

# **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**  
held in County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 13 June 2019 at 1.30 pm**

**Present:**

**P Welch (Chair) In the Chair**

## **Church of England**

Canon L Burton, K Passmore and C Weir

## **Other Religious Denominations and Faiths**

W Gray - Buddhism  
C Spencer - Bahá'í Faith

## **Teachers Associations**

V Bain - NEU  
S Baker - NEU  
B Dunn - RE Curriculum Group  
A Hartley - NASUWT  
S Lupton - RE Curriculum Group

## **County Council Representatives**

Councillors C Martin, J Shuttleworth and F Tinsley

## **Co-opted Member:**

S Walker - Humanist

## **Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)**

Isobel Short

## **1 Introductions, Welcome and Apologies**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Councillor J Shuttleworth who replaced Councillor W Stelling as the County Council Representative on SACRE. Everyone introduced themselves and gave a brief introduction of their background.

Apologies for absence were received from J Bainbridge, Councillor P Brookes, N Chapman, M Dixon, F A Johnson, J Pallister, C Singh, H Tait, M Turner and D Van Der Velde.

## **2 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment:

Page 4 – Key Stage 4 Results 2018, first bullet point ‘given’ changed to ‘even’.

## **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to the items of business on the agenda.

## **4 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

## **5 Chairs Comments**

The Chairman advised Members that J Nicholls was unable to attend the meeting today to talk to members on what it meant to be a Quaker.

He asked Members to let him know if they wished to speak at a future meeting of SACRE on some aspects of what their faith means to them.

He then informed Members about Interfaith week which would be held on the 10 to 17 November 2019.

The last Interfaith conference organised in Durham brought together primary and secondary schools for a hugely successful event which had a multiplying affect. The Chairman recognised a great number of volunteers had since gone into schools which was greatly appreciated.

The Conference this year had been put on hold until after the Agreed Syllabus had being launched.

## **6 RE Advisor Report**

The RE Subject Advisor advised Members that she continued carrying out external contracts with Hartlepool and South Tyneside and was beginning to carry out some work with North Tyneside.

The RE Advisor then referred to the three network meetings which were taking place in Durham. Two of the network meetings would be held next week. The first was a primary network which was well attended last time, the second was the secondary network which was looking like it was going to be less well attended in comparison to the Primary network and the third network was a focus network.

## **7 Monitoring of RE**

The Chairman referred to the information contained in the RE Commission report and the long-term concerns of monitoring of RE, in particular that some pupils were not receiving their legal entitlement of RE provision, which was discussed at the last SACRE meeting. As agreed at the last SACRE meeting a letter was sent to D Hinds (Secretary of State for Education) raising SACRE's concerns. A copy of the letter that had been sent to D Hinds was available for members to view.

The RE Advisor advised members that herself and K Passmore had met HMI Mark Evans at a conference in York in March and they spoke to him after the conference. She had followed up the meeting with an e-mail to his office registering the concerns of SACRE.

She then referred to Primary EDPs and advised members that she had met with 9 or 10 primary EDPs and had made the point of raising the profile of RE when visiting schools. She would continue trying to raise the profile of RE with secondary EDPs.

M Dixon was going to meet the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Service but unfortunately, he was unable to attend the meeting today to provide an update.

The RE Adviser then referred to the Questionnaire NQTs (primary) on Initial Teacher Training and advised that she had met a number of trainees who were finishing their first year of teaching and had asked them to complete the questionnaire about training. The questionnaires had not been analysed and she asked if a small group could analyse the results, for SACRE to discuss at a future meeting.

V Bain, S Baker, Canon L Burton, B Dunn and S Lupton agreed to form a working group to analyse the questionnaires and meet up with K Passmore to discuss the results.

Members were referred to a recent SACRE briefing where it was reported that N Lawson from the Curriculum Unit of the Department for Education had written to the Chair of NASACRE, P Smalley setting out the expectations of

the government with regards to school compliance in RE. The Chairman indicated that he hoped to hear something positive back from the letter.

W Gray referred to SACREs obligation to monitor RE in schools on behalf of Durham County Council.

The RE Advisor responded that the role of SACRE was to advise the local authority on matters of RE and collective worship and referred to the 2010 guidance that detailed the sort of things that SACRE could advise on. There was nothing in the document which specified monitoring, only advising and Durham County Council does not have any authority over academies.

## **8 Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting of Durham SACRE would be held on 7 November 2019.

## **9 Any other business**

C Spencer advised Members that she had attended a Faith Network meeting at Darlington, where she was warmly welcomed by the Hebrew congregation.