

16 July 2014	ITEM: 19
Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	
Annual Report 2012-2013	
Report of: Deborah Weston: Associate RE Adviser	
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 the Annual Report to members of SACRE for approval

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

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

3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

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

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

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

- 5.1** Not applicable

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

6.1 SACRE ensures that:

- the Local Authority reviews its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education on a regular basis;
- publishes an Annual Report of its work;
- offers guidance on resources and methods of teaching and in consultation with Thurrock Schools;
- monitors the quality of provision for RE and Collective Acts of Worship in Thurrock.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

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

There are no direct financial implications to this report.

7.2 Legal

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

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

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

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

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

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

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

Not applicable

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

Minutes of SACRE meetings 2012-13

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

Appendix A - SACRE Annual Report 2012-13

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for Religious Education

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

(S.A.C.R.E)

ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13

The Functions of SACRE

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

Thurrock SACRE has four main functions:

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

Officer's Statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ruth Brock

Principal Officer, Pupil Achievement

Achievement and Standards

Appendix 1 – analysis of GCSE results 2011-2013

3.1 GCSE Results

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The School Workforce

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

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

Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for RE – Thurrock

SACRE Advice

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

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

Collective worship

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

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

Membership of SACRE

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

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

Thurrock SACRE is supported by:

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

Thurrock SACRE Youth Conference 2012 -

The Culver Centre, Thurrock, Essex

Some evaluations of the conference.

What I will do:

I'll start thinking about my future

What I will do:

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

What was good?

I think this has made me think about being equal with people from other religions

What was good?

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

Do more?

Questioning at the beginning

Do more?

Give more time for crafts

I liked ...

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

I liked?

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