

# Swindon Borough Council

## Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

**Tuesday, 26 November 2019**

The Commonweal School, The Mall, Swindon SN1 4JE

At 6.00 p.m.

**Group A:  
Christian Denominations  
and Other Religions or  
Religious Denominations**

Malkit Babbra, Sikh Community  
Jo Backus, Buddhist Community  
David Burbidge, Baptist Church  
Claire-Marie Burchall, Roman Catholic Community  
Atiff Ghafar, Muslim Community  
Reverend David Howell, Swindon Evangelical Alliance  
Michelle Howard, United Reformed Church  
Dinesh Patel, Hindu Community

**Group B:  
The Church of England**

Reverend Clive Deverell  
Reverend Norma McKemey  
Ruth Williams

**Group C:  
Teacher Associations**

Tracy Mason, NEU  
Helen Redhead NEU  
Lottie O'Brien, NASUWT  
Emma McCarthy, NASUWT

**Group D:  
The Local Authority**

Councillor Matthew Courtliff  
Councillor Fay Howard  
Councillor Oladapo Ibitoye  
Councillor Garry Perkins  
Councillor Bazil Solomon

**Co-Opted:**

Jo Garton, Swindon Humanists  
Fidelma Meehan, Baha'i Community

**Support Officers:**

Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor  
Gareth Cheal, Education Place Planning and Admissions  
Manager  
Steve Bogg, Commissioner for Education

**Committee Officer:** Rita Glen Gallo, 07980 752051  
email: [rglen-galo@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:rglen-galo@swindon.gov.uk)

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Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

# **AGENDA**

**1. Welcome from the Chair**

**2. Apologies for Absence**

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

**4. Public Question Time**

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

**5. Chair's Announcements**

**6. Minutes** (Pages 5 - 8)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019.

**7. Minutes from Key Stage 4 Working Party** (Pages 9 - 12)

**8. Questions for RE Curriculum Leaders to consider (New Ofsted 2019)**  
(Pages 13 - 14)

**9. Wire Award Gold 2019** (Pages 15 - 16)

**10. Feedback from the Hub meetings**

**11. RE Annual Conference Flyer - January 2020** (Pages 17 - 18)

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

The next meeting of the SACRE is on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. Members of the SACRE are asked to suggest venues or indicate where this and future meetings of the Panel should be held.

**Date of Despatch:** 18 November 2019

**Public Question Time** - Swindon Borough Council is committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. Up to 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from members of the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters and specific planning applications). Questions must be relevant, clear and concise. Because of time constraints Public Question Time is not an opportunity to make speeches or statements. Prior notice of a question to the Director of Law and Democratic Services is desirable - particularly if detailed background information is needed.

**Access Arrangements** – The Venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you would wish to attend the meeting but have any special requirement to enable you to do so please contact the Committee Clerk above, as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

If you would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size please contact the Committee Officer whose name appears on the first page of this agenda.

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**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**TUESDAY, 23 JULY 2019**

**PRESENT:-**

<b>Group A:</b> Christian Denominations and Other Religions or Religious Denominations	Jo Backus (Buddhist Community) David Burbidge (Baptist Church) Clare-Marie Burchall (Roman Catholic Community) Reverend David Howell (Swindon Evangelical Alliance) Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community)
<b>Group B:</b> Church of England	Reverend Norma McKemey and Ruth Williams
<b>Group C:</b> Teacher Organisations	Emma McCarthy and Tracy Mason
<b>Group D:</b> Councillors	Councillors Fay Howard and Bazil Solomon
<b>Co-Opted:</b>	Jo Garton

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Matthew Courtliff, Oladapo Ibitoye and Garry Perkins and Malkit Babbra, Reverend Clive Deverell, Attif Ghafar, Michelle Howard, Fidelma Meehan and Lottie O'Brien.

**1. Appointment of Chair**

Resolved – That Councillor Fay Howard be Chair of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the Municipal Year 2019/20.

**2. Appointment of Vice-Chair**

Resolved – That Emma McCarthy be Vice-Chair of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the Municipal Year 2019/20.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interest in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

**4. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

**5. Minutes**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019, be confirmed and signed as a correct record

## **6.**

### **Matters arising not on the agenda**

The SACRE Advisor advised that:

- a) Action 32, Point 5 (That the SACRE Advisor be requested to write to Headteachers and Chair of Trustees of the schools to request an update on the work undertaken by them with those pupils not officially entered for GCSE and A Level RE exams) - This will be undertaken after the engagement of Gill Dickinson from Bristol who would be able to support Swindon schools after her retirement from teaching in July 2019.
- b) Action 32, Point 6, (That the Annual Report be forwarded to all schools and academies in Swindon to heighten the awareness of the Swindon SACRE work within the borough. Action) - This will be circulated in the autumn as part of the website checking programme.
- c) Action 33, Point 1 (Jo Garton to visit Southfield School to assist them with updating the RE content on their website) – This will be undertaken in the autumn.

The SACRE Advisor circulated a letter of thanks from Kingsdown Academy to the Chair of the SACRE for the support made available to the school to ensure compliance with its legal duty when offering students Religious Education and access to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development and Assemblies (Collective Worship). The SACRE agreed that this was evidence of the successful review of schools' websites undertaken by the group and to schools' appreciation of the review.

Resolved – That the School Advisor liaises with Jo Garton regarding school's visits aimed at updating RE content on schools' website.

## **7.**

### **Membership**

The SACRE Advisor discussed membership and explained that the SACRE constitution included reference to non-attendance. The Committee voiced their concern regarding the lack of regular attendance by some members. The Committee further noted that Sarah Foulkes no longer worked at the Council and that nominations would be sought from the Council to replace her on the SACRE.

Resolved – (1) That enquiries be made to determine who would be replacing Sarah Foulkes on the SACRE.

(2) That the SACRE Advisor and Clerk continue to seek a nomination from the Jewish community to the vacancy on Group A (Christian Denominations and other Religions or Religious Denominations).

(3) That Helen Redhead be appointed to serve on the SACRE as a member of Group C (Teacher Associations).

(4) That the Clerk be requested to enquire if Mandy Sandleton wanted to continue to serve on the Committee.

## **8.**

### **Key Stage 4 Religious Education**

The SACRE Adviser advised that due to the timing of the meeting, Key Stage 4 Secondary RE teachers teaching Key Stage 4 Religious Education were unable to attend to inform the SACRE on the difficulties they encountered when teaching the subject.

Emma McCarthy advised that Robert Tylee, Course Co-ordinator for Religious Studies at New College, invited the SACRE to New College where he would be able to give a discussion regarding Key Stage 4 Religious Education.

Whilst giving a presentation on Religious Studies at GCSE, the SACRE Advisor reminded members that this was an opportunity to prepare questions for the RE practitioners attending the next meeting. The focus was to be on how SACRE would be able to support them in their Key Stage 4 work following the new Ofsted assessment framework.

The SACRE broke up into working groups to review and discuss the content of the AQA's Religious Education GCSE past papers on Christianity, Islam and Thematic Studies. The SACRE compared exam expectations on children and agreed that a) the papers were more based on rote learning rather than through debate; b) lacked the opportunity for critical thinking, c) assessments were not clearly based on RE content but on English spelling and grammar, d) there was no uniformity between the papers and e) concerns regarding pupil's engagement. Emma McCarthy informed the SACRE on the project she was to be undertaking regarding the use of RE vocabulary across all Key Stages.

The SACRE Advisor elaborated on the new curriculum content, the difficulties faced by school's Senior Leadership Teams and the options available to them to ensure effective delivery of Religious Education in their schools. The SACRE discussed possible reason for the decline in the take-up of Religious Education as a GCSE subject by pupils.

Resolved – (1) That Emma McCarthy be requested to liaise with Robert Tylee and invite him to the next meeting of SACRE which will be held at the Commonweal School.

(2) That the experience of subject leaders regarding teaching Key Stage 4 Religious Education be gathered and be presented to members of Senior Leadership Teams at the next meeting of SACRE.

(3) That Ruth Williams be requested to forward to the SACRE Advisor, questions to be submitted to the Senior Leadership Team at the next meeting.

## **9. Development Plan**

SACRE would encourage schools, academies and colleges to celebrate the religious and cultural diversity found in Swindon.

The following four goals were debated by Members:

- a) Improving standards
  - The SACRE's focus on A levels to improve standards.
  - Undertake a watching brief over the impact of the new Key Stage curriculum on GCSE entries, engagement and attainment.
  - Continued attendance at Hub meetings and conferences.
- b) Effective management of the SACRE with key stakeholders and the Local Authority
  - Annual report to be circulated next year.
  - Continue engagement with Councillors.
  - Discussion with the Head of Education on the future working

relationship between the Local Authority, schools and the SACRE group.

- c) Monitor schools' provision for RE
  - A review of the agreed syllabus.
  - Continue website monitoring for RE content.
  - Offer half day workshops to develop Spiritual, Moral, Social and Culture (SMSC) development through collective worship.
- d) Celebrating the religious and cultural diversity found in Swindon
  - To be achieved through teaching the Agreed Syllabus; monkey survey.
  - Promotion of the WIRE (Widening Inclusivity in Religious Education) Award following the success of this year.
  - Support needed from SACRE members to visit schools and review websites for RE content.

The SACRE Advisor confirmed that Greenmeadow School was the first school to receive the WIRE Award and that the Chair would be presenting the school with a certificate in the autumn.

Resolved – (1) That the SACRE Advisor:

- a) Continue to promote RE conferences as and when available.
- b) Send out a circular to all Swindon schools promoting the WIRE award
- c) Be requested to liaise with the Head of Education regarding Local Authority representation on the SACRE.
- d) Be requested to review the prospect of relaunching the “Parables through Art” project in Swindon.

## **10. Religious Hub updates and Feedback from LTLRE Conference**

The SACRE Advisor gave feedback regarding the South West SACRE Conference held in June 2019. Emma McCarthy then elaborated on the Hub meetings since the last SACRE meeting that included a) a Humanism session held in November 2018 which was led by Jo Garton, b) a Hub leader training undertaken in December 2018 in Bristol led by the SACRE Advisor and c) Katherine Taylor's session on reflective story telling held in March 2019.

She confirmed that Adam Robertson was invited to the next Hub meeting to be held on the 10<sup>th</sup> October where he would be discussing the new Ofsted framework.

Resolved – (1) That Emma McCarthy be requested to circulate dates and information regarding the next Hub meetings to SACRE members.

(2) That the SACRE Advisor be requested to circulate further information regarding the next SACRE conference (RE to Save the Planet) to be held in January 2020.

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

The next meeting of the SACRE would be on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at The Commonweal School, The Mall, Swindon SN1 4JE.



**Notes from Meeting held on 9/10/19 6pm - 7.30 @ 26, Kensal Rd BS3 4QX PAPER 6**

**Bristol SACRE KS4 working group**

**Those present : Fiona Dorman, Emma Woodshaw, Jill Dickinson, Alice Sarbicki and Katy Staples**

## **Background**

We have established the need for a new Curriculum at KS4 for non examined RE (presentation made by Jill Dickinson and Alice Sarbicki at the last SACRE meeting,)

The New Ofsted Framework asks all schools to focus on the Intent of the curriculum, the implementation through well sequenced learning that ensures progression ,and the impact of that learning on pupils' knowledge and understanding.

There is a need to offer a coherent framework and curriculum for this important stage in pupils' learning -this is likely to be the last phase of formal study of Religion and Worldviews for the majority of the cohort.

Any offer needs to follow on prior learning and continue to build on key concepts and useful subject content building a compound framework of understanding

## **Some key Documents that might shape the vision for this curriculum are**

"Putting the Big ideas into practice" Barbara Wintersgill, Denise Cush and Dave Francis

<https://www.reonline.org.uk/resources/putting-big-ideas-into-practice-in-religious-education/>

"Religion and Worldviews in a Broad and Balanced Curriculum" Georgiou, Seymour and Wright

<https://www.reonline.org.uk/leading-re/re-in-a-broad-and-balanced-curriculum-a-practical-tool/>

## **Discussion**

It was suggested that pragmatically if this course was being offered as part of a non-examined offer in a pool with PSHE and Careers etc that it would be good to make a suggestion that schools offer a minimum of 6 units of work with 6 1 hour lessons in each unit taken from an option of 8/9 units

A minimum of 36 hours for KS4 taught by RE specialists wherever possible

**Desired transferable skills** that it was agreed these needed to be taught :

The ability to disagree well,

To marshal and synthesise information and arguments

To understand that knowledge is contextual

To appreciate that there can be a variety of interpretations of text and expression of belief.

Show critical thinking

Recognise the status of texts

Develop discursive essay writing skills

Interpret representations and expressions of faith and read symbolic metaphor , images and so ensure religious literacy

Explore differing ethical frameworks and reasons given for making differing moral decisions within and across belief systems and world views

### **Assessment**

It was felt that the requirements of researched accreditation boards for moderated and annotated banks of work would be untenable given the large cohorts of students and the limited amount of contact time (36 hrs across two years).

Therefore any assessment should be based on the intrinsic value of the study rather than any external accreditation .

However to ensure that pupils understand and value the contribution of the course to their full education and to enable them to retain and express their learning it is essential that there should be a written record of their study. Each unit will have a summary task such as an essay , an oral presentation, a debate or an annotated piece of art etc

There should be a school based record of progress and a comment should be made on the report to parents .

### **Initial Suggestion of Possible Units**

It would seem practical in each unit (of 6 weeks) to study a maximum of two faiths.

It should be noted that the main religions currently studied at KS4 in our area are :

Christianity, Islam and Buddhism.

<b>Possible Unit Title</b>	<b>Strands taken from “Broad and Balanced Curriculum” ideas</b>	<b>Matched up with ideas in “Big Ideas in Practice”</b>
	The Core Disciplines of RE Theological/Philosophical /Social Sciences	
1 God?	Theological (the nature of God) Philosophical (The existence of God)	Big Ideas 6 “The Big Picture”
2. The Grave and Beyond?	Theological Social Sciences	Big Ideas 4 “Making Sense of Life’s experiences” Big Ideas 6 “The Big Picture”

3. Matters of Life and Death	Philosophy(Ethics) Theology	Big Ideas 3 “How to live a Good Life”
4. Relationships and sex , why is there any controversy?	Social Sciences Theology Philosophy(Ethics)	Big Ideas 3 “How to live a Good Life”
5. The end of the World as we know it?	Theology Philosophy Social Sciences	Big Idea 5 “Influence, community , culture and Power”
6. Is Bristol (Swindon)Religious or Secular?  (Local study)	Social Sciences	Big Ideas 1 “Continuity, Change and Diversity”  Big Ideas 5 “Influence, Community Culture and Power
7.Expressing the Inexpressible?”	Theology Philosophy Social Sciences	Big Ideas 2 “Words and Beyond”
8. Religion causes all the Wars?”  Is this true?	Philosophy Theology Social Sciences	Big Ideas 5 “Influence Community Culture and Power”
9. Who am I ? Why am I here?	Philosophy Theology	Big Idea 4 “making sense of Life’s experiences

### **Actions**

**KS** to circulate FD’s hand written notes and these

**JD** to start to collect materials to begin putting units together

**ALL** to send to JD materials that they have that may be useful for this project

**ALL** on Bristol SACRE to report back at the next SACRE meeting and agree a next date for a meeting

Since the meeting Alice Sarbicki has requested that Merryn Evans from her school join the group as she is undertaking a Farmington on this very topic!

**The final deadline for this project is May 2020 in order to have it available for schools to pilot it from September 2020**

**All materials will be available on the SACRE website**

### **Questions for RE Curriculum Leaders to consider**

How is your RE curriculum conceived, taught and experienced?

How do you know that your pupils 'know more' and are able to do more?

This should be linked to your vision and for C of E schools to 'life in all its fullness.'

How do you present your curriculum?

Do you have high ambition for all students not offering SEN pupils a reduced curriculum, for example.

Can you tell us about the intent, implementation and impact of your curriculum?

Is the intent rooted in the solid consensus?

Is your curriculum planned and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before?

Do you have curriculum flexibility {within the structure of paragraph 172 of the new framework)

Are your whole staff able to talk knowledgeably about the end points in your RE curriculum and where you are trying to get your pupils to?

Does your RE policy reflect your curriculum intent?

Have you noted what the end point will be?

In terms of implementation, how effectively is your subject being taught.

Do your subject leads know if planning matches what is taught?

Does your CPD as an organisation reflect our support for this?

Is the depth of challenge evident in students' books?

How is assessment data used to inform teaching and planning?

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**Bristol and South Gloucestershire SACRE**  
**WIRE Award 'Gold'**  
**Draft Criteria**

The idea behind the Wire 'Gold' award is to encourage schools to go beyond individual activity and reach across the school, out to parents or to other schools in their area. Schools can choose from a 'menu' of activities depending on their context. One from each column, plus one other.

Engaging with pupils	Engaging with parents	Engaging with other schools or the wider community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher attends at least 2 of the 3 RE Hubs <b>and</b> another form of training – e.g. conference, inset training etc.</li> <li>Teachers include a plan or examples of pupil's work to show how they have used/implemented something they have learnt into their teaching/school curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils put on an event for parents to show what they have learnt in RE. This could be an assembly, or a play.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with another school on a joint RE project.</li> <li>Teachers to partner with another local school to share ideas of good RE and encourage those teachers to use some ideas in RE lessons.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trips to places of worship in at least TWO classes in the school – e.g. Key Stage One and Two – to two religions e.g. Mosque and synagogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils invite parents in to hear about their recent trip to a place of worship. They describe why it was important, and what they learnt.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary school to work with 2 other local secondary's to help them with RE – either through a joint event, or project.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entering the 'spirited poetry' award which asks children to write poems responding to spiritual ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils put on a 'spirited art' or 'spirited poetry' exhibition in their school and tell parents about the reasons behind their work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrange a Multi-faith (people of different faiths and/or none) encounter day</li> <li>Invite another school to be part of it?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children writing talking about why important to know about other faiths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils invite parents in to tell them what they remember about RE when they were children in school and whether they think RE has changed since then</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils produce a positive impact in their community based on an RE theme (e.g. 'stewardship' - planting trees, clearing litter</li> </ul>

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**Bristol & South Gloucestershire**

# **Annual RE Conference 2020**

Friday 31st January 2020 9.30 am - 3.30 pm

Engineers House, Bristol BS8 3NB

## **“RE to save the Planet?”**



### **DETAILS:**

Our keynote speaker this year is **Fiona Moss**. Fiona is a primary specialist. She is currently the Editor of RE Today's Primary RE series "Inspiring RE" edited 'RE Ideas' and 'Opening up RE'. She was also one of the writers for the Understanding Christianity resource.

She trains hundreds of teachers each year in schools, local authorities and dioceses across the country and worldwide

The conference will be **FREE** for South Gloucestershire teachers.

Teachers from Bristol and other areas will be charged £110. It is £65 for any subsequent delegate from the same school.



### **FIND OUT MORE:**

To register please visit Eventbrite: [Annual RE Conference 2020](#) or contact Ali.Driver@bristoldiocese.org

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