



**Title of meeting:** Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

**Date of meeting:** 6 November 2024

**Subject:** SACRE Monitoring Group Report

**Report by:** Chris May, SACRE Advisor

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- 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 9 October 2024.

The group received updates on professional RE education and monitoring the effectiveness of RE and an update on implementation of Living Difference IV, including training in RE, was received. The Annual report was also discussed.

- 2. Recommendations:**

**That SACRE notes the findings of the Monitoring Group meeting.**

- 3. Background:** The Monitoring Group met at 4.30 pm on 9 October 2024.  
**Present:** Pastor Chris Thomas (Group A), Revd. Samantha Duddles (Group B), Jane Kelly (Group B), Kari Laing (Group C), Taki Jaffer (Group D), Councillor Asghar Shah (Group D) and Councillor Benedict Swann (Group D).

**Also in attendance:** Debbie Anderson (Head of School Improvement), Chris May (Hampshire Secondary Teaching and Learning Adviser for RE) and Karen Martin (SACRE Clerk).

The meeting was chaired by Chris May.

- 4. SACRE Annual Report 2023-24**

Chris May introduced the item and invited members of the Monitoring Group to comment on the information presented as the Annual Report covers RE monitoring as well as SACRE's wider activities. The report must be published by 31 December each year and follows a template provided by NASACRE.

It was noted that once agreed by the full SACRE, the Annual Report 2024-24 will be presented to the Cabinet Member for Children Families and Education for noting at her meeting in December.

- 5. Inspector/Adviser Updates:**

Chris May informed the group of upcoming visits but noted that as it is early in the academic year, no visits have been made to date. Chris May provided a verbal update including highlighting the following:



- The Hampshire and Wessex annual cross-phase conference will take place on 6<sup>th</sup> March. This will be promoted with Portsmouth schools to encourage delegates from Portsmouth to attend as in previous years.
- A face-to-face Primary Network meeting has been held this term and two further remote access meetings will take place during the academic year.
- No Secondary Network meetings are planned but Portsmouth schools are invited to Hampshire Secondary Network meetings.
- Currently there are no advertised RE teacher vacancies in Portsmouth.
- This academic year, 12 students have elected to study the new Winchester Humanities PGCE with RE as their main subject (up from one student last year) and this was very encouraging. Teacher recruitment is a huge issue nationally and this is very positive news and potentially very beneficial for keeping specialist RE teachers in the area in the future.
- In relation to **RE Hubs**, Chris May informed the Monitoring Group that Justine Ball was considering making an application for Lottery Funding to train speakers on RE and Worldviews. This will be discussed further in the full SACRE meeting.

## 6. Effectiveness of RE:

Chris May talked through recent Ofsted inspections and noted that where specific comments RE have been made, these have been positive and there seem to be more comments relevant to RE appearing in inspection reports. There also seems to be a trend towards seeing more mentions of Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) development in Ofsted Reports. Debbie Anderson, noted that personal development is very strong in Portsmouth schools.

## 7. SACRE Action Plan:

Chris May introduced his report stating that it provided the rationale for producing an action plan. He explained that it is good practice for SACREs to have a three-year action plan and that its purpose is to identify areas of strength and areas for development across the work of SACRE. This will help ensure the best possible support for Portsmouth schools and assist SACRE in fulfilling its statutory obligations effectively. Additionally, it will set out the focus and priorities for SACRE's work during the three-year period.

The Monitoring Group agreed to form a small, informal working group to assist Chris May develop a draft action plan for consideration by the full SACRE at its meeting on 6 November. The draft action plan will be circulated to all members of the Monitoring Group for comments before wider circulation to the SACRE.

## 8. Council of Portsmouth Students (CoPS) Relationship:

Chris May informed the Monitoring Group that he and Kari Laing had recently held a meeting with Jessi Wilson who facilitates and support the CoPS. It was agreed that Chris and Kari will continue to liaise with CoPS and additionally that CoPS is only one vehicle for accessing young voices in Portsmouth and others could be identified. The Clerk agreed to undertake a web search.