

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Thursday, 17th June, 2021.

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Ashpreet Singh Nainu (Chair), Sue Elbrow, Zubayr Abbas-Bowkan, Waqar Bhatti, Shujah Hamid and Hardip Singh Sohal

Committee 2 – Church of England

Lynda Bussley (Vice-Chair), Rev Gordon Briggs and Christine

Committee 3 – Representatives of Teacher Associations

Councillors Basra, Begum, Brooker, Kaur and Smith

Committee 4 – Representatives of the LEA

Councillors Basra, Begum, Brooker, Kaur and Smith

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Sparrow and Sharp

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING WAS NOT QUORATE AND NO FORMAL DECISIONS WERE THEREFORE MADE.

29. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 3 March 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2021 would be reported to the next meeting.

30. Matters Arising

Minute 24: SACRE Finance Update - It was confirm that the Chair had reviewed and given approval for the purchase of the book entitled, 'Making Every RE Lesson Count (a practical guide to RE)' by Louise Hutton and Dawn Cox. A copy would be sent by the publishers directly to all primary and secondary schools at no extra postage cost.

31. SACRE Membership Update

The Chair asked the Clerk to send details of the next meeting to the Hindu Education Board UK, as they were keen to send a representative to attend the meeting as an observer. In addition, an invitation would be sent to a secondary school teacher who had also expressed an interest in attending a meeting as an observer.

32. Review of the Terms of Reference and Membership of SACRE and making recommendations to Council

The SACRE considered a report on the review of the terms of reference and membership. The proposal to consider widening Committee 1 (Christian Denominations and Other Faiths) category to include 'beliefs' had been

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recommended to establish a way of appointing the Humanist representative to full voting membership. It was noted that any revisions to the TOR would need to be endorsed by the Member Panel on the Constitution and ratified by Council.

During discussion, some members expressed the view that Humanism was not a faith, and as such, could not be included in Committee 1 category. Others suggested that more information and further discussion was needed and critically, to be mindful of the requirement to reflect the religious population in the local area in the membership.

The Professional Adviser (Adviser) reported that a number of SACREs had included Humanism in category 1, to give voice to representative members. Members were informed that Religious Education (RE) was not simply about the study of a religion, but rather about encouraging young people to value themselves and the communities they lived in. In addition, RE teaching in secondary schools currently incorporated other views, as reflected in the Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2018-2023. It also specified the study of a non-religious worldwide view in Key Stage 3 (noted as possibly Humanism).

Members broke up into their respective groups to discuss the proposal further and to decide whether to vote in favour or against the proposal, as each group was entitled to just a single vote. There was no voting right for Co-opted members.

Members returned and the following was noted that Committee 1 (Christian Denomination and Other Faiths) was undecided, Committee 2 (Church of England) was in favour and Committee 4 (Representatives of the LEA) was not in favour.

No Committee 3 members were (Representatives of Teacher Association) present at the meeting.

The Clerk advised that there needed to be at least one member present from each of the four groups in order for the meeting to be quorate. As there was no representative member in Committee 3 present, the meeting was deemed to be inquorate. No formal decision could therefore be made.

The proposal would be reconsidered at a future meeting.

(At point 6 (the top of page 3 of the report) the rest of the sentence after 'Humanism' was disregarded as it was not applicable).

33. Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub Update

It was reported that no representative from Slough SACRE had attended this meeting.

The SACRE congratulated Anne Andrews, RE Adviser, Oxford Diocesan Board Education and Chair of Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub on her election to a

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post on the NASACRE Executive (National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education).

(Sue Elbrow was experiencing internet problems at this point connecting in and out of the meeting).

34. Summer 2021 SACRE RE Newsletter

Members received the Summer 2021 SACRE RE newsletter and were encouraged to submit items for inclusion in the Autumn 2021 newsletter to the Adviser or the Clerk.

It was confirmed that the newsletter had been circulated to schools.

35. SACRE Action Plan 2021-2022

The Adviser provided an update of the 2021-2022 Draft SACRE Budget.

The following points were highlighted:

- The next NASACRE conference was likely to be held in Birmingham.
- The next RE Network meeting would be held on 1 July 2021 (a previous meeting had taken place in May 2021). The Chair requested for practice materials to be provided to RE teachers and circulated to all those on the RE co-ordinators database. The Adviser was requested to check that schools had received their copy of the 'Making Every RE Lesson Count (a practical guide to RE)' book and to take the opportunity to establish what further resources schools may require.

Members discussed the issue of SACRE connecting with schools and it was suggested that a short RE survey of teachers should be undertaken to get feedback on ways that SACRE could increase engagement with schools. It was highlighted that this was a critical method used as part of the process of reviewing the Agreed Syllabus (every 5 years) in gathering feedback and comments from teachers.

The SACRE thanked David Rees, the Professional Adviser for the work he had done in producing the newsletters and in increasing engagement with RE teachers.

36. Draft SACRE Budget Update

Members noted the NASACRE estimated recommended level of funding of 2% from the CSSB (Central Services School Block) to SACREs.

The Group Manager for Schools Effectiveness was therefore asked to provide details about the following in order to ascertain the percentage of funding received:

- The amount of CSSB funding received by the Council.

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- The percentage of funding currently allocated to Slough SACRE.

A response to be provided via email.

(Sue Elbrow was having problems connecting in and out of the meeting).

37. A short summary of Ofsted Published Research Review on Religious Education

Members noted a short summary of the Ofsted published research review on RE, which sought to help prevent pupils from developing misconceptions about religion and non-religion.

The Adviser encouraged members to view available resources at RE: Online (www.reonline.org.uk), where details on religion/worldview could also be found. A link to the Think Tank RE: Online video would also be circulated to members for information.

During discussion, the question about monitoring the quality of RE being taught in schools was raised and it was explained that a series of reviews were being undertaken on the whole school curriculum, which included RE with the focus on lived experiences. No indicators had been provided about the correct way of carrying out assessment, as the decision was left to local areas. More work was therefore needed in this area. The Adviser was involved in the assessment process, and would provide feedback to SACRE. The Adviser explained that the review had highlighted that students could now access Eastern religions and the need to promote greater use of religious buildings.

Members discussed that the Crossing the Bridges programme should be revisited in order to further promote the crossing the bridges places of worship project. This item would be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

The Vice-chair suggested that a scheme of work should be developed, based on the Agreed Syllabus to promote the principles of believing, belonging and behaving. Lynda Bussley would send a copy of a draft plan to the Adviser for information.

38. SACRE Membership News (An update from members regarding activities undertaken since the last SACRE meeting)

Councillor Brooker reported that he had been appointed as a church warden and had been asked to become a school governor at St Mary's CE Primary School.

Julie Siddiqi announced that Sunday 4 July was National Thank You Day. She had been involved in the initiative and had endeavoured to promote the inclusion of faith elements. Members were encouraged to get involved and details would be sent to the Clerk for circulation.

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The Chair reported that Robin Lander had made a presentation on Humanism (taught as world view) for Year 8 pupils in his school. Further presentation at assemblies for Years, 7, 8 and 9 had also been arranged.

39. Equality and Diversity - Resources

Equality and Diversity

The Adviser reported that Milton Keynes Council was offering training to schools on Understanding the Importance of Race and Diversity, on 17 & 24 June 2021. Further details would be sent to the Clerk for circulation to members.

40. SACRE Members' Attendance Record

SACRE members' attendance record was presented.

41. Date of Next Meeting - 6 October 2021

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 6 October 2021.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.30 pm and closed at 6.13 pm)