

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
15th February 2011

Report of the Director of Children's Services

An Update on Key Issues

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present members of SACRE with a brief update on key issues that have developed or arisen since the last meeting of SACRE.

2 Summary

2.1 Members of SACRE will receive a brief report on a number of key issues. These are matters which have either been raised at previous SACRE meetings and which have moved forward, or matters on which it is appropriate to brief members of SACRE.

3 Recommendation

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

4 Background

4.1 Since the autumn term meeting of the SACRE there have been developments in a number of areas which had previously been agenda items for SACRE or which have local or national importance for RE.

4.2 Members will be briefed on these key developments. 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 Financial implications may be raised by individual items. These have been dealt with elsewhere, or will be raised at future meetings of SACRE.

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Letters of congratulations for schools

Letters have been sent to schools who achieved examination results which were above the national average for Religious Studies at both GCSE and A level. These have been very well received.

Letters to Academies

Letters have not been sent to Academies. I wanted to be sure that the wording was appropriate so I have asked colleagues in neighbouring authorities to share with us the approach they have taken. Some examples can be brought to the next meeting.

The Student Council for Religious Education

The student council members had a very successful first meeting. They bonded well and have agreed to complete a task within school which will contribute to an RE display in the Kingston Centre sharing student's views on RE. We have decided to change the format of meetings where appropriate and for our next meeting we will be visiting Sikh and Hindu faith buildings in Wolverhampton.

Farmington Fellows

Jan Young from Queens Croft High School, Lichfield, a special school, has agreed to share her work with other special school teachers at a network meeting. Jan's work explored effective strategies for facilitating visits to faith buildings for children with special educational needs.

The Best of British Islam

In November NATRE sent me multiple copies of a 7-DVD set called Best of British Islam which came from the British Foreign and commonwealth office (FCO) for RE teachers (secondary). A condition of the offer was that I show a clip or two and talk about the issues the clips raise, and how the resource might be used in the classroom. An evaluation form was completed by me encompassing the teachers' views and returned to NATRE. The films are superb and the teachers gave some very positive feedback!

Resignation of Rummy Bajaj

With regret we have been informed that Rummy Bajaj has resigned as a member of SACRE. His resignation letter read:

'...Attending the meetings I admired with awe the level of expertise of the committee members and your skilful handling of intricate SACRE matters.

I can assure you that I will be leaving SACRE with the confidence that the Sikh issues at schools are going to be dealt with compassion and fairness under your leadership.

I take this opportunity of wishing you and fellow members that "May God fill your lives with Happiness, Good Health & Spiritual Prosperity.

Kind Regards,

Rummy Bajaj'