

Title of meeting: Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

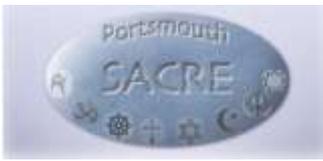
Date of meeting: Wednesday June 26 2019

Subject: COMMISSION ON RE (CoRE) and RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL (REC)

Report by: Patricia Hannam, Professional Adviser

1. **Purpose of report:** The purpose of this report is to inform SACRE of activities of this SACRE in relation to the Commission on RE Report, including a meeting of SACRE members to discuss this. In addition, it gives an update of the activities of the Religious education Council in relation to the Commission on RE report.
2. **Recommendations:** That SACRE receive the report and consider a mechanism for co-opting a Governor and ITE representative to SACRE.
3. **Background:** The Commission on RE final report was published in September 2018. A small group of SACRE members met with SACRE Professional Adviser on 13th June to discuss the CoRE Report including Chris Thomas (Group A), Sam Duddles (Group B), Ruth Guyer (group A), Maria Cole (Group D).
4. **Consideration of CoRE Report Recommendations.**

Regarding the name change to 'Religion and Worldview' There was a shared concern that 'worldviews' could in a constrained curriculum lead to a diminishing of the opportunity to explore what it means to live a life with a religious perspective. It was agreed there was the need for academic rigor. Perhaps worldviews would be better placed in the PSHCE curriculum. The group shared a concern about the loss of Christianity at the center of RE as is at present and

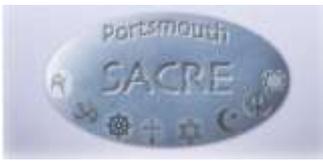


whether RE's current 'Wholly Christian' nature should be retained. A concern that this expansion of the subject would lead to a resource and teacher training concern. Teachers will need to be very well trained to take in other worldviews. Regarding the National Entitlement, it was agreed in principle this could be helpful. If it can be shown it would improve the quality of teaching and help to raise the profile of RE. Regarding the recommendation that Ofsted should inspect RE, this was uncontentious. The group felt that there would be no advantage to changing the composition of SACREs to the proposed new LANR&Es. Further it was regarded as likely to be a significant loss if the close relationship with the Local Authority was amended. The group felt it was grateful to the support and commitment to SACRE shown by Portsmouth LA.

A discussion took place also regarding the relationship between the academisation of schools and religious education as well as the impact of the EBacc on the reduction of RS GCSE entries across the authority.

It was suggested that Portsmouth SACRE Consider inviting/co-opting a representative from a governing body and a local ITE provider and that a mechanism for doing that be found.

- 5. The Religious Education Council (REC) of England and Wales**, is a large body consisting of members of many organisations which have an interested position in relation to RE. This includes many faith bodies as well as national bodies such as the Association of RE Inspectors Advisers and Consultants. (AREIAC). SACRE professional Adviser sits on the REC as AREIAC representative.

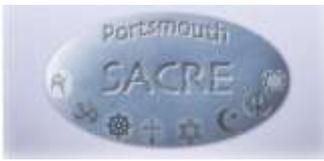


The REC meets twice a year in London in various places of worship. The May 2018 meeting was held in Southwark Catholic Cathedral education centre.

6. Key matters presented and discussed in the May RE Council Meeting.

The REC Board is a body consisting of those elected from the whole REC membership. A small sub-group has been advising the REC Board on a way forward for the CoRE report findings, in light of the limited response received from the DfE. The REC board is proceeding to consider ways to take forward the CoRE report recommendations by grouping them into three broad groups.

- (i) Aspects of the report that can be put into place right away, acknowledging that some recommendations have already been met. For example, reinstating the bursary for RE PGCE and funding Subject Knowledge Enhancement courses for people wanting to train as RE teachers from other undergraduate disciplines.
- (ii) Aspects of the report that are not so contentious and could be implemented soon with some specific action. For example, encouraging government to consider bringing together a body to discuss the continuance of the 'right to withdraw' from RE which does not exist for any other subject. In addition, discussion can begin now on what the precise and desirable content of a National Entitlement would be - were it to exist.
- (iii) Aspects of the CoRE report that need further consideration. For example, the legal position of SACREs, and position and management of a



National Entitlement; and in general aspects of the CoRE report that would need legislative change.

The Chair of REC has been working to continue to keep RE in the national eye. The CEO continue to give a clear voice to matters relating to religious education in our schools in many national forums.

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: