



## **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**

**Date**        **Thursday 7 November 2013**  
**Time**        **1.30 pm**  
**Venue**       **Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham**

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### **Business**

#### **Part A**

**Items during which the Press and Public are welcome to attend.  
Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chairman's  
agreement.**

1. Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of County Durham SACRE
2. Introductions, Welcome and Apologies
3. Declarations of interest, if any
4. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2013 (Pages 1 - 4)
5. Matters Arising
6. Chairs Comments
7. Church of England Diocese Syllabus
8. Where Did AT1 and AT2 Go?
9. Inquiry Project
10. SACRE Updates - Report of the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education (Pages 5 - 6)
11. Date of the next meeting
12. Any other business
13. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public during the discussion of items containing exempt information

**Colette Longbottom**  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall  
Durham

30 October 2013

To: **The Members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**1. Church of England**

Canon L Burton, Revd. J Jewsbury, J Katsambis and D Mowbray-Pape

**2. Other Religious Denominations and Faiths**

J Bainbridge	- <b>Methodist Church</b>
N Barker	- <b>The Salvation Army</b>
S Brown	- <b>Assemblies of God</b>
W Gray	- <b>Buddhism</b>
B Guymer	- <b>Baptist Church</b>
J Kidd	- <b>Methodist Church</b>
I Osborne	- <b>Roman Catholic</b>
J Pallister	- <b>Roman Catholic</b>
S Purba	- <b>Sikhism</b>
Bhakti Rasa Dasa	- <b>Hinduism</b>
D Sadlik	- <b>Judaism</b>
C Spencer	- <b>Bahá'í Faith</b>
M Stephenson	- <b>United Reform Church</b>

**3. Teachers Associations**

V Bain	- <b>RE Curriculum Group</b>
S Baker	- <b>NUT</b>
C Callaghan	- <b>NUT</b>
A Hartley	- <b>NASUWT</b>
P Lamb	- <b>SHA</b>
S Lupton	- <b>RE Curriculum Group</b>
P Welch	- <b>NUT</b>

**4. County Council Representatives**

Councillors J Blakey, M Dixon, S Iveson and W Stelling

**Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)**

Isobel Short

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**Contact: Paula Nicholson**

**Tel: 03000 269710**

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**DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held in Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham on Thursday 6 June 2013 at 1.30 pm**

**Present:**

**Canon L Burton (Chairman) In the Chair**

**Church of England**

Revd. J Jewsbury

**Other Religious Denominations and Faiths**

J Kidd	- Methodist Church
I Osborne	- Roman Catholic
J Pallister	- Roman Catholic
D Sadlik	- Judaism
S Brown	- Assemblies of God
C Spencer	- Bahá'í Faith

**Teachers Associations**

S Baker	- NUT
A Hartley	- NASUWT
P Welch	- NUT
C Dyer	- R E Curriculum Group

**County Council Representatives**

Councillors M Dixon and S Iveson

**Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)**

Isobel Short

**1 Introductions, Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from J Bainbridge, C Callaghan, W Gray, J Katsambis, D Mowbray-Paper, Councillor J Blakey and Councillor A Willis.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

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

**3 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 March 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:-

Minute No.4 – Resolution should read that the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education upon receipt of the writing request from the Humanist respond inviting him to attend a future SACRE meeting to talk to members about what he could contribute to SACRE with a time limit of 15 minutes.

Minute No.6 - That the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education write to the Board of Education and the Bishop and not the Chairman.

#### **4 Matters Arising**

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education advised Members that the Humanist would be attending the next meeting of SACRE to give a talk on how he could contribute to SACRE.

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education advised SACRE Members that she had checked the legal position with regard to the use of the Agreed Syllabus and confirmed that the law stated that the Agreed Syllabus should be used by controlled schools. She proposed that instead of writing a letter to the Diocesan that she would make an appointment to discuss the matter in person.

Members discussed the matter in detail and agreed that the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education arrange a meeting with the Diocesan.

Members also discussed that the launch for the Diocesan Agreed Syllabus was shortly so they needed to act quickly and asked the Vice-Chairman to raise the issue of the Agreed Syllabus at the next Diocese meeting she attends.

Councillor Dixon gave SACRE an update on SACRE Funding and advised Members that the Group had met and W Gray had put together a business plan and they were in the process of arranging a meeting with the Head of Education. It was proposed that a copy of the Business Plan be circulated to Members for their comments and the Working Group with the exception of W Gray attend the meeting.

#### **Resolved:**

- (i) That the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education arrange a meeting with the Diocesan to discuss the agreed syllabus.
- (ii) That the Vice-Chairman raise the issue of the Agreed Syllabus at the next Diocese meeting she attends.
- (iii) That the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Councillor Dixon and C Spencer meet with the Director of Education to discuss the SACRE Business Plan.
- (iv) That a copy of the Business Plan be circulated to Members for their comments.

## **5 Chairs Comments**

The Chairman had no comments to make as items had been covered under Matters Arising.

## **6 SACRE Membership**

The Chairman advised SACRE that C Dyer had tendered her resignation from SACE with effect from 31 July 2013, as she had a new job. SACRE Members congratulated her and wished her well.

The Clerk advised Members that their membership on SACRE was for a four year period which would expire on 31 August 2013. The Clerk would be writing to organisations for their nominations.

Members were also advised that Councillor A Willis was now a Member of SACRE to replace Councillor M Simmons.

### **Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

## **7 NASACRE Bursary Bid**

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education presented the circulated report to Members on the NASACRE Bursary Bid 2013, which was a joint bursary bid between Durham and South Tyneside SACREs which had been put together with the help of P Welch (for copy see file of minutes).

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education was pleased to report that at the NASACRE Annual General Meeting it was announced that the bid had been successful and they had been awarded £4,000.

The Chairman congratulated everyone involved in the Bursary Bid 2013.

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education advised SACRE that a Working Group would be established in September and she asked for volunteers.

### **Resolved:**

- (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That D Sadlik be appointed to the Working Group.

## **8 Art Competition**

SACRE were advised that the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education, J Bainbridge, D Sadlik and C Spencer judged the 2013 Art Competition.

Some of the entries had been shown to Members of SACRE at the meeting. The theme was 'What do Christians Believe about Jesus' and entries were from Year 3 children.

There were 5 winners and each entry received a certificate with a comment from SACRE.

The Chairman thanked those who had been involved in the judging.

Members asked if there would be an Art Competition next year. The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education responded that this would depend on budget but would be the decision of SACRE.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**9 All Party Parliamentary Group Report**

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education gave a summary of the circulated Inquiry by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education entitled 'The Truth Unmasked' which was the main findings and recommendations and advised Members that a copy of the full report was available on line. She also advised Members that Durham SACRE had sent some evidence in December last year in relation to the inquiry (for copy see file on minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**10 SACRE Development Plan**

The Chairman advised Members that SACRE were waiting to ascertain if they had a budget.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**11 Where Did AT1 and AT2 Go?**

That the item be deferred to the next SACRE Meeting.

**12 Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting of SACRE would be held on 7 November 2013.

## SACRE National and Local Updates 2013

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### National

There has been a lot of activity nationally around Religious Education in recent months.

- In July, Michael Gove addressed the **Church of England Seminar** on education. When asked about the undermining of RE in schools, he admitted that Government policies had had a negative impact on RE. He said he had thought that, because schools had to provide RE lessons, the subject was 'protected'.

*"I think RE has suffered as a result of my belief that the protection that it had in the curriculum was sufficient, and I don't think that I've done enough".*

He assured attendees that he would address the issue and would work with faith groups and others.

- On 6 October, the **RE Ofsted long report** was published and received a lot of press coverage on TV, radio and newspapers. This report summarises findings from 185 school inspections which solely focused on RE provision (achievement, teaching, curriculum and leadership and management of RE). The report highlights several areas of weakness, including the role government has played in undermining RE, as well as poor subject knowledge and lack of understanding of purpose of RE amongst teachers. Alan Brine, HMI and Ofsted's National Adviser for RE, is the author of this report. He came to speak to teachers at the Durham RE Conference last March and will do so again on 21 March 2014.
- On 23 October, the Religious Education Council (REC) published the **National Framework for RE (non-statutory)** - this has replaced the 2004 NSNF. This has been signed by Michael Gove but no government funding has been provided in the review and publication of this document.

The Framework has been published in an attempt to bring RE in line with the new programmes of study for National Curriculum subjects.

The introduction does state that this Framework is designed to "provide a basis for developing locally agreed syllabuses and RE syllabuses in academies and free schools".

This National Framework for RE **DOES NOT** replace the statutory duty of Local Authorities to revise and provide a locally Agreed Syllabus for RE and for community schools to use this in the teaching of RE.

### Local

- Termly RE networks continue this year, with the addition of a RE network specifically for special schools. Isobel continues to run these.
- The Local Authority have received a lot of queries and telephone calls over the last few months connected with various issues around RE and Collective Worship, particularly in relation to parental withdrawal. This remains a very sensitive area and both schools and parents are keen to have clear advice.

Isobel has spoken to primary inspectors in relation to these matters, including the legal position of RE and the duty to ensure that RE is provided for all pupils in school.

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