



Title of meeting: Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Date of meeting: 2 November 2022

Subject: SACRE Monitoring Group Report

Report by: Justine Ball, SACRE Advisor

- 1. Purpose of report:** The purpose of this report is to inform SACRE of the findings and discussions that took place during the meeting of the SACRE monitoring sub-group on 19 October 2022.

The group received updates on professional RE education and monitoring the effectiveness of RE and the latest overview of results from the GCSE examination series in 2022. An update on implementation of Living Difference IV, including training in RE was received. Also, an update on progress on updating the Portsmouth SACRE directory of places of worship and visitor publications was considered. It was agreed that Sam Duddles and Justine Ball will discuss expanding the membership of the monitoring group in order to ensure representation from each group.

- 2. Recommendations:**

That SACRE notes the findings of the monitoring group meeting and requests SACRE volunteers to join the Monitoring Group in the Spring term 2023.

- 3. Background:** The monitoring group met at 4.00pm on 19 October 2022.
Present:

Sam Duddles (SACRE Chair), Jane Kelly, Elizabeth Jenkerson, Kari Lang and Councillor Asghar Shah

Apologies: Debbie Anderson, Councillor Benedict Swann, Taki Jaffer

- 4. Inspector/Adviser Updates:**

- a) Living Difference IV was adopted in November 2021 and schools have now implemented this from September 2022. One of the areas that website monitoring will check is reference to Living Difference IV rather than Living Difference III. Over the period of 2021 to the summer term of 2022, there were three large launch events for the new syllabus and many teachers, leaders and advisers from across Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight attended, as these were online. Reference to the syllabus and its requirements is also part of every training offer for RE which Portsmouth schools can attend.



- b) Dates have been agreed for the primary RE networks which will take place once each term online. The numbers for these are usually good. Discussion was held about how to reach RE leaders who do not attend training and possible ways to reach out to them, including RE e news which people can receive free of charge from the Hampshire RE centre.
- c) An update was given about the recent free of charge CPD offer for Portsmouth Primary schools at Portsmouth Anglican Cathedral on diversity in Christian traditions. Three of the monitoring group were present at this and two spoke at it as well as the Inspector/Adviser. Materials from this will be shared on the open access RE Moodle for other teachers to use.
- d) The group discussed monitoring Collective Worship and ways that this could be done, including looking for information on school websites and asking for information in the RE networks.
- e) It was noted that the White Paper will be discussed at the next NASACRE training event to be held on 17 November 2022, 7-8 pm online. SACRE members will be encouraged to attend this and are able to book through the SACRE clerk.

5. Updates on Portsmouth 2022 GCSE Religious Studies examinations and known results:

Since the full set of data is not available currently, a full report on this will be brought to the next meeting of SACRE. However, data available from Ofqual (which includes Southampton and Portsmouth in the Hampshire Data), indicates that these results for the region will have been above the national.

6. Other sources of evidence of effectiveness of RE:

The Inspector/adviser reported that there were very few mentions for RE specifically in the Ofsted reports for Portsmouth. Where RE was mentioned, it was spoken of positively. It was mentioned that Ofsted feedback sessions provide more information than the written reports and that RE is often mentioned as a strength of the school, but that this may well not be included in the final report. It was stated that the Ofsted subject report for RE is due shortly and this will be studied carefully to consider the key findings for the subject.

7. Monitoring school websites:

The Inspector/Adviser reported that she would be meeting with the Head of School Improvement shortly to discuss beginning the monitoring programme. Volunteers to do this from the monitoring group would use a checklist to ensure that they were consistent in looking for information and recording it in the same manner. This would be done and reported on in the next monitoring group meeting.

8. Update on ECT and subject training offer:

There is real concern nationally and locally about recruitment into Secondary initial Teacher education courses, including RE PGCE courses and many institutions are struggling to fill places. It was noted that Winchester University now offers training on Humanities with RE as part of its offer to help recruitment of future teachers. It



was commented upon that if RE is not taught well at GCSE and A level, then students will not go onto study the subject at university. Discussion was held about the change in name from Religious Education to Philosophy, Religion and Ethics in one school. Here, student numbers had significantly increased and students were going on to study the subject at University and the perception of the subject appeared to have improved. Further research was needed on this in other schools to comment on this in more detail.

9. AOB

- a) The Inspector/Adviser talked about the approach to teaching Religious Education in the syllabus and that it was useful to remind SACRE members about this so that their monitoring of the subject could be informed by this approach. This would be discussed at the next SACRE meeting, in particular pages 105-107 in the syllabus.
- b) The chair of SACRE commented that the Portsmouth Places of Worship Directory had been well received by schools. She was updating information in the directory and requested further information from SACRE members on places of worship to add to the directory where there were gaps in information.