

SACRE Annual Report 2020 - 2021

Date: 30th March 2022

Report of: Director of Children and Families

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- Every school in England must include religious education as part of its curriculum. Every local authority must appoint a Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE) to support this provision.
- SACREs have a duty to publish an annual report, ideally by the 31st December each calendar year. This report has to be sent to the Secretary of State for Education as well as to key partners, including schools, teacher training institutions, libraries and councillors.
- This report considers the priorities for SACRE over the last year and the progress made on them; the main areas of discussions at SACRE meetings; advice to the local authority; how the Leeds SACRE has worked more broadly with other SACREs in our region; minor amendments to the locally agreed syllabus for RE and details of the professional support and training offered by SACRE consultants.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the content and recommendations set out within the appended report.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 In keeping with the information above, SACREs are advised to send their annual report to key partners, including councillors.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 2 The report has been considered by Leeds SACRE.

What are the resource implications?

- 3 This report has no resource implications.

What are the legal implications?

- 4 This report has no specific legal implications.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

- 5 The report outlines how the locally agreed RE syllabus encourages understanding of and empathy for others. It teaches young people to value difference and diversity. This is essential for people's health and well-being that they grow up in communities where they feel accepted, understood and valued. It also describes the free training offered by SACRE consultants to faith communities to support them in hosting visits from schools which aids understanding of different religions and different cultures. Primary schools from Leeds and Kirklees participated in an online interfaith conference. A morning of learning and activities focused on the importance and deeper meanings behind well-known Spring festivals such as Pesach, Holi, Easter, Ramadan and Vaisakhi. This was followed by afternoon sessions on Zoom to give pupils the chance to meet and question faith representatives from Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Jewish communities. This further helps pupils recognise their similarities and differences with others and engenders a healthy sense of belonging.
- 6 Since September 2020 schools have been required to follow statutory guidance on teaching Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) in English schools. These are deeply personal areas of human life, where facts, feelings, values and experiences all intertwine. Accuracy, sensitivity and safety are all key ingredients in helping children and young people understand how to live healthy and fulfilled lives with integrity and respect. This has always been a sensitive area and perhaps nowhere more so than at the interface between beliefs, sex and relationships. Leeds SACRE, in partnership with Calderdale, Kirklees and Bradford, formed a small working group of SACRE members and local authority advisers to prepare an anthology of authentic and diverse faith perspectives on the areas covered in RSHE, along with some basic background information. Over the year the group presided over the compilation of these materials and involved over 40 members of faith communities, including SACRE members.

Options, timescales and measuring success

- 7 This is an annual report which is reporting retrospectively so that options, success and timescales are not applicable in this instance.

Appendices

- 8 Appendix 1 - Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report 2020-21

Background papers

- 9 None