 20
6	Report on the Inquiry into the Supply of and Support of Teachers of RE in England. All Party Parliamentary Group on RE	21 - 26
7	Review of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus 2009	27 - 34
8	Academy Responses to the Local Agreed Syllabus	35 - 42
9	The OFSTED Report - Realising the Potential	43 - 50
10	Secondary Religious Education	51 - 56
11	Thurrock SACRE - Secondary Religious Education	57 - 64

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

Agenda published on: **7 October 2014**

Information for members of the public and councillors

Access to Information and Meetings

Members of the public can attend all meetings of the council and its committees and have the right to see the agenda, which will be published no later than 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published.

Recording of meetings

This meeting may be recorded for transmission and publication on the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be recorded.

Members of the public not wishing any speech or address to be recorded for publication to the Internet should contact Democratic Services to discuss any concerns.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Guidelines on filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities.

If you wish to film or photograph the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment please contact the Communications Team at CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk before the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will then be consulted and their agreement sought to any specific request made.

Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to use social media, make recordings or take photographs these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

Thurrock Council Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is available throughout the Civic Offices. You can access Wi-Fi on your device by simply turning on the Wi-Fi on your laptop, Smartphone or tablet.

- You should connect to TBC-CIVIC
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

The ICT department can offer support for council owned devices only.

Evacuation Procedures

In the case of an emergency, you should evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point at Kings Walk.

How to view this agenda on a tablet device



You can view the agenda on your [iPad](#), [Android Device](#) or [Blackberry Playbook](#) with the free modern.gov app.

Members of the Council should ensure that their device is sufficiently charged, although a limited number of charging points will be available in Members Services.

To view any “exempt” information that may be included on the agenda for this meeting, Councillors should:

- Access the modern.gov app
- Enter your username and password

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

Minutes of the meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education held on 16 July 2014 at 6.00pm

Present:

Committee A: Mr A Rashid, Mr P Anderson

Committee B: Mr J Graham, Rev. J Guest, Mrs M Taylor and Mr D Bates

Committee C: Ms A Jellicoe, Ms H Gillman and Mr R Epps

Committee D: Councillors Gupta, Kerin and Ojetola

Apologies: Mrs S Lawson, Mrs M Shepherd, Miss A Ahmed, Mr P Griffiths and Ms A Winstone

In attendance: Ms D Weston – Associate Adviser for Religious Education
Ms L Lloyd – School Improvement Adviser
Miss K-V Martin – Senior Democratic Services Officer

1. **Appointment of Chair of SACRE**

Nominations were invited for the appointment of Chair for the Committee. It was proposed by Councillor Ojetola and seconded by Mr Epps, that Rev. Guest be appointed as Chair of the Committee.

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

Nominations were invited for the appointment of Vice Chair of Committees A, B, C and D.

The following members were elected as Vice Chairs:

Committee A: Mr Anderson

Committee B: Rev. Guest

Committee C: Mr Epps

Committee D: Councillor Ojetola

The Associate Adviser for Religious Education explained that SACRE was important as it set the syllabus for Thurrock and produced an annual report which Councillors presented to Full Council.

Members of SACRE were also informed that 80% of Academies within the borough had also chosen to follow the SACRE syllabus.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education held on 11 December 2012 and the notes of the inquorate meetings held on 6 March and 1 May; 3 July 2013; 3 December 2013 and 19 March 2014 were approved as a correct record.

4. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business to declare.

5. Declaration of Interests

There were no such interests declared

6. Discussion of Membership

The Adviser for Religious Education confirmed to the Committee of the current membership and any outstanding vacancies. It was agreed that Mr Anderson would join Committee A as an additional Free Church Representative.

It was further agreed through discussions that the Chair of the Committee, Ms Jellicoe, Mr Epps and Mr Anderson would seek to confirm Jewish, Hindu, Community School and Buddhist representatives.

The Chair of the Committee enquired as to the timing of the meeting, whether it was convenient with all members. Members confirmed that with working and personal commitments the current timing of the meeting worked well.

7. Thurrock SACRE – Annual Report 2011-2012

The Adviser for Religious Education introduced the report which presented a summary of the work of SACRE over the academic year for 2011/2012.

Members were advised that it was a legal requirement that SACRE submit an annual report of its activities to the local authority.

RESOLVED:

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

8. The Changing Profile of Religion and Belief in Thurrock

It was explained to the Committee that this item was for information and related to the following items. The Adviser for Religious Education explained that the changes within the profile of religion and belief were not always

noticed. Examples given from the report were that over the last 10 years the number of Christians within Thurrock had slightly dropped, whereas the number of Muslims had doubled.

Members queried as to the breakdown of the denomination within Christian religion within Thurrock, the Adviser for Religious Education confirmed to Members of SACRE that she could get the figures for the Committee.

The Committee briefly discussed the growth and cultural influence within local schools of black led churches, it was raised that following discussions at a previous Full Council meeting the preferred term used was Pentecostal Churches. The Chair of the Committee informed the Committee that the phrase 'Pentecostal' was inaccurate and suggested that the Committee perhaps discuss the matter at the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That SACRE should consider the membership of committee A and decide whether or not it appropriately reflects the principal religious traditions in the area.**
- 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.**
- 3. That a further update report be brought the December meeting of the Committee.**

9. GCSE Results 2012

It was explained that the report was of the results from GCSEs taken in 2012. Members were informed that ofsted had upgraded the framework to which Religious Education was taught to.

RESOLVED:

- 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.**
- 2. If there appears to be no appropriate provision, then SACRE should consider informing the Education Funding Agency of its findings.**

10. Provisional GCSE Results 2013

The Committee were advised that SACRE had a statutory duty to monitor provision for Religious Education (RE) in accordance with its agreed syllabus.

Members were notified that figures were low for RE within schools, this was due to schools not making the correct provision for RE. It was noted that 90% of entry was 15/16 year olds. It was also discussed and agreed that members would look into visiting local schools.

RESOLVED:

- 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.**
- 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.**

11. Review of Membership and Terms of Reference of SACRE

It was explained to the Committee that at a previous meeting the changes in demographics across the borough was discussed and it was decided which religious groups should be represented on the Committee.

Members were advised that 2.8.2 of the report outlined the guidelines when determining the composition of Committee A. Part of these guidelines were that the group should meet to worship within the community.

RESOLVED:

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

12. Annual Report 2012-2013

Members discussed the report which presented a summary of the work of SACRE over the last academic year.

It was suggested that the first paragraph of the Officers Statement within the appendix to the report be amended to read as follows:

“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 representative should be sought for SACRE.”

The Committee agreed that Councillor Ojetola would present the report to Full Council subject to the amendments made by Mr Anderson.

RESOLVED:

That SACRE accept this report as an accurate record of its work in the year 2012-2013 subject to the amendment within the appendix.

The Chair of Committee suggested that the Committee meet again on Wednesday 15th October 2014, to finalise the agenda as many members had to leave early.

Members agreed this date subject to confirmation from the clerk.

RESOLVED:

That the clerk to SACRE checks the proposed date and contact the Chair and the Committee to confirm.

The meeting finished at 7.35pm.

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

This page is intentionally left blank

15 October 2014	ITEM: 5
Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	
National Religious Education Review	
Report of: Deborah Weston: Associate RE Adviser	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Accountable Head of Service: Vivien Cutler –Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
This report is 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*

This page is intentionally left blank

15 October 2014	ITEM: 6
Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	
Report on the Inquiry into the Supply of and Support of Teachers of RE in England	
All Party Parliamentary Group on RE	
Report of: Deborah Weston: Associate RE Adviser	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Accountable Head of Service: Vivien Cutler –Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
This report is 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

This page is intentionally left blank

15 October 2014	ITEM: 7
Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	
Review of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus 2009	
Report of: Deborah Weston: Associate RE Adviser	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Accountable Head of Service: Vivien Cutler –Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
This report is 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>Summer Term 2013</p>	<p>Initial discussions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deborah Weston and Ruth Brock agree an outline budget for the review of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus • Estimate a budget of £10,000 over two financial years
<p>Autumn Term 2013</p>	<p>SACRE meeting Initial review stage</p> <p>Plan Pupil voice conference – for Autumn 2014</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SACRE to agree an outline programme of review for the syllabus • SACRE agree membership of small Agreed Syllabus Review Group • draft and execute questionnaire to consult with teachers about their views on the revision • Questionnaire to all schools – via ‘survey monkey’ – RE Today services will develop this. • consult students about Religious Education in Thurrock
<p>Spring Term 2014</p>	<p>Establishing review group</p> <p>First meeting of Review Group Initial drafting</p> <p>Report to SACRE summer term meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Identify dates for meetings, and call first meeting. • Consultants from RE Today propose a timeline, • Draft contents page for the syllabus in detail (this commissions the consultants writing and guides the process, via SACRE and the AS Review Group) • Agreed Syllabus Review Group considers questionnaire responses and other guidance documents to evaluate the possible directions and developments of the syllabus. • 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.
<p>Summer Term 2013</p>	<p>Second meeting of AS Review group</p> <p>First and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Consultants to draft initial materials – possible

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

15 October 2014	ITEM: 8
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education	
Academy Responses To The Local Agreed Syllabus	
Report of: Deborah Weston, RE Consultant	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key
Accountable Head of Service: Mike Peters, (Interim Strategic Lead) School Improvement, Learning & Skill	
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
This report is 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

Summer Term 2013	Initial discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deborah Weston and Ruth Brock agree an outline budget for the review of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus • Estimate a budget of £10,000 over two financial years
Autumn Term 2013	SACRE meeting Initial review stage Plan Pupil voice conference – for Autumn 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SACRE to agree an outline programme of review for the syllabus • SACRE agree membership of small Agreed Syllabus Review Group • draft and execute questionnaire to consult with teachers about their views on the revision • Questionnaire to all schools – via ‘survey monkey’ – RE Today services will develop this. • consult students about Religious Education in Thurrock
Spring Term 2014	Establishing review group First meeting of Review Group Initial drafting Report to SACRE summer term meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Identify dates for meetings, and call first meeting. • Consultants from RE Today propose a timeline, • Draft contents page for the syllabus in detail (this commissions the consultants writing and guides the process, via SACRE and the AS Review Group) • Agreed Syllabus Review Group considers questionnaire responses and other guidance documents to evaluate the possible directions and developments of the syllabus. • 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.
Summer Term 2013	Second meeting of AS Review group First and second Autumn Term SACRE meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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 • 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

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

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

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

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

	Percent	Count
0	40.0%	8
1	10.0%	2
2	15.0%	3
3	10.0%	2
4	5.0%	1
5	0.0%	0
6	0.0%	0
7	0.0%	0
8	0.0%	0
9	0.0%	0
10	0.0%	0
More than 10	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
More than 10	42.1%	8

15 October 2014	ITEM: 9
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education	
The OFSTED Report: Realising The Potential	
Report of: Deborah Weston, RE Consultant	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key
Accountable Head of Service: Mike Peter, (Interim Strategic Lead) School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
This report is public.	

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

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>

15 October 2014	ITEM: 10
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education	
Secondary Religious Education	
Report of: Deborah Weston, RE Consultant	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key
Accountable Head of Service: Mike Peters (Interim Strategic Lead) School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
This report is 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	58
Ormiston Park	No data received							
St Clere's School	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	12
William Edwards School	0	9	9	6	10	0	0	34
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.

Total hours taught in Religious Education, academies,¹ in Thurrock local authority area, by year group and post A level qualification in the subject, November 2013,².									
	Year Group								Total
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
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, ³	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 ⁴	6%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		3
Total	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

15 October 2014	ITEM: 11
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education	
Thurrock SACRE – Secondary Religious Education	
Report of: Deborah Weston, RE Consultant	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key
Accountable Head of Service: Mike Peters (Interim Strategic Lead) School Improvement, Learning & Skills	
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services	
This report is 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:**
 - 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.

Total hours taught in Religious Education, academies,¹ in Thurrock local authority area, by year group and post A level qualification in the subject, November 2013,².									
	Year Group							Total	
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
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, ³	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 ⁴	6%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3	
Total	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

This page is intentionally left blank