

## SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** SACRE                   **DATE:** 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015

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**WARD(S):** All

### PART I

#### FOR INFORMATION

#### COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOLS

##### 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is simply to provide details of the new Common Inspection Framework for schools which is operable from September 2015. This information relates to the scrutiny of religious education and collective worship.

##### 2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to note the report.

##### 3. Supporting Information

The common inspection framework:

Education, skills and early years

School Inspection Handbook

Implementation from September 2015

##### 3.1 Inspection of religious education and collective worship: Schools with a religious character

If a voluntary or foundation school is designated as having a denominational religious character ('a school with a religious character'), then denominational religious education, the school ethos and the content of collective worship are inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. Academies designated as having a religious character by the Secretary of State are inspected in an equivalent way by virtue of a provision in the academy's funding agreement. The inspectors who conduct section 48 inspections are appointed by the school's governing body or the foundation governors in a voluntary controlled school, having consulted with person(s) prescribed in regulations (normally the appropriate religious authority) where applicable. The inspectors are normally drawn from the relevant faith group's section 48 inspection service, although not all faith groups have their own inspectors organised in this way.

Regulations specify that Inspectors may visit lessons and assemblies in order to help them evaluate how those contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their personal development, behaviour and welfare. The relationship between section 5 and section 48 inspections is governed by a protocol between Ofsted and signatory faith group inspectorates.

3.2 Ofsted's lead inspector should check the section 48 arrangements and:

- if a section 48 inspection is occurring at the same time, the section 5 report, in the section on 'information about this school', should mention that a section 48 inspection also took place; the section 5 report should not use evidence from the section 48 inspection
- if a section 48 inspection has been carried out since the previous section 5 or short inspection, inspectors should inform themselves of any key issues raised but should not use its evidence in their own inspection
- if no section 48 inspection by a suitable person has taken place, the lead inspector should check the arrangements. These schools must conform to the legal requirements for non-faith schools:
- RE in maintained schools (except voluntary aided schools, those with specific trust requirements and voluntary controlled/foundation schools whose parents request denominational RE) should be based on the locally agreed syllabus prepared by the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). The RE curriculum should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Britain. It also means that a school or academy without a religious designation must not provide an RE syllabus (or any other) to pupils by means of any catechism or formulary that is distinctive of any particular religious denomination.
- 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 as mentioned above. Academies without a defined religious character must provide collective worship that is 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. Inspectors should note any requirements of the academy's funding agreement.
- A school can reflect the religious backgrounds represented in its community in its collective worship, as long as the majority of provision is broadly Christian. Alternatively, the family backgrounds of some or all pupils may lead the headteacher and governing body to conclude that broadly Christian collective worship is not appropriate. The headteacher can apply to the local Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) to have the broadly Christian requirement disapplied and replaced by collective worship distinctive to another faith. The headteacher must consult the governing body before doing so. Academies need to apply to the Secretary of State via the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

**4. Comments of Other Committees**

This report has not been to any other committees.

**5. Conclusion**

This report is simply to provide SACRE with details about the new Ofsted scrutiny of schools with particular regard to religious education and collective worship.

**6. Background Papers**

Ofsted Common Inspection Framework: School Inspection Handbook