

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on Thursday 8 June 2023 at 3.00 pm

Present:

B Dunn (Vice-Chair) In the Chair

Church of England

Canon L Burton and K Passmore

Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

S Baker	- Roman Catholic
W Gray	- Buddhism
F Johnson	- Methodist Church
C Spencer	- Bahá'í Faith
M Turner	- Islam
D Van der Velde	- Judaism

Teachers Associations

B Dunn - RE Curriculum Group

County Council Representatives

Councillors D Haney and S Townsend

Co-opted Member

S Walker - Humanist

Senior Professional Learning Advisor

S Blakeman

1 Introductions, Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Members to introduce themselves.

Apologies for absence were received from V Bain, M Dixon, N Dodd, A Hartley, S Lupton, H Tait, C Weir, P Welch and Councillors C Varty and M Walton.

Apologies for absence were also received from P Hodgson – Specialist Inspector.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to some minor grammatical changes and that it be noted that K Passmore was to share information on AREIAC and not NATRE as stated in the minutes.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Matters Arising

Canon L Burton referred to the Chairs Comments and indicated that she had not received a copy of the local census data or the presentation.

K Passmore responded that she had sent a copy of the presentation to the Chair (P Welch) but would send the information to the Clerk for circulation to Members.

In response to a question from S Walker on the Humanist representative becoming a full voting Member, the Clerk advised that a report on the adoption of the changes to the Constitution to allow the Humanist representative to become a full voting Member, would be brought to the next SACRE meeting.

Canon L Burton asked if Community Cohesion was to be a standard item on the agenda.

The Chair responded that Community Cohesion had been requested to be a standard agenda item but was not part of the agenda today and suggested if Members wished this could be considered under 'Any Other Business', but he was not aware of any topics for consideration.

5 Chairs Comments

The Chair had no comments but indicated that he was thrilled that two teachers were joining the meeting today to deliver a presentation on what was happening in schools.

6 SACRE Medium and Long-Term Planning

That the Item be deferred until the next SACRE meeting.

7 Presentation from Emma Downing (Wingate Primary School) RE Deep Dive Experience

Emma Downing from Wingate Primary School was in attendance to deliver a presentation on her RE Deep Dive Experience.

The presentation provided details of who the Inspectors met and the lessons observed. She advised Members that she had a RE lead file that contained a copy of the policy including intent, implementation and impact; Durham Agreed Syllabus; School Medium Term planning including vocabulary and notes on COVID; Benchmark Assessments; CPD for herself and staff; Peer Review feedback and a Grab Sheet.

She continued that the Grab Sheet included key developments, training, brief overview of the Durham Agreed Syllabus and how they had adapted it to WPS, LTP, MTP, enquiry focus, reflection aspect, her role as Lead and steps for development.

The presentation also provided details of her meet as RE Lead with the Inspector and what she would do differently (for copy of presentation, see file of minutes).

Members thanked E Downing for her informative presentation and Members asked questions on the presentation in particular around worldviews.

8 Presentation from Vicki Mitchell (Yohden Primary School) supporting SEND pupils in RE lessons

Vicki Mitchell from Yohden Primary School was in attendance to deliver a presentation on supporting SEND pupils in RE lessons.

The presentation provided details of three children known as Child A, Child B and Child C. The presentation also provided detail of each of the five strands and how this looked in RE lessons as well as key questions, unit overview and how she made it a creative curriculum with a sense of enquiry and provided examples of the work. She concluded the presentation by providing details of what monitoring showed (for copy of presentation, see file of minutes).

Members thanked V Mitchell for her informative presentation.

Members discussed that presentation and asked if the strategies that were in place for the children would continue when they moved year groups. Members were advised that this was the case and the Teaching Assistant

would also be moving with the children and the strategies had been put into other areas.

E Downing suggested that the medium-term plan in the Durham Agreed Syllabus next time be very structured and focused on lots of different religious areas and bring in non-religious world views.

V Mitchell indicated that the Durham Agreed Syllabus assumes that you were going to have links with other faiths but this was not always the case and commented that it was difficult to go to places of worship due to tight budgets, so this was not always possible.

The Senior Professional Learning Advisor stated that in terms of moving forward with the Durham Agreed Syllabus they have found that all schools were now using the Durham Agreed Syllabus and teachers she had spoken to were confident in terms of knowledge and understanding. When it came to critical thinking and personal reflection was when some teachers found it difficult to work into lessons. There was pressure on schools to evidence what children were learning and commented that you could evidence knowledge but reflection and critical thinking was hard to evidence. Some additional guidance around this could be in terms of training that would add further value to the Durham Agreed Syllabus.

Councillor Haney indicated that a meeting had been held prior to the SACRE meeting around non-religious and religious world views so they were working on this.

Members discussed how useful the Durham Agreed Syllabus was and its effective implementation and asked that SACRE be included in future launches of the Durham Agreed Syllabus.

The Senior Professional Learning Advisor indicated that she would take this back to the service and find out what was covered in terms of what information went out to schools and ensure that SACRE Members were invited to any launches going forward.

The Chair indicated that the Durham Agreed Syllabus launch moved to virtual due to COVID and was originally planned as a physical launch.

The Senior Professional Learning Advisor asked Members if they would like a regular update around any training on aspects of Religious Education which Members confirmed would be very helpful. She then provided details of some courses that were coming forward.

9 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of SACRE was scheduled to be held on 9 November 2023 at 3.00 pm.

10 Any other business

Canon L Burton asked if secondary schools who were using the Durham Agreed Syllabus could be invited to attend a future SACRE meeting to share their work.

The Chair indicated that he would also like to see a return of Members sharing their faiths.

Members discussed the time of meetings for the next municipal year where it was suggested a possible 4.00 pm start. It was suggested that this be discussed with the Chair of SACRE.