

<b>15 January 2015</b>		<b>ITEM: 6</b>
<b>Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education</b>		
<b>Thurrock SACRE – Who delivers RE in Thurrock Primary Schools?</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-Key	
<b>Report of:</b> Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education		
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Ruth Brock, School Improvement Manager		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children’s Services		
<b>This report is Public</b>		

## **Executive Summary**

This report was commissioned at the summer term meeting on SACRE in response to concerns raised by a report from the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE with the support of the RE Council of England and Wales that suggested that RE in primary schools was increasingly being delivered by adults other than teachers.

At the time of writing, almost 30% of primary schools in Thurrock had responded to a request for information about provision for RE and of those, no school reported that their entire RE provision was being delivered by adults other than teachers but almost 50% of those that responded did report that some lessons of RE were delivered by teaching assistants.

### **1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:**

**1.1 That SACRE continue to encourage schools to respond to this request for information about provision for RE until at least 50% of primary schools have responded.**

### **2. Introduction and Background**

**2.1** Thurrock SACRE discussed the report, “RE: The Truth Unmasked” during its meetings in 2014 and launched an enquiry into the delivery of RE in Thurrock Primary schools in an attempt to discover whether or not the issues identified in this report were also the case in Thurrock. According to the report, almost one in four primary pupils were taught RE by teaching assistants.

## Who Teaches RE in Thurrock Primary Schools? - December 2014

(Numbers in brackets are the number of lessons where supplied)

	Teachers	General Teaching Assistants	PPA Cover Teachers	Higher Level Teaching Assistants
<b>1. Abbots Hall Primary</b>				
<b>2. Arthur Bugler</b>				
<b>3. Aveley Primary</b>				
4. Benyon	✓	✓ (during PPA cover or in the teacher's absence)		
5. Bonnygate	✓		✓	
6. Bulphan C of E	✓			
<b>7. Chadwell St Mary</b>				
<b>8. Chafford Hundred</b>				
9. Corringham	✓			
<b>10. Deneholm</b>				
11. Dilkes Academy	✓			
<b>12. East Tilbury</b>				
<b>13. Gateway</b>				
<b>14. Giffauds</b>				
<b>15. Graham James</b>				
16. Herringham Primary	✓ (10)			✓ (4)
<b>17. Holy Cross</b>				
<b>18. Horndon on the Hill</b>				
<b>19. Kenningtons</b>				
<b>20. Landsdowne</b>				
<b>21. Little Thurrock</b>				
<b>22. Manor</b>				
<b>23. Orsett</b>				
<b>24. Purfleet</b>				
<b>25. Quarry Hill</b>				
26. Shaw Primary	✓ (presumably – not clearly indicated in email)			✓
<b>27. Somers Heath</b>				
28. St Joseph's Catholic	✓			

Primary				
<b>29. St Mary's</b>				
<b>30. St Thomas'</b>				
<b>31. Stanford le Hope</b>				
32. Stifford Clays	✓ (21)			✓ (4)
<b>33. Thameside</b>				
34. Tudor Court	✓			
<b>35. Warren</b>				
36. West Thurrock Academy	✓			
<b>37. Woodside</b>				

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 It is difficult to draw conclusions when only 30% of the data has been returned but early indications are positive. SACRE might opt to continue to encourage schools to respond to the request for information or decide to act on this sample of data.
- 3.2 The risk of writing to schools with incomplete data is that the conclusions might lack credibility in the minds of those who we wish to influence. However, the challenge of increasing the response-rate must not be under-estimated due to demands on the time of Headteachers

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 A more complete set of data would put SACRE in a better position to draw conclusions, make decisions and recommendations to the council and to schools.

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

- 5.1 Not applicable

### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 Not applicable

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
**Finance Manager**

There are no financial implications contained within the report.

### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
**Education Lawyer**

This report simply recommends that actions agreed previously be continued. There are no further legal implications.

### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**  
**Community Development Officer**

The implications of this report are that there may be a risk that some pupils in Thurrock are being taught RE by those who have had no training in the teaching of the subject potentially leading to inequality of opportunity in terms of access to accurate knowledge and understanding. Until a fuller set of data is available however, it is premature to draw conclusions.

### **7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)**

Not applicable

## **8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- None

## **9. Appendices to the report**

- None

### **Report Author:**

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Associate Adviser for Religious Education