

Dear Head Teacher and Chair of Governors

I am writing to provide you with some information about Sunderland 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 local authority
- The Church of England
- Teachers Associations
- The local authority, including councillors and RE specialists

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

One of the purpose of SACRE is to monitor the provision of RE in Sunderland and following a meeting of the Agreed Syllabus conference be responsible for the revision, production of the Sunderland Agreed Syllabus.

At a time of significant change within education, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of 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 the locally agreed syllabus (schools 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.

Sunderland SACRE works closely with the School Improvement Service in Sunderland and with Cathryn Forbes. Head of Humanities at Farringdon Community Academy who is the professional support to SACRE.

We are currently looking to develop the range of support obtainable to schools, for example, networks and conferences. We would value your feedback as to how SACRE could further support your school in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. Therefore we would urge you to contact Annette Parr (Annette.parr@sunderland.gov.uk) or Cathryn Forbes (cathryn.Forbes@farringdonca.net) with any suggestions.

Yours sincerely

DRAFT