

10th February 2020

Agenda Item: 11

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

OUTSIDE BODIES REPORT: STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an opportunity for Members to review the Annual Report of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) for 2018-19, attached as **Appendix 1**, an outside body upon which the Council is represented and to consider whether there are any further actions arising out of the information contained in the report.

Information

2. The Local Authority (LA) is required by the Education Act 1996 to constitute a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and is also required by Circular 1194 for the SACRE to broadly represent the proportionate strength of local religious groups. The statutory duty is reaffirmed in the 'Religious Education Guidance in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010 which states 'An LA should fund and support a SACRE and an ASC satisfactorily in line with the duty to constitute or convene each of these bodies and to enable them effectively to carry out their function.'
3. In addition to these central statutory duties, the Nottinghamshire SACRE has a range of functions, some advisory, and some executive. The Annual Report for 2018-19 records the representatives on SACRE as well as providing advice and information to the LA on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education in Nottinghamshire. This report has been submitted, as required, to the Department for Education.

Advisory Functions

4. There are two key advisory functions for which the SACRE is responsible: firstly, to advise Children and Families Services upon matters connected with religious worship in County schools and secondly to advise on matters related to the religious education curriculum in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus. This includes SACRE advising on teaching methodology, choice of materials and resources as well as the provision of training for teachers.

Executive Functions

5. There are three key executive functions for which SACRE is responsible: firstly, to consider and determine, in accordance with chapter 3 of the 1996 Education Act, applications from head teachers of County schools in relation to altering in any way the requirement of Christian collective worship. A second key function is to review the Agreed Syllabus for RE every five years and finally, there is a responsibility to publish an annual report on the national SACRE website.

SACRE Membership

6. Nottinghamshire's SACRE is made up of a representative from each of the following faith groups: Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Methodist, Muslim, Religious Society of Friends, Roman Catholic (2 members), Salvation Army, Sikh and United Reformed Church; in addition there are two co-opted members representing Baha'i and Paganism. There are representatives from County Councillors, Children and Families Services and the teacher associations, alongside teachers from all phases of education. Page 17 of the 2018-19 Annual Report provides a list of the current membership of SACRE.
7. The Council is represented on the Nottinghamshire SACRE by one Education Improvement Adviser and one officer from the Education Improvement Service which also provides administrative support for SACRE meetings, development networks and conferences. The current County Councillor representatives are: Councillor Boyd Elliott (Chairman of SACRE), Councillor Phillip Rostance and Councillor Vaughan Hopewell.

SACRE Achievements 2018-2019

8. During 2018-2019 SACRE has continued to support the development of Teacher Networks across the County with meetings taking place in the Nottingham Liberal Synagogue where network attendees learned more about how the Synagogue supports schools through their education programme; the spring Network took place at the National Holocaust Centre. These Networks continue to be valued by those who attend.
9. The annual SACRE Religious Education Conference, which took place on 17th June 2019, was also a success with delegates learning more about creative resources that can be used in classroom practice. 22 delegates attended and 21 evaluations completed. Evaluations were extremely positive and comments made such as - 'Inspirational ideas presented in a fun and engaging way, a real understanding of how children learn best' and 'I am more confident in sharing of ideas with colleagues & SLT to ensure we have a creative approach'.
10. For a fourth year, the Council financially supported a workshop conference at the National Holocaust Centre focussing on "British Values: investigating what matters". This conference was underpinned by these identified themes:
 - Freedom after suffering
 - Wisdom

- Hope
- Commitment

11. The report also presents a summary of the GCSE results for 2015-2019 as well as those for A level. Members are advised that actual numbers of children taking GCSE RE in 2019 has decreased from 1,641 to 1,630; this reflects the national decrease in the numbers of candidates taking the subject. AS levels also decreased to 73 pupils from 107 which again reflects a national decrease in the number of candidates taking the subject. However, at A level, there was a slight increase from 155 to 174 candidates taking the subject although this cohort remains small. This will be the last year that the GCSE short course in RE will be included in the Annual Report. The data for the short course is incomplete for Nottinghamshire as the data is no longer gathered on the short course because GCSEs which are not full GCSEs are no longer included in performance measures as a result of the Wolf reforms. This section therefore has no value to Notts.
12. The report concludes by outlining areas for development with two clear priorities for 2019-2020:
- to support schools as they begin to implement the revised Agreed Syllabus in the context of the current Ofsted Framework.
 - to support the continued development of networks for teachers/coordinators and lead teachers of RE in schools and academies.

Other Options Considered

13. No other options were considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

14. The report provides Members with the Annual Report of SACRE for 2018-19 and to consider whether there are any further actions required.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

16. The cost of operating SACRE is included in the wider Education, Learning and Skills budgets.

Crime and Disorder Implications

17. Appropriate consideration has been given to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is the view of the County Council that this outside body supports the development of responsible citizens.

Safeguarding of Children Implications

18. The outside body takes due account of safeguarding needs and requirements in all aspects of its responsibilities and functions

Human Resources Implications

19. Appropriate levels of human resources have been allocated to the outside body.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That Members consider whether there are any further actions required arising out of the information contained in the Annual Report for 2018-19 of Nottinghamshire County Council's Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education, attached as **Appendix 1**.

Marion Clay

Service Director, Education, Learning & Skills

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Bryony Charnock-Walmsley
Education Improvement Adviser
T: 0115 8040648
M: 07920 183240
E: bryony.charnock-walmsley@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (AK 15/01/20)

20. The report falls within the remit of Children and Young People's Committee under its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (SAS 13/01/20)

21. The cost of operating SACRE is contained within the wider Education, Learning and Skills budget of £5.8m. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

The national SACRE web site can be accessed at <http://www.nasacre.org.uk/> and the local web site accessed at <http://www.rsresources.org.uk/index.php?pg=sa>

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1341