

# **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2009**

## **PRESENT:-**

Group A: Councillors	Councillors Doreen Dart, Mavis Childs and Raymond Fisher
Group B: Church of England	Ms Steph Mundin and Reverend Arthur Woo
Group C: Teacher Organisations	Mr David Easter, Ms Jo Garton, Mrs Helen Miller and Mrs Mandy Sandleton
Group D: Other Faiths	Mrs Helen Hancox (United Reformed Church), Reverend David Howell (Swindon Evangelical Alliance), Mr M S Khan (Muslim Community), Mr Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community), Mrs Wendy Tucker (Methodist Church), Mr Malkit Singh Virk (Sikh Community) and Mr Arun Bedi (Sikh Community (Deputy Representative))

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michael Bray, Councillor Fay Howard, Ms Norma McKemey, Mr. Paul Noble, Mrs Penny Summers, Mrs Tracy Mason, Miss Anne Wang and Reverend Paul Knight.

## **1. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair for Municipal Year 2009-10**

Resolved that - 1) Councillor Doreen Dart be appointed as Chair of the SACRE for the Municipal Year 2009-10.

2) Ms Jo Garton be appointed as Vice-Chair of the SACRE for the Municipal Year 2009-10.

## **2. 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.

## **3. Public Question Time**

No public questions were received during the meeting.

## **4. Membership Update**

The Clerk to the SACRE presented a report updating the SACRE on the current vacancies on the SACRE and recommending appointment of relevant representatives.

Resolved - 1) That the Membership update be noted.

2) That Reverend Arthur Woo be appointed to serve on the SACRE as a member of Group B (Church of England Group) to serve until September 2011.

3) That Miss Janet French be appointed to serve on the SACRE as a member of Group C (Teacher Organisations), subject to the approval of the relevant

Teachers Union, to serve until September 2011.

4) That Mr Arun Bedi be appointed to serve on the SACRE as a deputy to Mr Malkit Singh Virk to represent the Sikh Community on Group D (Other Christian Denominations and Other Faiths).

5) That the SACRE Advisor and Clerk continue to seek a nomination from the Catholic Diocese to the remaining vacancy on Group D (Other Christian Denominations and Other Faiths).

## **5. Chair's Announcements**

The Chair advised the SACRE that the Face to Faith project showcase involving young people from the four participating secondary schools would be held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2009 at 8 pm at the Arts Centre. It was asked that a report come to the next SACRE meeting on the Showcase, including feedback from the schools and pupils participating.

## **6. Minutes**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Further to minute 39, the SACRE Advisor reported that the questionnaire to go out to schools on delivery of Collective Worship had been prepared and the SACRE confirmed that it should be sent out to schools, for the data to form part of an annual update to the SACRE on delivery of RE and Collective Worship in the Borough. It was asked that the Clerk email to all members of the SACRE the web link to the Schools Standards Report which was reported to Cabinet.

## **7. Public Consultation on Curriculum Review**

Ms Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor) presented to the SACRE the current public consultation on Curriculum Reform, including the Primary Curriculum Review and Non-Statutory Guidance on Religious Education, for which comments had been invited by 24 July 2009. The SACRE discussed the implications of the consultation proposals on the way in which RE would be taught in schools, and particularly highlighted issues to be included in its formal response to the consultation. In addition, Ms Katy Staples reported back from the NASACRE conference, and the curriculum reform was presented and discussed at the conference.

In relation to the proposed Primary Curriculum, the SACRE expressed concern in relation to the change in the fourth area of learning from 'Human, social and environmental understanding' to 'Historical, geographical and social understanding' as this appeared to exclude Religious Education from being taught centrally within the curriculum. It was noted that the guidance still promoted the teaching of Religious Education, but there needed to be more clarity of its legal status, and whether it can be taught within a creative curriculum. The SACRE supported the use of end of Key Stage targets within the grade descriptors, which brought RE into line with the assessment of other subjects. However, there was concern that the removal of the clear requirement for both learning about and learning from elements in the grade descriptors removed assurance of quality of learning in relation to Religious Education. In relation to the non-statutory guidance, it was felt that there was no additional clarification of the position of Academies, except that the teaching of RE would be as agreed under their original contracts,

rather than in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The SACRE advisor agreed to contact the Swindon Academy to understand if they wished to utilise any element of the agreed syllabus and SACRE support. It was noted that the non-statutory guidance proposed the removal of a time allocation requirement for teaching of Religious Education in schools. Although, it was recognised that schools might find it difficult to meet all time requirements given the pressure within the syllabus, it did give a measure of how religious education should be prioritised in the curriculum and there was some concern as to whether there would be a reduction in its priority in school as a result.

Resolved – 1) That the SACRE Advisor be authorised to respond to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority on the public consultation on curriculum reform by the closing date of 24<sup>th</sup> July 2009 on the basis of the discussion with the SACRE including comments set out above.

2) That Members of the SACRE contact the Advisor if one or two would be willing to deputise and represent the SACRE at regional or national events when the SACRE Advisor is unable to attend, subject to approval by the Chair and within the current SACRE budget.

## **8. NASACRE Newsletter**

The SACRE noted the Spring 2009 edition of SACRE news from NASACRE (The National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education). SACRE Members were invited to contact the Clerk to the SACRE if there were any issues raised which should be addressed by the SACRE at a future meeting. The SACRE agreed that it wished to continue to receive the SACRE News via the SACRE Agenda rather than electronically.

## **9. Feedback from Cluster Meetings**

Ms Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor) updated the SACRE on the primary and secondary cluster meetings. It was noted that attendance from the secondary sector could be encouraged further.

Resolved – 1) That the update on the primary and secondary cluster meetings be noted.

1) That in the future these meetings be referred to as Network Meetings to avoid any confusion with other 'cluster' forums.

2) That the SACRE Advisor approach the Chair of SASH (Swindon Association of Secondary Headteachers) to consider the best way to advertise the opportunity the Secondary cluster sessions give to provide peer support and to share best practice, and to encourage more secondary teachers to attend.

## **10. Date and Time of the Next Meeting**

The SACRE noted the following dates had been scheduled for meetings of the SACRE in 2009/10:

- Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009, 6 pm
- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009, 6 pm
- Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010, 6 pm