

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**  
**17 November 2010**  
**Report of the Director of Children's Services**  
**Transforming religious education: the Ofsted thematic report on RE 2006-2009**

**1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To present members of SACRE with a brief overview on Transforming religious education: the Ofsted thematic report on RE 2006-2009.

**2 Summary**

2.1 In June 2010 'Transforming religious education': the Ofsted thematic report on RE 2006-2009 was published as an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of RE in Primary and Secondary Schools.

**3 Recommendation**

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report and note the contents.

**4 Background**

4.1 This report is based principally on evidence from visits to 94 primary and 89 secondary schools, 2 of those visited were Staffordshire schools.

4.2 Members will be briefed on this report. A summary is attached to this paper.

**5 Equal Opportunities**

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

**6 Financial implications**

6.1 There are no immediate financial implications

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## **Transforming Religious Education, Ofsted report 2010**

The Ofsted report, *Transforming Religious Education*, published on June 6th 2010, has criticised the quality of RE provision at both primary and secondary levels.

### **Primary**

The quality of RE in primary schools was broadly the same as reported in 2007 and not enough was of good quality - with only 6 out of 10 schools gaining a satisfactory rating. Although the visited schools took the subject seriously two problems were particularly highlighted. Most importantly, 'the pattern of the curriculum delivery of the subject often limited the opportunities for sustained learning in RE'. This is particularly seen in the reliance on a narrow curriculum model based on RE being delivered in half termly units taught weekly. This often inhibits sustained learning in the subject and opportunities to link it to other areas of the curriculum. Secondly, teachers lacked subject knowledge and confidence to plan and teach high quality RE lessons.

### **Secondary**

A significant decline is reported in the quality of RE since the 2007 survey, with only 40 out of 89 schools receiving good/outstanding ratings and 14 being rated as inadequate. Factors that were particularly highlighted as detracting from the quality of the provision were the 'impact on RE of the recent changes to the wider curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 3, and weaknesses in the quality of learning in much of the provision for the short course GCSE in religious studies'. Another very important issue that was raised is the uncertainty among many teachers of RE 'about what they are trying to achieve in the subject.' It is suggested that this results in a 'lack of well structured and sequenced teaching and learning, substantial weaknesses in the quality of assessment and a limited use of higher order thinking skills to promote greater challenge'.

The report was based principally on evidence from visits to 94 primary and 89 secondary schools in England between 2006 and 2009