

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
Date:	7 November 2023
Title:	Key National and Local RE Matters
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Justine Ball, County Subject Inspector

Tel: 02392 441442

Email: justine.ball@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to enable SACRE to consider key RE developments, nationally and locally not mentioned elsewhere in this agenda.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education notes the report.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to update and inform SACRE of key national development, for example the work of the Religious Education Council (REC) and NASACRE as well as the Association of University Lecturers in Religious Education (AULRE) and initiatives being led by the Culham St Gabriel's Trust.

Contextual information

4. **Culham St Gabriel's Trust initiatives** - These include:
Providing a range of virtual RE courses that are free to all on different aspects of RE. These are especially useful to new teachers, those teaching with no background in RE and those simply wishing to know more about the current world of RE. They include new 'Primary Beginning Teacher' courses. These can be found here:
[E Learning - Culham St Gabriel's \(cstg.org.uk\)](https://www.cstg.org.uk)
CTeach course – providing the opportunity for RE teachers to study a module on general educational research from the Chartered College of Teaching and apply it to their own RE teaching. The closing date for this is the end of November 2023 and the course is funded by Culham St Gabriels Trust:
[CTeach Scholarship Programme - Culham St Gabriel's \(cstg.org.uk\)](https://www.cstg.org.uk)

5. RE Hubs – This project was introduced to the SACRE last year. The South East section includes a range of speakers and places of worship, including a link to the Portsmouth Directory of Places of Worship. The range of resources on the website continues to expand, which will be of real interest and use to the SACRE and to Hampshire teachers, including information on further places of worship, speakers and training and CPD that are available for all. As noted in the previous National and Local Matters report, there is a need for more RE Hub accredited speakers in our area and speakers are accredited after completing the initial training. They can then advertise on the website. Further information can be found here: [Explore RE in your Region \(re-hubs.org.uk\)](https://re-hubs.org.uk)
6. National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) - NASACRE is the national body representing and leading on SACREs interests. A regular newsletter is circulated to SACRE members through their SACRE. In addition, a series of training sessions are offered for SACRE members to attend. The training program for 2023-4 is available on the NASACRE website here: [Virtual-training-programme-23-24.pdf \(nasacre.org.uk\)](https://nasacre.org.uk/virtual-training-programme-23-24.pdf)
7. An open letter was sent to the Education Secretary Gillian Keegan in September and published in the Telegraph. This was signed by a group of cross-party peers and MP's. Of particular note is the claim that RE provision is “a postcode lottery”, in which some children are receiving a comprehensive and well-taught education, while others receive “either tokenist RE or none at all” with 51% of children being taught by teachers without a specialism in RE. It also highlights that only 44% of the recruitment target for RE teachers will be met. The letter calls for teacher training bursaries for RE and a request for the government to set out what it is doing to improve RE teacher recruitment. [Pupils receive a tokenistic religious education, cross-party MPs and peers tell Gillian Keegan \(telegraph.co.uk\)](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2023/09/08/pupils-receive-tokenistic-religious-education-cross-party-mps-peers-tell-gillian-keegan/)
8. NATRE, represented by Deborah Weston, also represented RE at an Education Select Committee hearing on recruitment and retention on 12th September where RE was formally described as a shortage subject by the committee. The transcript can be found here: [12 September 2023 - Teacher recruitment, training and retention - Oral evidence - Committees - UK Parliament](https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/all-panels/e/education-select-committee/2023-24/12-september-2023-teacher-recruitment-training-and-retention-oral-evidence-committees-uk-parliament/)
9. The Jewish Museum has produced a range of clips and resources for teaching inclusive Judaism. It aims to promote an authentic representation of Judaism in the classroom and make sure that the Jewish community is presented as a diverse living tradition. [Inclusive Judaism - The Jewish Museum London](https://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk/inclusive-judaism)
10. There is a new Humanist film aimed at KS2 which looks at the scientific origins of life which will be very useful for teachers when teaching and debating with children about different beliefs about how the world came to be. The film can be found here: [Where do we come from? » Understanding Humanism](https://www.humanism.org.uk/where-do-we-come-from-understanding-humanism/)

11. On Friday 29 September, the RE Council of England and Wales published their non statutory proposal for a National Content Standard for RE, drawing on their project about Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom. It aim is to suggest a benchmark for high quality RE that syllabus writers can refer to in future when reviewing their syllabus, but it is important to remember that this is a suggestion to help with planning and writing high quality RE syllabi rather than a compulsory requirement. The document can be found here:
[National Content Standard for RE Released – REC \(religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk\)](https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk)

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes				
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes				
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes				
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes				
<p>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</p> <p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Document</u></th> <th><u>Location</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>None</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>	None	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>				
None					

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Living Difference IV, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education has an interest in equalities at its heart. A high-quality religious education taught according to Living Difference IV seeks to contribute to the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation especially and directly with regard to the protected characteristics of race and religion. Further, through experiencing a high-quality religious education taught according to Living Difference IV there is the intention to mitigate xenophobia of all kinds thus fostering good relations.