

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TUESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2012

PRESENT:-

Group A:
Christian Denominations and
Other Religions or Religious
Denominations

Mr Mark Cawte (Methodist) (Vice-Chair),
Reverend David Howell (Swindon Evangelical
Alliance), Mr M S Khan (Muslim Community) and
Mr Tony McAteer (Catholic Community).

Group B:
Church of England

Miss Janet French, Reverend Norma McKemey,
Ms Steph Mundin, Mrs Penny Summers and
Reverend Beth Brown.

Group C:
Teacher Organisations

Mrs Tracy Mason, Miss Lottie Rowe, Mrs Mandy
Sandleton and Mr Paul Sunners.

Group D:
Councillors

Councillors Doreen Dart (Chair), Claire Ellis,
Russell Holland and Fay Howard.

Also in attendance: Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor).

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte (United Reformed Church), Councillor James Robbins, Mr Arun Bedi, Mr David Burbidge, Mr Dinesh Patel and Sarah Foulkes

12. 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 were made.

13. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

14. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2012, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising – a) Further to Minute 7, the SACRE discussed the survey which was to be sent out to schools on their provision of RE and the teaching of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and were interested to see the level of response on the statutory teaching of RE. In addition to the survey results, it was suggested that the SACRE could see the extent to which RE had priority in each school's improvement plan. b) Further to Minute 9, it was requested that information be sent out to the SACRE Members by the School Improvement Advisor on the work of the Teaching School in Swindon. c) Further to the attendance list, the Clerk to the SACRE advised that Ms Sara Crabb had stepped down from the Teacher Associations Group and a new representative would be sought from the ATL union.

15. Religious Education at St Francis C of E Primary School

The SACRE were welcomed to St Francis C of E Primary School by Steph Mundin and Mark Tidey and received presentations on their work supporting RE.

Mark Tidey advised that he was a diocese employee based at St Francis, and his title was Home School Link Advisor. The purpose of his role was to work with St Francis and other local schools, and to offer whatever help was appropriate for teaching of RE or the provision of Collective Worship. It was particularly important to him to establish a genuine engagement with each school, and to ask where he could contribute. It was recognised that as a representative of the diocese he was often able to respond more personally to questions of faith than a teacher was able to do, and he welcomed all opportunities to support local schools.

Ms Steph Mundin advised that she was the RE Co-ordinator for St Francis Primary School. The role was about being responsible for teaching and planning a quality, broad and balanced RE curriculum from nursery to year six in line with the Agreed Syllabus and the School's RE policy. This included providing resources and materials, monitoring planning teaching and learning, observing lessons, team teaching, providing support to other teachers in particular NQTs or those new to teaching in a church school, ensuring assessment and monitoring of progress in RE was in place, and ensuring that pupils were receiving a balance of learning across attainment targets. It was recognised it also involved liaising with the Governor responsible for RE, collective worship and PSHE co-ordinators, and reporting to senior leaders in the school, and promoting RE to parents through workshops. RE had higher profile in a church school than in other primary schools. In addition, Steph Mundin outlined the particular way in which RE was taught in foundation stage, using Solihull teaching materials.

Resolved – That Mark Tidey and Steph Mundin be thanked for their excellent presentations and for hosting the SACRE meeting at the school.

16. National Developments in RE

The SACRE considered a report from the SACRE Advisor and Head of Commissioning – Economy / Attainment on national development in RE since the last meeting.

It was noted that the RE Council for England and Wales (REC) had been asked by the Government to carry out a review of the RE curriculum. The timetable and content of the first phase of the review were reported to the meeting. The SACRE would be invited to provide comments by 6th December 2012 on the preliminary report to be issued in November. It was agreed that a small SACRE Working Group be set up to consider the report in detail when issued and recommend to the next SACRE meeting on 4th December the formal response to the consultation.

It was appreciated that the status of the English Baccalaureate was becoming more important for schools, and it would be up to schools to determine the status given to Religious Education in this context. Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor) advised that under the new Ofsted Framework individual subject areas, except English and Maths, would no longer be assessed.

The SACRE members received copies of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) Newsletter for Autumn 2012 for information.

Resolved - 1) That the update on national developments be noted.

2) That a SACRE Working Group be set up including Lottie Rowe, Mark Cawte, Tracy Mason, Janet French, Paul Sunners, and any additional members who contacted the SACRE Advisor, to review the preliminary report from the RE Council for England and Wales on the RE curriculum review when issued, and to make recommendations to the SACRE at the next meeting on the formal response to the report.

17. SACRE Self-Assessment

The SACRE had indicated at the last meeting that it would wish to carry out a self-assessment of its role.

The Ofsted Self-Assessment Toolkit for SACREs had been published in 2005, and the SACRE had last carried out a review in 2005. Although some of the context in which the SACRE operated had changed, it was agreed that the toolkit was still a good starting point for the SACRE to discuss its role.

The SACRE split into groups to discuss its own work and performance against the judgements of 'developing', 'established', 'advanced and 'exemplar of good practice'. Each of the groups reported back on their views and it was agreed that the SACRE advisor compile the notes from each group and report to the next meeting.

Resolved – That the summary of the SACRE Self-Assessment views be reported to the next meeting.

18. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SACRE was scheduled for 4th December at 6 pm.

David Howell advised that Gorse Hill Baptist Church were hosting a joint event with Swindon Youth for Christ on 8th October 2012 at 7.30 pm to pray for all the schools in Swindon, and talk about the work of organisations and churches working with schools. He invited any member of SACRE who wished to, to attend.