

# **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**TUESDAY, 27 JUNE 2017**

**PRESENT:-**

**Group A:** Mr David Burbidge (Baptist Church), Reverend  
Christian Denominations and David Howell (Swindon Evangelical Alliance)  
Other Religions or Religious and Mr Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community)  
Denominations

**Group B:** Reverend Clive Deverell, Miss Janet French,  
Church of England Reverend Norma McKemey and Ms Steph  
Mundin

**Group C:** Mrs Emma McCarthy  
Teacher Organisations

**Group D:** Councillors Mrs Lottie O'Brien (Chair),  
Councillors Fionuala Foley, Fay Howard, Barbara Parry and  
Gary Sumner  
Also in attendance: Peter Nathan and Katy Staples (SACRE  
Advisor) Jo Garton

Apologies for absence were received from Jo Backus, Fidelma Meehan, Mr Gurchoran Singh Lyal, Mrs Tracy Mason, Mrs Mandy Sandleton, Mr M S Khan, Mr Tony McAteer, Sarah Foulkes and Councillor Matthew Courtliff

## **1. Appointment of Chair**

Resolved - (1) That the appointment of Chair for the Municipal Year 2017/18 be deferred to the next meeting of the SACRE being held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017.  
(2) That Lottie O'Brien be appointed as Chair for this meeting of the SACRE only.

## **2. Appointment of Vice-Chair**

Resolved - That the appointment of Vice-Chair be deferred to the next meeting of the SACRE being held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

## **3. Welcome from Oliver Tomkins School**

The Headteacher, Rhian Cockwell and Vice-Chair of Governors, Clive Deverell, welcomed the SACRE to Oliver Tomkins Infant and Junior Schools, and with reference to the role and function of SACRE, for members' information, Ms Cockwell briefly summarised the School's approach to religious education for pupils.

## **4. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in

any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillor Gary Sumner made a personal, non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of all Agenda Items, on the grounds that his wife is a deputy head teacher of a Swindon school.

## **5. Public Question Time**

No public questions were received during the meeting.

## **6. Minutes**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **7. Development Plan - 2016-2018**

The SACRE received the updated Swindon SACRE Development Plan 2016-18, which was due to be developed further taking into account the suggested vision statement and goals for Swindon SACRE.

The SACRE considered the vision statements and analysed each of the four goals in relation to (i) how the Plan works, (ii) the Plans successes, and (iii) future actions. The SACRE felt that Plan was too complex and trying to achieve too much. It was suggested that, in order for the Plan to become a workable document and to ensure that recommendations are deliverable, the number of actions under each goal should be reduced to four or five. The following issues were raised and debated by members:

- The ability to Swindonise the Goals and teaching materials to support teachers.
- Schools to focus on the areas of the curriculum in relation to Religious Education (RE) they feel comfortable delivering.
- The differences between the delivery of RE in Community Schools and Faith Schools.
- Ofsted's expectation of schools developing the whole person.
- Informing the Swindon Areas Secondary Heads (SASH) of the SACRE agenda.
- Evaluating the new Agreed Syllabus for RE.
- The lack of funds to place the Agreed Syllabus for RE on-line, along with SACRE web pages.
- Primary schools being more compliant than secondary school with collective worship.
- Available guidance documents on Collective Worship.
- Undertaking a review of the Time to Breathe document.
- Including the SACRE Terms of Reference on the agenda.
- Removing the Key Performance Indicators from the Development Plan 2016-18.
- Creating a working contact list of suitable speakers on different faiths.

- National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) guidance about the expectations placed on speakers visiting schools.
- Responding to national and local crisis and possible guidance for RE Teachers.

Resolved – (1) That the SACRE Advisor updates the draft Development Plan 2016-18, in line with members' comments during the debate of the item, as summarised above.

(2) That Jo Garton, in her role as a Swindon Community Radio presenter, be asked to interview secondary school children about their thoughts on the New Agreed Syllabus for RE.

(3) That action A1 be removed from Goal 2.

(4) That the Time to Breathe document be further reviewed.

(5) That, in future, the SACRE Terms of Reference be included on the agenda frontsheet.

(6) That Steph Munda and Jo Garton prepare a contact list of suitable speakers on different faiths, as a resource for RE teachers.

(7) That the SACRE Advisor prepare guidance for RE Teachers about how they best respond to national and/or local crises.

## **8. NASACRE AGM Report and National Developments**

The SACRE considered an update report from the SACRE Advisor on a number of National Developments in relation to Religious Education, in particular feedback from the National Association of SACRE's Annual General Meeting.

The SACRE Advisor informed the SACRE of the most recent work of the Commission on Religious Education's and its request for evidence from SACRE's about observations and experiences over the years in relation to Religious Education. The SACRE Advisor provided a suggested response to the Commission, about 'Common baseline entitlement to RE' being the issue that most concerns Swindon SACRE at this time.

In supporting the draft response, the SACRE suggested that the local MP's should be contacted for comments before the response is forwarded to the Commission.

Resolved – (1) That the response prepared by the SACRE Advisor to the most recent request for evidence by the Commission on religious Education be agreed.

(2) That the two local MP's be asked to comment on the SACRE's response prior to it being forwarded to the Commission.

(3) That the SACRE Advisor seek to take appropriate steps to try and raise awareness of RE at future Swindon Association Secondary Headteachers meetings.

## **9. Feedback from Hub Meetings**

The SACRE received an update from Emma McCarthy, Hub Leader, about the recent RE Hub meeting. The Hub Leader explained that both primary and secondary schools attended the meeting and, although the numbers attending were less than the previous meeting, it was helpful to have a smaller group to build relationships and encourage the interaction between primary and secondary RE

teachers.

**10. Thanks to Sarah Lane Cawte**

The Chair and SACRE Advisor, on behalf of the Swindon SACRE, thanked Sarah Lane-Cawte for chairing the SACRE over the years and for her enthusiasm, incredible energy, hard work, knowledge and expertise of both local and national religious education issues. The SACRE wished Mrs Lane-Cawte all the best for her move and new life in Sussex.

**11. Date and Time of the Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the SACRE would be held on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017, commencing at 6:00pm, venue to be agreed.