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To: Learning and Development - Children, Families &  
Education Policy Overview Committee -1 March 2011

Subject: Kent SACRE Annual Report 2009-10

Classification: Unrestricted

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Summary: This paper provides Members with information on the Annual Report (2009-2010) of Kent's Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education. It also highlights particular developments and gives an update on the review of the locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education.

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## **Introduction**

1. (1) Each Local Authority (LA) is required to establish a permanent body, called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) to advise the Local Authority on matters concerned with the provision of religious education (RE) and collective worship in schools. This body is required to publish an annual report on its work and to send a copy of the report to the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA). The report is based on work taking place in the proceeding academic year.

(2) It is also a requirement for LAs to prepare and bring into operation a locally agreed syllabus (LAS) for RE.

## **The Annual Report for 2009-10 on the work of Kent SACRE**

2. (1) The annual report on the work of Kent SACRE 2009-10 has been submitted to the QCDA. The format of the report conforms with the report framework set by the QCDA. The report covers:

- Standards and quality of RE provision in schools
- Managing the SACRE and partnership with the LA & stakeholders
- Effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus for RE
- Collective worship
- Contribution to the community cohesion agenda.

(2) It is usual practice that the report is submitted to the QCDA at the end of each calendar year. With the forthcoming closure of the QCDA, arrangements for the submission of future annual reports are not yet known.

(3) The annual report is published on the KCC web-site and can be found at:  
[http://kent590w3:9070/Published/StdDataDocs/1/8/1/1/SD00001181/\\$SACREAnnualReport0910final291110.doc.pdf](http://kent590w3:9070/Published/StdDataDocs/1/8/1/1/SD00001181/$SACREAnnualReport0910final291110.doc.pdf)

### **The Kent SACRE Development Plan**

3. For a number of years the Kent SACRE has used a Development Plan as a tool to guide the work of the SACRE. The Development Plan is an evolving document which is under constant review and updated regularly to reflect current areas of work to focus on. The current Development Plan (Version 6.4) can be found at appendix four of the Annual Report.

### **The review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE**

4. (1) The current LAS was approved by the LA in December 2006 and LAs must undertake a review of the LAS not more than five years from the completion of its last review. Given this, work on the new LAS commenced in November 2010 with a view to having a revised syllabus ready to go out schools by September 2011.

(2) Since the preparation of the current LAS in 2006, there have been a number of important developments that have affected schools, the curriculum and religious education. For example, 2007 saw the beginning of the implementation of the New Secondary Curriculum, an increasing number of primary schools are developing more creative curriculum approaches that reflect the direction of the Primary Curriculum reviews that took place between 2008 and 2010, the implications to the LA of the increase in the number of academies and the new opportunities for Free Schools needs to be considered. There has also been a change in the focus of school inspections with more attention to outcomes for children and young people, including well being, and curricular provision as a whole, rather than individual subject content and effectiveness of provision.

(3) More recently, new Non-Statutory Guidance on Religious Education in English schools was published in January 2010 by DCSF. This updated parts of the previous guidance contained in Circular 1/94. In June 2010, Ofsted published "Transforming Religious Education" following its review of RE between 2006-09. In November 2010, the Department for Education published the long awaited Schools White Paper: The Importance of Teaching. This indicates a review of the National Curriculum is to be undertaken during the spring 2011. The outcomes for Religious Education and Collective Worship are likely to have important implications for schools, SACRE and the LA. Each of these recent developments needs to be considered in the preparation of the Kent Agreed

Syllabus for RE 2011 to ensure that Kent schools are provided with the most effective and suitable materials that reflect local and national requirements and policies.

### **Equality considerations**

5. (1) Learning about religion and learning from religion are important aspects of learning and supporting community cohesion. In particular, it underpins:

- The appreciation of one's own and of other cultural traditions.
- Valuing and celebrating a range of traditions and life-styles.
- Widening horizons and deepening understanding of the norms and ways of life of others.

(2) Kent SACRE is proud of the fact that it has maintained a truly inclusive membership that reflects the religious diversity of Kent, with each of the main world faith groups, a wide range of Christian denominations, and some minority religions/belief groups being represented.

(3) An Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted as part of the review of the LAS for RE.

### **Conclusions and Next Steps**

6. The Kent SACRE is committed to working in partnership with the LA to improve the quality of RE and collective worship in Kent schools. The annual report is a useful vehicle for demonstrating the effective working of the SACRE.

### **Recommendations:**

7. Members of the Learning and Development Children Families and Education Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- (i) Note that Kent SACRE's annual report 2009-10 has been submitted to the QDCA and published on the KCC web-site.
- (ii) Endorse the work of the Kent SACRE.
- (iii) Note that the review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education has commenced.

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*Background Documents: None*  
*Other Useful Information: None*