

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
18th November 2009
Report of the Corporate Director (Children and Lifelong Learning)
Procedures for Schools Causing Concern

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present SACRE members with proposals for procedures to be followed in the case of schools causing concern.
- 1.2 To give members the opportunity to consider the proposals and to make suggestions regarding the way forward.

2 Summary

- 2.1 The SACRE has, in the past, taken every possible opportunity to congratulate and commend students, teachers, departments and schools for positive approaches and achievements in RE and collective worship.
- 2.2 Where examination results have raised concerns, the SACRE has also offered the assistance and support of the Senior Adviser for RE.
- 2.3 There has, to date, been no formal procedure for contacting schools where other concerns have been identified. Proposals are attached to this document.

3 Recommendation

- 3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report and consider the adoption of appropriate procedures for schools causing concern.

4 Background

- 4.1 The monitoring evidence available to the SACRE, formal and informal, identifies schools to be commended and schools causing concern.
- 4.2 To date the Staffordshire SACRE has been generous with its praise but has seldom taken action to challenge schools causing concern.
- 4.3 The primary and secondary curriculum reviews have encouraged schools to take a creative approach to the curriculum. In some cases this may lead to schools compromising the provision and quality of RE.
- 4.4 The development of procedures to be undertaken where concerns are identified will allow the SACRE to respond to concerns immediately to challenge and offer support.
- 4.5 Draft procedures, first presented at the summer term meeting 2009 are attached. Members are invited to discuss and amend the procedures with a view to approving a course of action for the future.

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 financial implications for the SACRE.

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Procedures for schools causing concern

Where, in carrying out its statutory duty to monitor the provision of religious education as appropriate within the Local Authority, the SACRE has identified a cause for concern:

1. The SACRE or a sub-committee will request that a letter be sent from the Senior Adviser for RE or an appropriate LA officer to outline concerns to the school and offer support.
2. Any responses will be referred to the SACRE or a sub-committee for consideration.
3. Where no reply is received, a further letter will be sent by the chair of SACRE reiterating concerns and offering the support of the Senior Adviser or appropriate LA officer.
4. Any responses will be referred to the SACRE or a sub-committee for consideration.
5. Where no reply is received, the SACRE, through the chair, will send a further letter to the school reiterating concerns and alerting the school to further action:
 - a) Concerns to be raised with relevant LA officers (School improvement Partners, District Strategic Improvement Managers) with a request that the SACRE be informed of the outcome of any ensuing discussion.
 - b) A note of concern be sent to the Senior LA officer with responsibility for SACRE (usually a deputy director)
 - c) The SACRE to hold a note of concern on its records