

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TUESDAY, 20 APRIL 2021

PRESENT:-

Group A: Jo Backus (Buddhist Community), David Burbidge
Christian Denominations and (Baptist Church), Reverend David Howell (Swindon
Other Religions or Religious Evangelical Alliance), Malkit Babbra (Buddhist
Denominations Community), and Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community)

Group B: Ruth Williams, and Reverend Clive Deverell
Church of England

Group C: Tracy Mason, Helen Redhead, Lottie O'Brien and
Teacher Organisations Emma McCarthy

Group D: Councillors Fay Howard and Matthew Courtliff
Councillors

Also in attendance: Jo Garton

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Oladapo Ibitoye Imityaz Shakh and Garry Perkin. Claire Marie Burchall, Atiff Ghafar and Fidelma Meehan.

10. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded members of the need to declare any known interests in any matter to be considered by the Committee. No declarations were made.

11. Public Question Time

No public questions were received for this meeting.

12. Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed members to the last meeting of this Municipal year. She advised that this was her last meeting as Chair as she was not seeking re-election in May. It was noted that as per the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) committee's constitution, the next Chair would be elected from either Group A, B or C.

The Chair also confirmed that working party discussions will be held at the end of that SACRE meeting.

13. Minutes

That the minutes of the meeting on 24th November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

14.**Verbal Feedback from teacher members**

The SACRE received feedback from teacher members on how schools were undertaking religious education during this period. The Committee noted the following:

- Children were happy to come back into school
- Some pupils and staff at schools had their vaccinations in February.
- Schools did their best to provide support for home schooling.
- Emma McCarthy – Videos created for Years 3 and 4 with activities to do; RE videos created for the rest of the school; weekly assembly video for the school. This was an improvement on Lockdown 1, where work was being set for students to complete at home. The videos were an improvement from the first lockdown
- David Burbidge – Junior schools had taken up the invite to receive modules of work. There were also craft activities undertaken.
- Tracy Mason – RE, in line with other subjects, was left to the tutors to determine the work to be provided. The focus was more on the wellbeing of the pupils.
- Lottie O'Brien - Importance of collective worship. Virtual lessons were being held. Jo Garton- following her mentoring with a CoFE NVQH student, she would like to share the work created on spirituality at St Francis CoFE School by the student.

Resolved – That the paper prepared by the CoFE NVQH student regarding spirituality be submitted at a future meeting of the group.

15.**Annual Report**

The SACRE received its draft Annual Report covering the period September 2019 to August 2020. The Annual Report provided information in relation to the following areas:

- Introduction to SACRE
- Supporting Good RE through CPD
- Introduction to the SACRE Advisor including a synopsis of her work.
- Agreed Syllabus for RE in Swindon
- Support for schools
- Key events during the academic year 2019/20
- Support for schools through Governor training
- Monitoring of RE provision in Swindon schools
- Attendance by SACRE members at outside events
- Membership
- Funding and administration issues
- Meetings held
- Examination results data

The document was reviewed for accuracy. The SACRE Advisor explained that writing the report was a challenge due to the pandemic. It was noted that conferences had to be held online but that these were not undertaken during the first lockdown last year. Other points raised included:

- There were public exam results to record in the report;
- The second round of website scrutiny was not undertaken;
- Work on the WIRE awards was unable to be conducted.
- Voting and non-voting members on the group. It was agreed that a review of the Constitution be undertaken to review membership.
- Recruitment of new members onto SACRE. It was noted that a) Claire-Marie Burchall and b) Michelle Howard were stepping down from the group.

Resolved – (1) That the Chair and SACRE Advisor be requested to review the current SACRE constitution.

(2) That further to (1) above, the SACRE Constitution be an agenda item at the next meeting of the committee.

(3) Further to (1) above, the Chair and the SACRE Advisor be requested to liaise with the Legal Department regarding any amendments to be made to the SACRE constitution.

(4) That the Annual Report be submitted to the Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(5) That the SACRE Advisor be requested to arrange for the upload of the annual report to the national SACRE website.

(6) That Jo Garton be added to Group A of the Committee.

16. Verbal Feedback from RE Conference and SACRE Conference

The SACRE discussed the RE Annual Conference and the South West SACRE conference that were held online this year. It was noted that both were well attended (presentation from the South West SACRE Conference attached for information). Feedback was received from those attending the conference who confirmed that the sessions were very informative. It was noted that topics raised included the de-colonisation of Islam and the world views on religion. The SACRE how world views on religion may impact future RE curriculum. The SACRE Advisor confirmed that teachers from Swindon schools attended the Teacher's conference on RE. However, there were no representatives from SACRE.

17. National Updates / Newsletter for Schools

The SACRE received an update from the SACRE Advisor, who

- Confirmed that schools were able to attend virtual workshops on-line.
- Voiced concerns regarding replacement of GCSE and A Level exams. Schools are supporting each other, but further work was needed.
- Advised that no financial support offered to schools to attend RE training sessions and subject knowledge enhancements.
- Advised that discussions at the SACRE symposium will have an impact on curriculum work. Only teachers are able to attend. Good place for RE discussions and an opportunity to network. There will be a residential conference in the autumn. Places are limited.
- Confirmed that guidance on Ramadan was available and that Passover, Easter and Ramadan were close together this year.
- Advised that resources for Easter were available. This included a film made of Wells Cathedral. Additionally Swindon Evangelical Church created a number of supporting material for assemblies.

Resolved - (1) That teachers members of SACRE be requested to sign up to the SACRE symposium.

(2) That the SACRE Advisor be requested to circulate newsletters to schools.

18. Agreed Syllabus Conference

The SACRE had a discussion regarding the agreed syllabus. They reviewed the working party minutes from 21st January 2021 and their recommendations. The recommendations are:

1. That we keep the same Swindon Agreed Syllabus for the next 5 years
2. That we accept the relicensing offer from RE Today Services for £4838
3. That we offer all schools a re-launch training package where we showcase examples of exemplary local practice and offer the new supplementary booklet with supporting briefing in Spring Term 2022.

19. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

Here are the provisional dates for the meetings next Municipal year. These will be confirmed at Full Council in May 2021.

- 13th July 2021
- 23rd November 2021
- 15th March 2022