

NNW SACRE Hub

Meeting held on 24th February 2015

The meeting included representatives from the following SACREs:

Bolton

Bury

Cumbria

Lancashire

Warrington

Wigan

Apologies were received from Blackpool SACRE

Professional Development Support

The main item for discussion was support for the teaching and learning of RE and Helen Harrison (RE consultant) provided information on a range of sources of support for RE. These include:

- The Religious Education Council (REC)
- RE today
- National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE)

Specific sources of support were also highlighted:

- The RE Handbook
- RE Online
- The RE Directory

Local RE support was also discussed and this includes:

- The Lancashire Course programme
- Annual conferences for RE teachers
- Local Network meetings for RE teachers
- Governor conferences
- Good practice schools
- The use of social media (Facebook and Twitter)

The importance of supporting those who teach RE was agreed and it was recognised that as minimum expectation:

- All RE teachers should have access to national resources (e.g. being a member of an RE Association)
- Governors should be aware of the support given to teachers of RE
- All schools should have access to support in teaching about world religions from practising members of faith communities who understand and can promote the aims of Religious Education

The value of sharing resources and ideas was agreed and strategies to achieve this include:

- Sharing events across the local authorities in the Hub so that schools can access support from beyond their local authority area
- Use of IT to share information between the Hub representatives
- Advertising professional development opportunities on the national database
- Social media

Increase in withdrawal from RE

There was also a discussion about an increase in the number of incidents across the Hub area where pupils are being withdrawn from particular aspects of RE which relate to a particular faith e.g Islam, Judaism. In addition, there was some evidence that the number of Racist incidents was increasing. A range of strategies to support schools in dealing with these issues were explored and it was agreed that the following would be valuable:

- Support from faith communities, including visitors to schools and membership of SACREs
- Support for teachers in dealing with difficult issues

Letter from Lord Nash

The letter from Lord Nash, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools was discussed and it was agreed that responses would be sent by individual SACRES. It was also agreed that, following the General Election, the NNW SACRE Hub should request a meeting with government to discuss the issues facing RE.

Next meeting: Monday 15th June