

Isle of Wight SACRE Monitoring Report
Medina House Special School

Confidential Report of SACRE monitoring visit – 28 June 2018

- Focus:**
- To monitor the provision of Religious Education (RE) and effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus.
 - To enable members of the Island SACRE to observe RE in a primary school. A representative from the Island SACRE, Norma Corney, was able to attend the visit.

- Activity:**
- Extended discussion with the RE Manager, Janice Willmott, about the RE provision including consideration of the subject leader's file, planning and adapting of the planning, monitoring a sample of children's books and consideration of the Hampshire syllabus Living Difference III planning being used.
 - Introduction to the Deputy Headteacher.
 - Observation of RE lessons across the school.
 - Feedback and follow-up discussion with RE Manager.

- Background:**
- The school caters for primary-age pupils with learning difficulties from across the Isle of Wight.
 - All pupils have a statement of special educational needs for their moderate, severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. A growing number of pupils have a diagnosis of autism and a few have additional visual, hearing or multi-sensory impairments.
 - The RE Manager, Janice Willmott, has been the RE leader for 2 years at the school and is handing on the role to another colleague at the end of this summer term.
 - She has attended a wide range of training for RE, including the RE with Special Needs course each term this year, the SACRE introduction to the Locally Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference III and the Primary RE training day at Honeyhill school on the island for Managing RE.
 - Janice is also a member of the island's SACRE and regularly attends meetings as part of this.
 - There have been no withdrawals for RE in the school.

- Findings:**
- Curriculum:**
- The long term plan for RE was seen and talked through with the RE Leader. This complied with the syllabus identifying the concepts being taught and the religions in focus (Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism), which were appropriate for the school. The school website needs to be updated with this plan. The RE policy was thorough, up to date and on the website already.
 - The RE Leader has a very good understanding of the Living

Difference III syllabus and has used the training given on the networks to help improve the quality of the planning and learning in school – for example by talking through how she has adapted the planning for all children and how she has planned assessment for children to capture what they can do.

- The RE Leader has used staff meetings with the teachers to help them understand and adapt the medium term plans and the cycle of enquiry in their teaching. Several examples of planning skilfully adapted to suit the needs of the children were seen and discussed during the visit.
- A sample of RE work from across the school was looked at and there was evidence here of the RE Leader's monitoring of the work done, including learning walks. The work was captured in a variety of ways depending on the needs of the child and the assessment outcomes were clear to see.
- The work showed the school's own assessment system which runs from Level 1 to 7, with levels 6 and 7 being drawn from the ARE's in the locally agreed syllabus.
- The RE Leader has brought her RE work and assessment guidelines to the RE with Special Needs group for feedback and comparison with other schools, to help her develop the school's system. She has worked in detail on assessment and sought feedback from the group to improve her materials on a regular basis.
- The school uses the Hampshire Medium Term Plans for RE as well as some of the teaching packs and these were selected with thought for the needs of the children – for example most learning used A concepts that were everyday examples for the children to follow.
- The school had a detailed action plan for RE which contained clear steps for developing the teaching this year and the on going training for the teachers.
- The RE Leader was aware of the need to develop the use of visitors for RE as an action point. She had arranged a visit from the SACRE Buddhist representative with a sensory focus on singing and music and this had been very successful. She had also developed the use of sensory services at the local Minster each term and these were very successful in complementing the RE lessons and in engaging the children.
- The school had ordered artefacts and resources from the island's RE centre to help make the RE as sensory as possible and the RE Leader was considering the use of persona dolls to help where appropriate in some lessons.

Teaching

- During the visit, several classes were visited to observe RE learning.
- The first class seen was Seashells which was focused on Water as a symbol in RE and the lesson was based on the Communicate step by concentrating on the children's experience and feelings about water.
- The teacher created a highly sensory lesson using water

running down a slope, guitar music about water, lights and sounds with water on an individual basis to help children access the learning at their own level.

- The next class seen, Turtles, was also looking at water but using very different activities based on the needs within the class. Here they were using a teacher led activity with the class focusing on listening to music about water while creating their own water art. All the children were engaged and very keen to take part in the activities.
- The seahorses class were also looking at water as a concept but using a very different structure. They used a selection of activities, including water play and the story of John the Baptist with Makaton symbols to help the children learn about water in Christianity. The children also created art with sand to show the flow and pattern in water visually. All the children were fully absorbed and enjoying their learning.
- Other classes were seen too, which all varied the learning activities for the class to suit the needs of the children. In particular, the class focusing on Change adapted the Bible story suggested to use one on Jesus calming the storm, as this was felt to be much more obvious to the children and far more visual for them to remember. This was a better story for the children to focus on than the one in the planning and showed the thought that had gone into this by the teacher.

Leadership and Management

The RE Leader and management team were aware of what the school was doing for RE and were very supportive of the subject and the training for the teachers. The RE Manager had arranged an organised, detailed visit and had a clear action plan for improving the RE experience for the children. She knew how to move the subject on, particularly focusing on assessment and consistency in capturing evidence across the school as the next major subject step. The RE Manager had developed the Living Difference III syllabus clearly in the school and this was evident in the planning and examples of work seen.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the RE long term plan is placed on the school website, so that the information is available to all.
- It is recommended that the next RE Manager continues to monitor the assessment and recording of RE work across the school to ensure the high standard for RE is maintained.
- It is recommended that the school plans for a wider range of visitors for RE to help the children enjoy and remember their learning as much as possible.