

## **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**TUESDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2018**

**Group A:**

Christian Denominations and  
Other Religions or Religious  
Denominations

Malkit Babbra (Sikh Community)  
David Burbidge (Baptist Church)  
Clare-Marie Burchall (Roman Catholic  
Community)  
Reverend David Howell (Swindon Evangelical  
Alliance)  
Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community)

**Group B:**

Church of England

**Group C:**

Teacher Organisations

Lottie O'Brien (NASUWT)  
Emma McCarthy (NASUWT)  
Helen Redhead (School representative)

**Group D:**

Councillors

Councillor Fay Howard,  
Councillor Nick Martin  
Councillor Barbara Parry  
Councillor Roger Smith

Also in attendance: Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Matthew Courtliff and Jo Backus, Sarah Foulkes, Atiff Ghafar, Jo Garton, Reverend Clive Deverell, Michelle Howard, Reverend Norma McKemey, Fidelma Meehan and Ruth Williams.

### **15. Welcome from the Chair**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. In response to queries regarding the change of venue, she explained that due to unforeseen circumstances Tracy Mason was unable to host SACRE at Crowdy's School on this occasion.

### **16. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interest in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillor Barbara Parry made a personal, non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of all Agenda items on the grounds of her employment by Ridgeway School.

### **17. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

**18.**

### **Membership**

The Chair welcomed Malkit Babbra, representative from the Sikh Community. Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, advised that following the resignation of Janet French, she wrote to the Anglican Community seeking representatives from that group. Additionally, as teachers were not widely represented on the SACRE, she had sought nominations from schools and she then introduced Helen Redhead, teacher at Millbrook School and Chair of Governors at King William Church of England School to the committee. The SACRE discussed renewal of membership. It was noted that members were expected to hold office for a period not exceeding 4 years unless successfully re-nominated to continue in post.

Resolved – That the Clerk informs members of their post expiration date.

**19.**

### **Minutes**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2018, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**20.**

### **Website review**

Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, stated that following discussions with the Bristol School Advisor, it was agreed that letters issued to schools were to be supportive and guidance on the RE work to be undertaken in schools should be made available. She explained that the Red, Amber, Green (RAG) system was utilised to determine the amount of RE content on schools' website, with "Green" sites having comprehensive information. The SACRE Advisor thanked those SACRE members who reviewed schools' websites to determine RE content and asked for volunteers to review a further number of schools.

The SACRE discussed the content of the letters pertaining to each criteria as reviewed utilising the RAG system and agreed that they should be sent out to Headteachers with the Chair of Governors also being made aware of the review.

Resolved – (1) That the Chair and SACRE Advisor circulate the RAG rated letters to Swindon Schools.

(2) That the SACRE Advisor liaises with the Council's Governor Support Manager to include information regarding the Website review in the electronic briefing going out to all governors on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

**21.**

### **CORE Report**

Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor) presented a report from the Commission on Religions Education (CORE). She advised that this Commission had been set up by the Government to make recommendations on the future of religious education in schools.

The Advisor explained that the CORE report reflected the state of RE in schools and the diversity of religions within schools. She referred to the Commission's finding that included:

a) Pupils were encountering a growing diversity of religions and beliefs in their locality and in the media,

b) There was a variable quality of RE experienced by pupils across the country and

c) The legal arrangements around RE were no longer effective as more schools became academies.

To address this, it was recommended that:

- “Religious Education” would be rebranded to “Religion and Worldviews”,
- Teaching Religion and Worldviews would become statutory for all publically funded schools,
- non-statutory programmes of study for Key Stages 1 to 4 should be developed at a national level,
- SACRE would no longer review and create a locally agreed syllabus,
- GCSE and A-Level specifications would be reviewed in the light of the National Entitlement,
- Primary Initial Teacher Training would provide a minimum of 12 hours training on Religion and Worldviews,
- the Government should allocate funding for Continued Personal Development for Religion and Worldviews to support the delivery of the new non-statutory national programmes of study,
- SACRE to be re-named as Local Advisory Networks for Religion and Worldviews (LANRAW),
- Ofsted or Section 48 Inspectors to report if schools were meeting the National Entitlement,
- The Department for Education (DfE) to consider the impact of schools performance measures on the provision and quality of Religion and Worldviews,
- The DfE to review and provide clarification on the right of parents to withdraw selectively from parts of Religion and Worldview.

The SACRE debated the recommendations. They discussed the make-up of LANRAW and were concerned there would not be a statutory element to the group. Additionally, there would be no local authority Councillors on the group. The SACRE felt that without these two elements, local civic responsibility and accountability may be affected. The SACRE noted that a response from the Government regarding these recommendations was awaited and until then, SACRE would continue to review and support schools in their RE work.

Resolved – That the SACRE members may wish to write to their local Member of Parliament to express their views.

## **22.**

### **The WIRE Award**

Katy Stapes (SACRE Advisor) explained that this project was the idea of SACRE representatives from Bristol and South Gloucestershire. The idea was to promote the opportunity for more children to visit places of worship that were not Christian. The SACRE noted that the project sought to encourage and support good practice in Religious Education by rewarding:

- Schools taking students on visits to places of worship,
- where members of staff attend and benefit from further training through Religious Education CPD and
- Schools that go the extra mile in RE through entering a competition or putting on an RE related event during the school year

The Advisor explained that all these elements would have to take place within

an academic year and that the award would be provided by SACRE. She elaborated on the range of opportunities available for schools to obtain this award and how they were to submit their application and evidence forms. The SACRE heard that 8 Bristol schools and 12 Gloucestershire schools were participating in this scheme. The SACRE discussed the issues that may arise from lack of parental agreement for this scheme.

Resolved – (1) That this award be introduced in Swindon Schools.

(2) That the SACRE Advisor be requested to promote this scheme in Swindon Schools.

(3) That the project be monitored and the SACRE Advisor be requested to update the SACRE at a future meeting.

## **23. Feedback from the Religious Education hub meetings**

The SACRE received an update from Emma McCarthy, Hub Leader, about the recent RE Hub meeting held in September at the Commonweal School. The Hub Leader explained that both primary and secondary schools attended the meeting and Jo Garton spoke about Humanism. The session was interactive with discussions and activities being undertaken. Information provided at the Hub meeting was to be circulated to all head teachers after the meeting.

The SACRE members were also advised that the next Hub meeting would be held at the end of January and that Katherine Taylor would be conducting a reflective story telling session. Ms McCarty reported that the RE GCSE results had been outstanding at Brandon Forest School and that at the next Hub meeting, a teacher from that school would share their strategies for attaining good results.

The Hub Leader further advised that she was working with Ferndale School to create a vision statement for their website.

## **24. Matters Arising**

The SACRE Advisor referred to the positive impact that the Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) programme was making to RE in Swindon. She added that the LTLRE programme had been recognised as a national leader in RE teacher-teacher support. The SACRE heard that to date, the programme had been financed by charitable giving, mainly from the Jerusalem Trust and the St Matthias Trust but that this charitable support was ending. It was noted that £3,500 would be needed to continue to support and train the hub leaders for the RE community across the geographical area (Somerset, North Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Swindon (North Wiltshire)).

The SACRE Advisor explained that a contribution of £250 towards the £3500 shortfall was being sought from Swindon SACRE and this would help ensure the continuation of this service to RE in the Swindon area. After a debate, the SACRE agreed to the transfer of funding to the LTLRE programme.

Resolved – That a transfer of £250 be undertaken from the SACRE Advisor's budget to the LTLRE programme.

**25. Forthcoming CPD for teachers and SACRE members**

The SACRE Advisor confirmed that an annual Continuing Professional Development Conference for SACRE members was being held at Dillington House in Somerset on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019. She confirmed that there would be funding for a member of SACRE to attend and subsequently update SACRE on the days' proceedings.

Resolved – (1)

(2) The SACRE Advisor informed members that if they wish to attend, she was happy to offer a lift from Bristol if people found it easier not to drive the whole way to Dillington House.

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

The next meeting will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 6.00 p.m. at the Gorse Hill Baptist Church, Cricklade Road, Swindon SN2 1AA.