

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee/Panel:	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)
Date:	3 November 2020
Title:	Monitoring Group Report
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to report back and seek approval from SACRE regarding the recent activities of the SACRE Monitoring Group including the meetings that took place virtually on 5 May 2020 and 22 September 2020.

Recommendation(s)

2. That SACRE thanks the Monitoring Group for their report.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to inform SACRE of significant matters discussed in the recent Monitoring Group meetings and highlight key issues regarding religious education in Hampshire.

Contextual information

Attendees at the meeting on 5 May: Chris Hughes (Chair), Cllr Roy Perry, Cllr Anna McNair-Scott, Elizabeth Jenkerson, Jeff Williams, Rhiannon Love, Alasdair Richardson, Justine Ball and Patricia Hannam

4. Attendees at the meeting on 22 September : Chris Hughes (Chair), Cllr Roy Perry, Cllr Anna McNair-Scott, Elizabeth Jenkerson, Rob Sanders, Alasdair Richardson, Justine Ball, Patricia Hannam
5. In order to monitor the effectiveness of Living Difference III, during the last two meetings SACRE Monitoring Group discussed the following issues:
6. **Hampshire 2020 RS GCSE results.** In May arrangements for the summer examination series were discussed, including the requirement for teachers to submit teacher assessments. In the September the outcome of grades awarded for GCSE was discussed at length, following acceptance of teacher assessment data.
7. This would have been the third year of the current RS GCSE specification, which has the grading system: 9-1 - where 9 represented the highest grade. Grades were awarded according to a normal distribution curve rather than criteria referenced as was the original vision for the GCSE. In 2018 the percent of 7-9 grades nationally, in terms of numbers, were intended to be awarded in similar proportion to the old A* and A grades and 4-9 more or less similar in proportion as formerly A*-C.
8. In light of no local school by school subject level data being made available, the monitoring group discussed national subject level data which indicated that entry numbers for RS GCSE had remained fairly stable in 2020. Grades awarded at 4+ had increased from 72.6% in 2019 to 80.5% in 2020. Observing the 2009 – 2020 data, it seemed as though the decline in entries for RS observed in recent years had now stabilised.
9. In line with current DfE guidance, HIAS is not collecting subject level data. However, the monitoring group is collecting overall data from schools, in particular looking at the results for disadvantaged children, who, on a national level, appear to have done better than in previous years. Patricia Hannam added that this year there seemed to be a smooth transition of students from GCSE to A level.
10. **Professional development and research opportunities**
A SACRE-funded *hard to reach* secondary course successfully took place before face-to-face training was no longer possible.
11. Primary and Secondary RE network meetings attracted good attendance with higher numbers of teachers attending once these events went online. However, secondary RE network meetings have been slower to recruit. The possibility of working virtually is opening some new opportunities; for example, for subject knowledge booster 'webinars'.

12. Review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus: Living Difference III

A 'virtual' meeting was held in July 2020 with around 25 SACRE members from all four authorities who use Living Difference III locally. Having determined which elements of the syllabus are needing reconsideration, between now and Christmas SACRE advisers are engaging in many discussions regarding any redevelopments with religious scholars as well as teachers and other educational experts in the relevant field.

The writing phase will run between January and March 2021.

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

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:

SACRE's core business is to ensure high quality religious education in Hampshire which, it is intended, will make a positive difference to the way young people 'think speak and act in the world' (See purpose statement of Living Difference III 2016, the agreed syllabus for religious education in Hampshire).