

Report of: Corporate Director of Children's Services

Meeting of:	Date:	Ward(s):
Childrens Scrutiny	19 October 2021	N/A

Delete as appropriate:	Exempt	Non-exempt

SUBJECT: SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2021

1.	Context
1.1	<p>The law states that Religious Education must be taught in all schools. However, Religious Education (RE) is not part of the National Curriculum and therefore it is a local responsibility.</p> <p>Islington SACRE's role is to advise the local authority on what needs to be done to improve RE and collective worship (CW) for schools in its area. Through the SACRE, local communities and teachers have the opportunity to influence directly what pupils learn in RE.</p> <p>The main duties of SACRE include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addressing issues relating to RE in local schools and other educational establishments • developing ways of supporting schools in the delivery of the religious education syllabus and monitoring this delivery • developing and maintaining links with local and national faith communities • considering applications for determinations from Head teachers. This is an application that the school be released from the requirements for CW to be of a mainly Christian character • produce an annual report of its work

	<p>Religious Education encompasses religious literacy and the knowledge of the values and insights of religious and non-religious world views. Islington SACRE are proud that it also provides the endorsement of diversity and the encouragement of tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding within our neighbourhood, our nation, and the wider world.</p> <p>Religious Education is the only strand of the curriculum, which is shaped and influenced by local perspectives, therefore, SACRE is in a unique position to listen to, and take account of, local needs and circumstances.</p>
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In implementing the agreed Islington Agreed Syllabus of 2017, we sought to provide a framework for the teaching of Religious Education based on current thinking on religious education, but attentive to local circumstances and needs of Islington schools. • Support and expertise of the School Improvement Service and CS Islington now publishes a range of resources and guidance for schools.
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In March 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a nationwide lockdown, schools were closed to all pupils except key workers, and those deemed vulnerable. School leaders across Islington rose to the challenge with resilience and courage to support those pupils attending school and those learning at home whilst being mindful of pupil and staff wellbeing. Leaders faced unprecedented challenges in responding to a dynamic situation and ever changing guidance. • The impact of the COVID emergency on pupils is yet to be seen. Academically it is likely to have most negative impact on the more vulnerable and the disadvantaged. The impact on the mental health and wellbeing of young people could be wide reaching. On the other hand, some children may have thrived during this period. • Unfortunately, much of the work of SACRE has been curtailed and limited and particularly its ability both to convene and to connect. SACRE is confident that the work of the previous years has provided solid foundations on which to build. • SACRE acknowledges the significant effort that has gone into making provision to support lockdown learning, lesson resources, online learning and useful websites. • Schools responded quickly in order to deliver collective worship and many schools were able to deliver successful virtual collective worship through various IT platforms.
1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking ahead, the Islington Agreed Syllabus will be reviewed by March 2022, plus broaden the range of resources directly available to schools, including training for school leaders and classroom practitioners and discovering new ways to engage with local schools will continue to be important ongoing tasks for SACRE. • SACRE continue to broaden and renew the membership of Islington SACRE, recruiting faith and belief representatives from a number of traditions, as well as local teachers, young people, and others. The essential value of SACRE to local schools is that all voices are heard and every perspective is included.

1.5	The profile of Islington Schools:	
Maintained Schools using the Islington Agreed Syllabus and Schemes of Work	Kate Greenway Nursery School, Margaret McMillan Nursery School, North Islington Nursery School, Ambler Primary School, Ashmount Primary School, Canonbury Primary School, Copenhagen Primary School, Drayton Park Primary School, Duncombe Primary School, Gillespie Primary School, Grafton Primary School, Hanover Primary School, Hargrave Park Primary School, Highbury Quadrant Primary School, Hugh Myddelton Primary School, Laycock Primary School, Montem Primary School, Moreland Primary School, Newington Green Primary School, Pakeman Primary School, Pooles Park Primary School, Prior Weston Primary School Robert Blair Primary School, Rotherfield Primary School, Thornhill Primary School, Tufnell Park Primary School, Vittoria Primary School, Winton Primary School, Yerbury Primary School, Arts & Media School Islington, Beacon High, Central Foundation Boys School, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School, Highbury Fields School	
Voluntary Aided schools may choose to follow their locally agreed syllabus or different locally agreed syllabus (with the permission of the SACRE concerned) or devise their own curriculum (which must broadly reflect the requirements of an agreed syllabus).	Blessed Sacrament RC Primary School, Christ The King RC Primary School, Sacred Heart RC Primary School, St Andrews CE Primary School, St Joan of Arc RC Primary School, St John Evangelist RC Primary School, St Johns Highbury Vale CE Primary School, St Johns Upper Holloway CE Primary School, St Joseph's RC Primary School, St Jude & St Paul's CE Primary School, St Luke's CE Primary School, St Mark's CE Primary School, St Mary's CE Primary School, St Peter's & St Paul's RC Primary School, St Aloysius' College	
All through Maintained Schools using the Islington Agreed Syllabus and Schemes of Work	New River College, Samuel Rhodes Special School, Richard Cloudsley Special School	
All Through Academies may choose to follow their locally agreed syllabus or different locally agreed syllabus (with the permission of the SACRE concerned) or devise their own curriculum (which must broadly reflect the requirements of an agreed syllabus).	St Mary Magdalene Academy	

	<p>Single Academy Trust/Free Schools As above</p> <p>Multi Academy Trusts <i>*note individual schools identified in MATs are the ones in Islington. These MATs may have schools outside of Islington but are not highlighted here.</i></p> <p>As above</p>	<p>William Tyndale Academy, Whitehall Park School, The London Screen Academy, The Pears Family Charitable Foundation School</p> <p>City of London MAT (Highbury Grove, Highgate Hill, COLAI, COLPA-I), The Bridge London Trust (Primary, Secondary, Satellite, Integrated Learning Space Special schools and Hungerford Primary) Living in Harmony (New North Primary School)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SACRE directly provides the Islington Agreed Syllabus and Schemes of work to all educational settings • 23/57 (40%) of educational settings are not required to adopt the Islington Agreed Syllabus or Schemes of Work 	
<p>2.</p>	<p>Recommendations</p>	
<p>2.1</p>	<p>To accept this report and agree the recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 1: increase the diversity and membership of SACRE, and to work collaboratively with the Islington Youth Council • Recommendation 2: review the agreed syllabus in consultation with educational settings by March 2022 and share proposals for September 2022 - 2027 • Recommendation 3: continue to develop professional development opportunities for staff across Islington, including governors • Recommendation 4: continue to implement the RE Syllabus and Scheme of Work in light of the Islington Recovery Curriculum and the Children’s Scrutiny Education Inequalities 14 recommendations with a particular focus at KS3 and KS4. 	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Summary of SACRE work 2020 - 2021</p>	
<p>3.1</p>	<p>Advice to statutory bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SACRE has provided up-to-date advice, which is shared on Islington CS portal for schools. This advice is for schools and Local Authority parties or any other interested member of the community. An online function enables members of the public to contact the Head of School Improvement and/or the Chair of SACRE to ensure SACRE can receive questions (including FOIs) and comments. To date SACRE have published national guidance about diversity of religion and belief as well as the 2017 Agreed Syllabus for Islington. • SACRE has also provided guidance (via CS Islington) on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting students during Ramadan • Matters of religion and belief associated with PE (Physical Education) • Collective Worship guidance • Sex and Relationships education requirements • Attendance at school and religious observance (to be published) 	

- Additionally, the School Improvement Service supports and acts as a broker in the ongoing engagement with Head Teachers, senior leaders and RE Leaders across Islington in order to provide a platform for keeping senior leaders abreast of news about SACRE. For example:
 - Coordinating and convening support groups and the summer Conference
 - Supporting RE Leaders to prepare for an Ofsted "Deep Dive" in light of the Ofsted inspection focus that schools are providing a curriculum that is broad and balanced.
 - Providing bespoke support for schools as required

3.2 **Standards and Quality of Provision of RE:**

The table above illustrates the 3 year trend for Religious Studies at GCSE level (please note that outcomes for 2021 are yet to be published):

GCSE RS entries & results 2020 compared to 2019 and 2018			
Grade	Results 2018	Results 2019	Results 2020
9	12	34	32
8	26	55	31
7	43	74	46
6	70	79	79
5	71	84	65
4	59	60	67
3	49	62	77
2	19	35	33
1	13	9	16
U	3	4	6
X	0	1	0
# Entries	365	497	452
# 7+	81	163	109
# 4+	318	386	320
7+ grades included in performance tables* as % of entries	22.2	32.8	24.1
4+ grades included in performance tables* as % of entries	87.1	77.7	70.8
Entries included in perf. tables as % of Roll.	25.9	33.8	30.8
Average Point Score	5.0	5.36	4.95

3.3	<p>GCSE examination results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021 outcomes have yet to be published at the time of writing the report. This year assessments were based on moderated teacher assessment and are therefore not comparable to previous years' outcomes. Outcomes for 2021 will not be published until January 2022. • 2020 outcomes are a reflection on the impact of COVID-19, the lockdown of schools, the partial reopening and the challenges of assessment processes that secondary schools were asked to implement by the DFE. The number of entries decreased by 45 in 2020. Pupils achieving the highest grade (9) remained stable compared to 2019. • 2019 outcomes were better than those in 2018 for all indicators: % 4+, % 7+ whether we look at % of entrants passed or % of roll that passed. In 2019 there was an increase in the number of pupils taking RE compared to 2018 (497 compared to 365, an increase of 36%).
3.4	<p>Quality of RE provision in schools:</p> <p>The majority (91%) of schools in Islington are rated as good or outstanding in 2019 (Ofsted Data View, August 2019), this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of nursery schools were good or outstanding • 94% of primary schools were good or outstanding • 70% of secondary schools were good or outstanding • 100% of pupil referral units (PRU) were good or outstanding • 100% of special schools were good or outstanding • 96.4% of early years settings were rated good or outstanding, this compares positively to national (96.1) and London (94.9) December 2019. <p>Nationally, 62% of schools are rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding as at August 2019. In London, 93% of schools rated as good or outstanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Islington, 40% of secondary schools are Outstanding compared to 36% across London and 21% nationally. <p>At primary, SACRE has begun to reap the rewards of a deliberate effort to reach out to and support teachers of RE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2020 – 2021 the opportunity to move to virtual meetings was postponed due to the pandemic. One meeting was held in Autumn 2020. • In 2019 – 2020 the focus had been prior to lock down was the preparation of subject leaders for a "Deep Dive" during an Ofsted inspection of a school. • The focus in 2018-19 was on assessment of the Agreed Syllabus. • In 2017- 2018 network meetings focussed on the Agreed Syllabus; sharing information for those not at the launch, workshopping teaching approaches and sharing best practice. <p>At Secondary a new teacher representative to SACRE has been appointed in 2020 – 21. It is anticipated that this will help to engage secondary schools in developing a model, similar to the primary network meetings. The 2017 Agreed Syllabus made full provision for secondary RE, however nationally there is a tendency for secondary schools to engage with their locally Agreed Syllabus only so far as it supports the GCSE. Ofsted do not recommend this. Responses from Islington secondary schools will be a particular focus during the planned review of the Islington Agreed Syllabus.</p>

	SACRE continues to encourage all schools to achieve RE Quality Mark (REQM)
3.5	<p>Withdrawal and Complaints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been no complaints about RE and no requests for withdrawal. • There have been no requests for change of designation and no complaints about collective worship. • There have been two (2) FOI requests which were responded to within the statutory time frame.
3.6	<p>Agreed Syllabus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agreed Syllabus for Islington was launched in 2017 and has been well received by schools, thanks to the ongoing external support from RE Today and from the Islington School Improvement Service, in highlighting and disseminating information about the syllabus and the concomitant resources. • SACRE is aware that the Commission of RE (Report, 2018) has recommended changes to SACREs in future, to be renamed Local Advisory Networks for Religion and Worldviews, and significantly to lose their statutory duty to review and produce an Agreed Syllabus every 5 yrs. • SACRE will keep abreast of any policy or pressures which suggest such changes might be underway through the input of the RE adviser and updates from NASACRE. • SACRE will prepare to review the 2017 Agreed Syllabus by March 2022 as it is uncertain whether changes to primary legislation will occur before then. This work will begin in September 2021.
3.7	<p>Collective Worship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SACRE provides a comprehensive guidance on Collective Worship (CW) on the website covering the legal requirements, its presence in different school types and the difference between 'collective' and 'corporate' worship. • Collective Worship is a statutory requirement in all schools. The legal requirement to provide a daily act of Collective Worship and religious education in the curriculum, known as the 'religious clauses', stems from the 1944 Education Act. • In this Act RE was included in the school day as Christian faith nurture rather than an academic subject of the curriculum. Some schools find the requirement for Collective Worship an anomaly, other schools do not offer worship in a religious sense but bring pupils together to celebrate shared values and develop a sense of trust, commitment and community. The future for RE seems to be as an academic subject rather than personal growth. • We believe Islington SACRE's continued guidance on Collective Worship, including non-religious approaches to Collective Worship, is an example of good practice. • As noted, there have been no requests for change of determination or complaints about Collective Worship
3.8	<p>Management of SACRE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two meetings of SACRE were held in 2020/21, including the AGM in May. The meeting of July 2021 was cancelled due to technical issues via Zoom. • Islington Council is responsible for the composition of SACRE. Islington SACRE is made up of three groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Representatives of the Church of England, other Christian denominations and other religions and world-views to reflect broadly the diversity of belief in the

	<p>area. Currently this includes representatives of Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Jain faiths and Humanist worldview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Associations representing teachers. Currently this includes both Primary and Secondary school teachers from Islington Schools. There remains a vacancy from teacher unions ○ Local Council representatives (including deputies as required) ○ Local authority adviser ○ Clerk to SACRE provided by Islington Governor Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During 2020 – 21 we thanked the following Local Authority representatives for their valuable contribution to Islington SACRE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Councillors Ngongo and Hyde ● Islington SACRE welcome the following Local Authority representatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Councillors Chapman and Ozdemir ● SACRE meetings are held at the Islington Town Hall and clerked by Islington Governor Services. There is no cost to Islington SACRE.
3.9	<p>Contribution of SACRE to the wider Local Authority agenda:</p> <p>School partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In bringing teachers together for network/CPD meetings and the annual conference SACRE is contributing to schools’ ability to collaborate effectively. ● In briefing school leaders and Governors on RE-related matters, including the work of teachers, SACRE supports schools’ knowledge and understanding of the wider educational picture. <p>Attainment measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintaining a focus on assessment and learning outcomes, SACRE has supported teachers of RE to create high quality teaching and learning and assessment materials. ● Through the School Improvement Service a range of moderation services have been provided to secondary schools <p>SACRE’s contribution to the LA’s public sector equality duty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Islington SACRE contributes to the borough’s wider equality duty by actively recruiting and welcoming people from diverse backgrounds. Islington is a diverse borough and SACRE reflects this. ● Islington SACRE is aligned to the Islington Council Challenging Inequality agenda ● SACRE has welcomed the School Improvement Service offer of Unconscious Bias training to Islington educational settings ● However, diversity of faith and belief is only one type of diversity. The Commission of RE final report recommends SACREs enlarge to include expertise from education, academia, museums and galleries, as well as faith and belief ‘insiders’. A next step will be to consider what strategic relationships and partnership with local educational and cultural organisations may support the work of SACRE.
3.10	<p>Planned future work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review the Islington Agreed Syllabus ● Review Collective Worship guidance to educational settings ● Supporting families and young people with the implementation of Relationship and Health Education and how the teaching of RE can support/complement this ● Provide a suite of training for school governors: Islington Agreed Syllabus/Collective Worship and other RE-related matters

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support schools to develop their preparedness for a “Deep Dive” during an Ofsted inspection • Enlarge and renew the SACRE membership • Organise a summer conference (2022) for teachers and SACRE members to relaunch the Islington Agreed Syllabus for September 2022 - 2027
4.	Implications
4.1	Financial implications:
	There are no financial implications from the recommendations in this report.
4.2	Legal Implications:
	The authority must constitute a standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE), to advise the authority on religious worship in community and non-denominational foundation schools and religious education to be given in connection with an agreed or other syllabus (sections 390 and 391 Education Act 1996). SACRE must publish an annual report, in particular in relation to advice given to the authority (section 391(6) and (7) Education Act 1996).
4.3	Resident Impact Assessment:
	<p>The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.</p> <p>A Resident Impact Assessment has not been completed because Religious Education is a statutory requirement and it supports schools and settings to enact the Equality Act of 2010.</p>
4.4	Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:
	There are no environmental Implications as a result of the recommendations in this report.
5.	Reason for recommendations
5.1	No further recommendations – please refer to section 2

Final report clearance:

Signed by:		
	Director of Childrens Services	Date:

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