

Dear Head teacher and Chair of Governors,

I am writing to provide you some information and updates about Durham SACRE.

SACRE is the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education which meets termly and comprises of representatives from:

- Christian denominations and other religions and their denominations which reflect the principal religious traditions of the county.
- The Church of England.
- Teachers' Associations.
- The Local Authority, including councillors and RE advisors.

Since the 1988 Education Reform Act every local authority has been required to set up a SACRE

One of the purposes of SACRE is to monitor the provision of RE in County Durham and the committee is also responsible for the revision and production of the Durham Agreed Syllabus.

At a time of significant change within education, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you about the statutory nature of Religious Education which is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools. In all maintained schools, other than voluntary aided schools with a religious character, it must be taught according to a locally Agreed Syllabus, (School Standards & Framework Act 1998) which is a statutory order.

The head teacher must ensure the provision of Religious Education and ensure that sufficient time and resources are given to Religious Education to meet statutory requirements. For LA maintained schools, the governing body and the LA must also exercise their functions in securing this provision.

Academies may, but are not required to, follow the locally agreed RE syllabus. Alternatively, they can devise their own syllabus, but it must be in line with the legislation that underpins the locally agreed syllabus.

Durham SACRE works closely with the Education Development Service (EDS) in Durham and with Isobel Short, Specialist Inspector for Religious Education who is also the professional support to SACRE. Durham EDS can provide support for schools through contracts, networks and regular courses. SACRE members endorse this and contributes to their success where appropriate.

In addition to this we would like to remind you to support RE colleagues through attendance at the termly network meetings and the upcoming GCSE RE conference on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

Yours Sincerely,

Paul Welch

Chairman – Durham SACRE