

14 October 2015		ITEM: 5
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education		
A New settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Deborah Weston: Associate Adviser for Religious Education		
Accountable Head of Service: Roger Edwardson - Strategic Leader, School Improvement, Children, Education & Families		
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton - Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This pamphlet was launched in the House of Lords in July 2015 by Professor Linda Woodhead and Charles Clarke of Lancaster University. It considers the question of whether the current legal requirements for RE are fit for purpose in 2015.

1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:

That SACRE discuss the recommendations of the report in relation to the Thurrock context.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The pamphlet arises from the research and debate carried out by the Westminster Faith Debates and the Religion and Society Research programme which gave rise to them.
 - 2.2 This report was presented to SACRE at their 15 July 2015 meeting; it was decided to bring the report back to SACRE for further consideration.
 - 2.3 The pamphlet was previously circulated to all Members.
- ### **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 Head teachers.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 In order to carry out its statutory duties, SACRE needs to be informed of current research in relation to Religious Education and schools and to consider its implications for Thurrock 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 within this report.

7.2 Legal

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

This report requests consideration of recommendations. No decision is required. There are no legal comments.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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

Several recommendations in this report relate to questions of equality, especially whether or not people with non-religious belief are treated equally in relation to religious education in schools and in the structures that support it such as SACRE.

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**

- Appendix 1 NASACRE Briefing - A New settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools

Report Author:

Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for RE