

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

Standing Advisory Council

for

Religious Education

Annual Report for 2004

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1. Overview

1.1 Requirements as under the Education Act 1996

In accordance with requirements of section 391 (7) of the above act, the SACRE has had no reason during the year to give the Bath and North East Somerset Council any advice with regard to religious worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with the agreed syllabus. There have been no applications from Head Teachers in county schools to waive the requirements that collective worship shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

2. Religious Education

2.1 Locally agreed syllabus

Bath and North East Somerset Council adopted Somerset's locally agreed syllabus from 01 April 1999 for implementation from September 2000. Discussions are currently taking place with Somerset and North Somerset LEAs, who share the same syllabus, about possible revisions and additions.

2.2 Monitoring

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE receives summaries of the relevant sections of reports following inspection of schools under the School Inspection Act 1996 Sec 10 (OFSTED reports), showing coverage of curriculum requirements, the act of collective worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision. Generally, provision for primary and Key Stage 3 in secondary schools is good and never less than satisfactory. The picture for Key Stage 4 and Sixth forms is far more variable, ranging from unsatisfactory to good.

3. Standards in religious education

3.1 OFSTED Reports

Although the current OFSTED framework requires judgements on religious education, acts of collective worship and personal development, reports received suggest that schools do not nominate these areas to be the focus of an inspection and consequently they are often sampled rather than reported on in depth. The proposed changes to school inspection due to be implemented from September 2005 are likely to exacerbate this situation and it will be difficult, if not impossible, to gain an accurate and reliable picture of standards in religious education.

3.2 Public examination results (attached) Summer 2004 (Data provided by DES may not be accurate)

Religious studies full GCSE
Religious studies short GCSE
Religious studies A S levels
Religious Studies A Level

4. Methods of teaching, material and training

4.1 Teaching

No advice has been given to the Local Education Authority on teaching.

4.2 Teaching materials

Teaching materials received from Bath and North East Somerset schools, Somerset and North Somerset LEAs and national organisations are being promoted on the SACRE website.

4.3 Teacher training

No training was organised this year but schools have been circulated with courses being run nationally and especially locally by Somerset SACRE, who have the benefit of an experienced Religious Education consultant.

5. Complaints concerning religious education

There were no complaints received.

6. Collective worship

6.1 Advice

No advice was asked for and none was given.

6.2 Monitoring

The Local Authority advisers undertake this role as part of their link role with schools. Action in one secondary school and one primary schools was necessary. The support was well received and positive action resulted.

6.3 Training

No training on collective worship was organised.

7. Determinations

No determinations were sought.

8. Complaints about collective worship

No complaints were received.

9. Links with other agencies

9.1 National

SACRE members attended the following conference:

NASCRES AGM – May 2004
QCA Conference – December 2004

9.2 Local

Contact is maintained and found helpful with North Somerset SACRE and the Secondary Heads of Religious Education group.

10. Other issues

10.1 Governor training

Governor training has been given, as part of a LEA induction programme, to explain the position of and requirements for religious education and collective worship.

10.2 SACRE Website

Financial help from the LEA and the enthusiasm of a small working party of SACRE members, including an elected councillor, ensured that a website dedicated to SACRE is maintained and developed.

11. SACRE arrangements

11.1 Professional, administrative support and finance

The Local Authority funds a clerk for 10 days a year, covers members travelling expenses and administration costs. The additional budget of £11,052 was allocated to cover the running of the website, newsletter, training for SACRE members and developments items, such as the establishment of a Resource Centre for teachers.