

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

MONDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2008

PRESENT:-

Group A: Councillors Councillors Doreen Dart and Raymond Fisher

Group B: Church of England The Venerable Alan Hawker and Mrs Penny Summers

Group C: Teacher Organisations Mr David Easter, Ms Jo Garton, Miss Anne Wang, Mrs Mandy Sandleton and Mrs Helen Miller

Group D: Other Faiths Mrs Helen Hancox (United Reformed Church), Reverend Paul Knight (Baptist) and Mr Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: - Ms Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michael Bray, Councillor Fay Howard, Councillor David Sammels, Mr. Paul Noble, Mrs Tracy Mason, Reverend David Howell and Mr M S Khan.

23. Declarations of Interest

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

24. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

25. Membership Update

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services and SACRE Advisor requesting that the SACRE appoint a new member to the Sikh Community vacancy in the Other Faiths Group.

Resolved - (1) That Mr Malkit Singh Virk be appointed as the representative of the Sikh Community on Group D (Other Faiths) until September 2011 unless reappointed at that point for a further four year term by Full Council.

26. Minutes

Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

27. SACRE Member Presentation

Ms Jo Garton gave a presentation to the SACRE on Humanism, and

answered questions from the SACRE on her beliefs. It was noted that in Ms Garton's experience an understanding of humanism and other 'non-faith' perspectives could assist teachers to teach Religious Education to those of no faith, and that many teachers were requesting resources for this purpose. Ms Jo Garton circulated a one-page summary of humanist beliefs for Teachers and SACREs.

28. Update on 'Faith to Face' Project

The SACRE received an update from the Community Support Manager and the Neighbourhood Engagement Manager on the progress of the 'Faith to Face' Project, which was seeking to create faith clubs in four secondary schools in Swindon, to initiate and support interfaith dialogue between young people from different schools, neighbourhoods and faith positions. This work had been supported by a successful application for a National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) Young Inter-Faith Projects Fund grant and from project funding made available for community cohesion from the Government Office for the South West. The SACRE commended the work to date, and noted that a report on progress was required by NASACRE by 31st March 2009.

Resolved – That the Director of Community bring the draft of the progress report to the NASACRE to the next meeting of the SACRE on 9th March 2009.

29. Feedback on use of the AERIAC Toolkit in a local school

Mrs Penny Summers and Ms Jo Garton advised the SACRE of the experience of using the AERIAC (Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants) toolkit to evaluate RE in a primary setting. It was noted that the experience had been invaluable to the school concerned in preparing for an Ofsted inspection and to assess their progress in the quality of teaching of the agreed syllabus. It was felt that for general use the full toolkit could be time-consuming and would be demanding for new or non-specialist teachers. In addition, the SACRE could not resource SACRE Members to provide support visits to assist all schools to complete the AERIAC toolkit. However, the SACRE recognised the benefits of the toolkit and wished for alternative ways to be considered for schools to use a version of the toolkit to assist with their self-assessment of the quality of religious education.

Resolved - That the SACRE Advisor, in consultation with Mrs Penny Summers, Ms Jo Garton and Mrs Helen Miller seek to produce a summary version of the toolkit, and its use be discussed with the primary and secondary cluster meetings to consider how its use might be promoted to schools.

30. SACRE Annual Report

The SACRE received its draft Annual Report (September 2007 to September 2008) which was required by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) at the end of 2008. The SACRE highlighted a few minor amendments to the Advisor.

Resolved - 1) That subject to the comments and amendments made during the SACRE meeting, and any further changes provided by 15th December, the SACRE Advisor be authorised to submit the final version to the QCA.

2) That SACRE give consideration at its next meeting to its development plan and how its work for the coming year should be shaped by gaps and priorities identified through the Annual Report.

31.

Correspondence / Newsletter

The SACRE received a copy of a letter from the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) providing the Autumn RE update highlighting current issues for Religious Education, and the Autumn 2008 NASACRE Newsletter. It was noted that key issues from these documents would be picked up in future SACRE agendas.

32.

Date and Time of the Next Meeting

Resolved – That the next meeting of the SACRE scheduled for 6 p.m. on 9th March 2009 be held at Bridlewood Primary School.