

16th April

The Department for Education has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (134699):

Question:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for how many local authorities the agreed religious education standard is provided (a) by the local authority's own Agreed Religious Education Syllabus Conference, (b) by another local authority's Agreed Religious Education Syllabus Conference and (c) on a standard basis by RE Today. (134699)

Tabled on: 28 March 2018

This question was grouped with the following question(s) for answer:

1. To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the extent to which SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. (134696)
Tabled on: 28 March 2018
2. To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department takes when it learns that an individual SACRE or Agreed Syllabus Conference is experiencing difficulties in fulfilling its statutory duties; and if he will make a statement. (134697)
Tabled on: 28 March 2018
3. To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many SACREs there are; and how many of those SACREs have no representation from humanism or other non-religious beliefs. (134698)
Tabled on: 28 March 2018

Answer:

Nick Gibb:

Local authorities have a duty to establish a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), locally representative inter-faith bodies whose role is to support religious education and collective worship in schools. SACREs should advise the local authority on religious education provision, including methods of teaching, resources, and the provision of teachers. They should also produce and publish an annual report on their activity.

Local authorities are responsible for convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) every five years, and providing an agreed syllabus which must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. The Department has not made an assessment of whether local authorities are working collaboratively to establish their agreed religious education standard or using RE Today's syllabus template. Local authorities are free to make arrangements that are right for them and their schools when preparing a locally agreed syllabus.

Local authorities are responsible for appointing representatives to each of four committees on a SACRE. For group A, these should represent Christian denominations and such other religions and religious denominations as, in the local authority's opinion, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area. For group B, the Church of England; group C, teacher associations; and group D, the local authority. The Department has not made an assessment of the representation of any religious or non-religious belief on SACREs.

If the Department is informed that an individual SACRE or ASC is experiencing difficulties in fulfilling its statutory duties, the Department will contact the local authority to remind them of their duty to support their activities satisfactorily.

The answer was submitted on 16 Apr 2018 at 08:04.

NOTE:

- All the written questions tabled in the current Session of Parliament (and where relevant, the answers) can be viewed here: <https://members.wqa.parliament.uk>