

In my role as RE Adviser and to support SACRE (referring to Items in Minutes of 13/7/16) I have addressed the following:

Matters Arising in the Minutes of 13/7/16

Item 4: Respect for All Conference

This excellent day supported schools that attended to achieve their “Healthy Schools Champions Award” and was included within the celebratory video produced which was shown on 9/9/16 at the launch of the Healthy Schools, Difference and Diversity Champions Award 2017, which I attended.

Item 5: Annual Report 2015 – 2016

I have requested from the LA the DFE results of the examinations in RE for 15-16. When received I can analyse the data. The draft will be and circulated ready for approval at the next SACRE meeting.

Item 6 : Action Plan

Please find an Action Plan Priorities attached to the email circulating this report (yellow highlights are updates since the last SACRE meeting).

Item 7: Network Meetings

These are planned to take place at WHSGs Secondary, 19/10/16: Primary, 19/10/16. The dates are published on the SETSA Website.

Item 8: SACRE Training

Arranged for 28/9/16 to be led by RE Today’s Kate Christopher.

Agenda 28/9/16

Item 7: Advisers Report

Items 8-13 Response to the literature attached to the Agenda

I have read the information carefully and compiled the following notes to support SACRE Members in considering their responses.

Item 8 is for adoption by NASACRE and I recommend this to SACRE members.

Accord Coalition Award (**Item 11 on SACRE Agenda 28/9/16**). This is out of number order for a purpose as necessitated by the paragraph below:

Having attended the Diversity and Difference Launch (as detailed above – the Action Plan is attached to this email circulating this information) I met with Lisa Holloway and spoke to several teachers about how SACRE’s involvement in this programme might support its application for recognition within the **Accord Coalition Award (Item 11 on SACRE Agenda 28/9/16)** while it supports teacher development and the quality of teaching and learning within RE in the twelve schools, including two special schools, within the Borough that are part of the programme.

In this programme the schools are working towards accreditation in the summer term 2017. This programme is linked to the update of the SACRE Action Plan (Item 6, above) and a proposal for SACRE to support Continuing Professional Development for teachers and thus the development of high quality teaching and learning in RE in the Borough. This also supports many of the recommendations within and in association with the literature which accompanied the Agenda for

28/9/16, namely Items 8 – 13, which are noted below. SACRE could consider that in facilitating this group to attend a Respect for All Conference it is meeting many of the criteria for accreditation under the Award Scheme as in the application form. This will become clear as members engage with the information below.

Item 9 Tell MAMA Annual Report

Encouraging teachers to attend good quality RE through the Strictly Conference and through attending the RE Networks SACRE, by being involved in the Diversity and Difference programme and engaging with Holocaust Education, engages with ways in which members can identify with, support and address the priorities within the important “**Tell MAMA Annual Report**” in which the “**Founder’s Statement**” includes the following:

“My team has worked with conviction, focus and real care for victims of anti-Muslim hatred and we have done this with a core value in our work, that of defending and protecting human rights. This means that we will defend the identities of all people within our country and within local communities. This also means that where we find anti-Muslim hatred, antisemitism, LGBT hate or disability hate for that matter, we will counter and challenge it.”

Annual Report, Faith Matters, July, 2016, P.7

SACRE could consider the advice in the NASACRE Summary of the Report referring to transport links within the Borough (Item 9) and ask the LA:

- whether they have any findings about such incidents
- if our young people and their families feel secure within the Borough

Ask the LA to share:

- the Tell Mama Report with all schools, whatever their phase, maintained or independent status, or their governing body arrangements, and as many youth groups as they can within the geographical areas of Southend.

The importance of the contents mean that it is necessary to ensure that schools are aware of these issues so they can:

- share with the LA the methods and procedures they are employing
 - to educate all their students to prevent such abuse
 - to support victims and their families, especially young girls and women who are more frequently the victims
- encourage young people subject to such abuse to report it if/when it occurs so they can share this with friends and family so victims can receive the help they need
- ensure young people know how to report such incidents themselves or on behalf of others less able to do so
- ensure young people know that Southend is committed to maintaining and improving their security while in school and when in the wider community:
 - so they “feel secure”
 - are supported in both situations
- adopt a zero-tolerance stand point towards such abuse and perpetrators of it within their communities

Also encompassed within the “**Founders Statement**” above are the aims shared by the Centre for Holocaust Education through the Holocaust Memorial Trust. This has been extended into a Primary programme, a development applauded and strongly encouraged by Ofsted. Two of SBC Primary schools are already involved in this with an aim to display their work as part of the annual Holocaust Memorial Day Service each January. I have attended both training days, including the recent primary curriculum launch.

The HMD materials also include resources to support teachers to design and teach high quality lessons encompassing the wider questions of genocide, persecution and refugees as well as the atrocities

visited upon the Jewish communities. As we know many other communities and groups of peoples, such as Roma and followers of religious practises were also subject to the extremities of the holocaust and have been subject to other such regimes since.

The aims within last two sentences of the quotation above (Tell MAMA Annual Report, July 16, p.7) are those SACRE could support through encouraging and providing opportunities for schools such as the Respect for all Conferences for pupils and teachers which also supports teachers and pupils in building community cohesion.

In reply to the comments of NASACRE's Summary (Item 9) SACRE might again consider that encouraging RE Teachers to attend the Annual Conference held by the National Association of the Teachers of Religious Education (to be held on January 2017, in London) would also support the provision of high-quality teaching so Islam and other world faiths and non-religious world views are taught well.

These are also linked to the views expressed in the Tell MAMA Report within the following report in **Item 12**.

Agenda Item 12: APPG on Religious Education: Improving Religious Literacy (July 2016)

This has the following explanation of the importance of "religious literacy" in building community cohesion:

"Religious literacy enables willingness and ability to live with religious and cultural tensions and with conflicting beliefs and practices. It supports social cohesion by providing safe spaces where different views can be aired, listened to and engaged with without the pressure to conform to an overall perspective."

Cited in the AAPG Report on Religious Literacy Members of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Chester, P. 7

Within the report are the following, which can be interpreted as supporting SACRE's wish to provide such experiences for teachers and pupils, as follows:

Community initiatives 6.11.

Some of the most effective ways of improving religious literacy are community-led initiatives. These complement school-based RE and formal workplace training. The examples of successful work in this area submitted to the APPG varied from small-scale local projects to national cultural initiatives. The APPG recommends that the government supports, and facilitates more effectively, the work of local communities and civil society organisations in the promotion of religious literacy. We suggest that projects which aim to improve participants' religious literacy should receive a favourable assessment in the allocation of local authority funding.

AAPG Report on Religious literacy P. 49

5.7. Sometimes cultural or community projects can be negatively viewed as having less effect on an individual's learning than formal teaching. Partly this is because the impact of such projects can be less tangible and may be more difficult to measure or quantify. But this does not mean that these initiatives are any less valid. Projects of this type which are already underway provide very real practical ways for improving religious literacy.

AAPG Report on Religious literacy P. 42

5.11.

Many of the submissions to the inquiry suggested that visiting places of worship and engaging in dialogue with members of local religious communities can help to develop individuals' religious literacy. These can be organised locally or coordinated at a regional or national level. In February 2016, for example, 92 mosques welcomed thousands of non-Muslim visitors as part of the Muslim Council of Britain's 'Visit my Mosque' campaign. The Inter Faith Network for the UK organises an annual Inter Faith Week where hundreds of religious communities and interfaith organisations hold events and discussions and engage in volunteering initiatives. (See <http://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/about>)

AAPG Report on Religious literacy P. 43

Muslim Council of Britain (2016), p. 2. See <http://www.interfaithweek.org/> .

Organised visits and open days encourage dialogue between people of different religious and non-religious backgrounds. They can provide an informal space to deepen participants' understanding of each other's perspectives, and they can lead to the forming of positive long term relationships between different groups in the community.

AAPG Report on Religious literacy P. 44

(This was also an aim of the RE Teachers Networks and an outcome of the recent RE/ CoWo Survey)

The report concludes that:

5.20.

The APPG recommends that central government and local authority funding allocation criteria should be orientated towards the delivery of religious literacy through community initiatives. It also recommends that projects that have the specific aim of improving religious literacy, or those for which there is a reasonable expectation that an improvement in religious literacy will be a natural outcome.

AAPG Report on Religious literacy P. 50-52

There are 24 recommendations and I highlight the following:

Recommendation 1: the Department for Education should reinforce the statutory requirement of all state-funded schools to provide RE for all pupils, including at Key Stage 4, and should monitor its effective delivery.

Recommendation 6: the Department for Education should take steps to ensure that all teachers of RE, especially non-specialists, have access to high quality subject-specific CPD opportunities.

(The NATRE Annual Conference, "Strictly RE", held each January, offers exactly this with the added bonus of opportunities to network with, hear from and speak with Ofsted and HM inspectors, foremost thinkers and writers in RE and to share ideas and resources teachers of RE from across England.)

Recommendation 9: the Department for Education should take steps to promote uptake of the GCSE Religious Studies short course.

(SBC SACRE shares this view and have already stated its wish to investigate the position regarding provision/ teaching of RE within the Borough schools, questioning their entitlement to RE, here some pupils are not entered for RE examinations at GCSE (SACRE's SETool and Annual Report 2014-2015).

Recommendation 12: the government should ensure that training programmes covering both equality and diversity and religious literacy are provided for civil servants and others in the public sector.

Recommendation 21: central and local governments should take steps to encourage public engagement in local and national dialogue and outreach initiatives between different religious and non-religious groups. They should also take steps to encourage the development of new local schemes which can build long-term relationships between people of different religions and beliefs in local communities.

(SACRE should consider this within the review of the LA RE Syllabus. SACRE also has members who are members of Southend on Sea's thriving *Inter Faith Form* and such links should continue to be celebrated and nurtured.)

Reference: All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education "Improving Religious Literacy: A Contribution to the Debate" (July 2016) Note: This is not an official publication of the House of Commons or the House of Lords and has not been approved by either House or its committees. All Party Parliamentary Groups are an informal groups of Members of both Houses with a common interest in particular issues. The views expressed in this report are those of the group.

Agenda Item 13: Post Brexit Britain

This document supports the work of SACRE members through the Respect for All Conference held last academic year. Again the Difference and Diversity programme promotes SACRE's determination to give young people the necessary skills and awareness to live well, within a multi-cultural Britain, through the provision of high quality RE.

The report states:

“In addition to acquiring knowledge, young people need to successfully develop conflict resolution, decision making skills, self-regulation, self-respect, negotiation and respect for those with different beliefs and values”

Reference: Citizenship, RE and PSHE need to be promoted to build respectful schools and societies in post Brexit Britain: An open letter to the Secretary of State for Education: Dr David Lundie, Senior Lecturer in Education, Liverpool Hope University (July 16)

Note from the Adviser's Report to SACRE 13/7/16

To have a fuller picture of the status of RE within the Borough I have begun to analyse data from academies within the Borough and I shall collect it from those who did not self-report such information with in the RE Survey conducted last academic year, to ascertain:

- the status of their RE and which Syllabus they are following
- their provision for Collective Worship

This will give SACRE members a fuller picture of the current provision within the Borough.

Frances Neil (September, 2016)