

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Committee:	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
Date:	27 February 2024
Title:	Monitoring Group
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update SACRE on the activities and considerations of the SACRE Monitoring Group.

Recommendation(s)

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

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to inform SACRE of the matters discussed at the SACRE Monitoring Group meeting that took place on 23 January 2024.

Contextual information

4. SACRE has a statutory responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus. This group meets about 6 weeks before each full SACRE meeting in order to support SACRE in fulfilling this responsibility.
5. Those present were:
Chris Hughes (chair)
Justine Ball
Chris May (SACRE Support Officers)
Jeff Williams
Chris Robinson

Apologies:

Cllr Elaine Still
Rhiannon Love
Alasdair Richardson
Noel Thorpe Tracey

Matters discussed:

6. Professional Education Opportunities:

The advisors reported that the following CPD events had run since the last meeting:

- Four primary RE networks in Eastleigh, Fareham, Aldershot and Teams
 - One secondary RE network meeting on Teams
 - SMSC Governing Body training
 - The normal offer of courses including *How to manage RE for new RE leaders*, *Assessment in RE*, *RE and Ofsted*
 - The Cross Phase RE conference with nearly a 100 delegates in attendance
 - A large New Forest Curriculum leaders conference with 15 leaders in the RE workshop
 - A briefing on RE to special school heads
 - An RE leaders visit to the Vedic Temple
 - Training with the primary PGCE students at Winchester University
7. There was discussion around training on Philosophy for Children and it was noted that the Diocese was running training that was available also to LA schools. This is now on the RE Moodle for schools to book onto.
8. There was further discussion about providing further governor training on RE in the year ahead for governors to be updated about RE and the work of the SACRE. The advisors will contact Governor Services to investigate this.

SACRE Monitoring Visits:

9. The advisers reported that two primary visits had been undertaken last term and two visits were planned for the Spring term. The schools were following the syllabus well and using concepts and the cycle of enquiry clearly in their RE. Two secondary visits were taking place this half term, including a visit to a special school, and two further visits by the end of March 2024.

Reports from Primary and Secondary Ofsted Visits

10. The Ofsted Report on RE is due this half term and further information will be provided on this to SACRE when it is released. The advisors spoke about 9 Hampshire Ofsted reports which reported favourably on RE in the school visited. These were discussed and found generally very positive, with only one school being asked to consider further the key content they wished children to learn in RE.
11. The advisors further reported that there had been positive comments in one secondary school report, and a number of further positive comments from inspections into special schools. In total, four school reports mentioned faith and belief as part of a positive comment out of the nine reports across this period. There were no negative comments relating to RE provision.

Information gathered from other inspector/Adviser visits

12. 10 schools had requested visits from the Advisers during the period covered by this report. All of these would have been funded through the schools Management Partnership arrangements with HIAS. The visits were focused on curriculum support and review of RE, especially where the subject is led by non specialists.

Update on teacher vacancies and ITE provision

13. It was mentioned that the situation nationally remains very worrying with low numbers enrolling on ITE training. This is still an area of real concern to the group.

Preliminary GCSE Results and Information

14. The key overall figures again remain in line with national results, and while there has been a drop in outcomes from the previous year, this is in line with the national trend. At the 7+ band, there has been a 7% drop which brings results into line with 2019 outcomes, and again represents a national trend, although this has taken Hampshire results from slightly above national outcomes to slightly below this year.
15. The generally positive headline figures reveal some concerns. The first is a 19% drop in entries compared to 2019. Possible explanations for this were discussed by the group, including EBacc entries, specialist teachers and recruitment.
16. The data analysis also raises a concern with the outcomes of SEND students, where there is an attainment gap which has widened on last year.
17. It was agreed SACRE would send letters to those schools performing particularly well in different areas and the Secondary RE Advisor will work with the Chair of SACRE to produce these.

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

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

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.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

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.

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.