



Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date Thursday 5 November 2015
Time 1.30 pm
Venue Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham

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. Introductions, Welcome and Apologies
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2015 (Pages 1 - 4)
3. Declarations of interest, if any
4. Matters Arising
5. Chairs Comments (Pages 5 - 6)
6. RE Inspector Report (Pages 7 - 8)
7. Inter Faith Week
8. Provision for RE Age 14-16 (Key Stage 4)
9. Date of the next meeting
10. Any other business
11. 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

28 October 2015

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

1. Church of England

N Chapman and K Passmore

2. Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

J Bainbridge	- Methodist Church
N Barker	- The Salvation Army
S Brown	- Assemblies of God
V Gallant	- Judaism
W Gray	- Buddhism
B Guymer	- Baptist Church
J Kidd	- Methodist Church
J Nicholls	- Society of Friends (Quaker)
I Osborne	- Roman Catholic
J Pallister	- Roman Catholic
S Purba	- Sikhism
Bhakti Rasa Dasa	- Hinduism
C Spencer	- Bahá'í Faith
M Stephenson	- United Reform Church
M Turner	- Islam

3. Teachers Associations

V Bain	- NUT
S Baker	- NUT
A Hartley	- NASUWT
P Lamb	- SHA
S Lupton	- RE Curriculum Group
P Welch	- NUT

4. County Council Representatives

Councillors P Brookes, M Dixon, S Iveson and W Stelling

Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)

Isobel Short

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held in Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham on Thursday 4 June 2015 at 1.30 pm

Present:

P Welch (Chairman) In the Chair

Church of England

N Chapman and D Mowbray-Pape

Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

N Barker	- The Salvation Army
W Gray	- Buddhism
J Kidd	- Methodist Church
I Osborne	- Roman Catholic
Bhakti Rasa Dasa	- Hinduism
C Spencer	- Bahá'í Faith
M Turner	- Islam

Teachers Associations

V Bain	- RE Curriculum Group
S Lupton	- RE Curriculum Group

County Council Representatives

Councillors P Brookes and M Dixon

Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)

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1 Introductions, Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting in particular D Lawson who was a Humanist representative and was in attendance to observe the meeting. C Forbes was also in attendance as an Observer. Everyone introduced themselves and gave a brief description of their background.

The Chairman advised members of the resignation of J Jewsbury and members wished to convey their thanks to him for his contribution to SACRE and wish him well for the future.

Apologies for absence were received from J Bainbridge, S Baker, V Gallant, A Hartley, J Nicholls, J Pallister and K Passmore.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2015, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

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

4 Matters Arising

Members sought clarification on the resignation of S Brown. The Clerk advised members that she had written to S. Brown to convey best wishes on behalf of SACRE and to advise him that members would like him to remain as a member of SACRE as they valued his contribution. The Clerk advised members that no further correspondence had been received and it was agreed that Councillor M Dixon would write to him and send a card on behalf of SACRE.

I Osborne referred to Minute No. 8 and the SMSC and British Values Conference and asked if there was any information in relation to British Values.

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education responded that British Values would be actively promoted in all schools and not just taught. She also advised members that she would re-schedule the presentation that she unfortunately had to cancel. There was also a seminar on 15 June 2015 to look at British Values and SACRE had a part to play in how it would be promoted in schools.

Members discussed British values and the Chairman suggested that this area be discussed in more detail at the SMSC and British Values training event.

5 Chairs Comments

The Chairman referred to the new GCSE and A level specifications and advised members that the examination boards were behind schedule which was a concern for those teachers who taught over a 3 year curriculum.

The Chairman indicated that he was a senior examiner for the examination board Edexcel where it was confirmed that no legacy specification will be offered from 2018. He advised members that the examination board WJEC were offering a course with three components which was an hour exam worth 25% a 2 hour exam worth 50% and another 1 hour exam worth 25%. He also referred to the requirement now to teach 2 religions.

The Chairman also thanked everyone who had supported SACRE in particular those who had attended the working groups and who would be attending the SMSC and British Values conference to be held on 15 June 2015. He was very grateful for their time and commitment.

6 Report of Working Groups

The Chairman advised members that two of the working groups had met since the last meeting.

The notes of the SACRE Development Working Group meeting held with C Spencer, D Mowbray-Pape and J Bainbridge had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

C Spencer and D Mowbray-Pape presented the outcome of their meeting and members discussed the contents of the minutes and suggested that the Communication Working Group look at marketing SACRE.

Members discussed the future of SACRE as schools were now being taken out of local authority control and they don't have to buy into the authority's services so what would be the role of SACRE.

The Chairman indicated that the Communications Working Group had met and produced an annual report which would be considered under a separate agenda item.

The Chairman advised members that a response had been received from Lord Nash which was impartial due to the election. K Passmore had suggested to the Chairman that a further letter be sent to Lord Nash.

7 RE Inspector Report

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education gave a PowerPoint presentation (for copy of presentation see file of minutes).

The presentation looked at the following:-

- RE Networks
- RE Hubs
- All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on RE – Chair Stephen Lloyd lost his seat.
- Expert Advisory Group (EAG) had produced some curriculum materials based on the RE framework.
- GCSE Changes from 2016
 - Exam boards are working on draft specifications.
 - First teaching would be September 2016.
 - First exam summer 2018.
 - Implications for those who teach RE over 3 years.
- NASACRE AGM held in May 2015
Charles Clarke was the Key Note Speaker and asked the following questions:-
 - Is the current statutory framework the right one to promote RE at the current time?
 - Should RE be statutory at all?

- Should RE be part of the national curriculum?
- Should RE be nationally or locally determined?
- What should RE be called?
- Should it continue to be statutory from age 5 to 18?
- What is the role of SACRE?
- Should the right of parental withdrawal from RE remain?
- What about parents who want religious instruction rather than religious education?
- Is change needed?
- What should happen about Collective Worship?

Members discussed the contents of the PowerPoint presentation.

Resolved: That the presentation be noted.

8 Initial Teacher Training providers for Religious Education

The Chairman referred to the closing down of the PGCE course at Durham University. There were however, opportunities at the Carmel College, Darlington and the Shotton Hall SCITT has 3 places for RE trainees from September 2015 and there were no applications at present.

The Chairman and the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education were meeting to see how SACRE could ensure that people applied for the positions as they could not write to members of parliament about the issue if places were available and people were not applying.

9 SACRE Draft Annual Report 2014

A copy of the draft annual report for 2014 had been circulated to SACRE members for approval.

The Chairman thanked the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education, W Gray and Cllr Dixon for all their help in producing the report.

Members discussed where the report should go and it was suggested that a few figures and charts be included into the report and be made more attractive to read.

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education asked that paragraph 7.2 of the report be amended so that '50%' was removed so that it read 'The calendar year 2014 was thus the first full year of this reduction in professional support'.

SACRE members agreed to formally adopt the annual report with some minor amendments.

10 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of SACRE would be held on 5 November 2015.



2015/0035157POJN

Lord Nash

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools

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tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

Paula Nicholson
Clerk to Durham SACRE
Durham County Council
County Hall, Durham
DH1 5UQ

3 August 2015

Dear Ms Nicholson,

Thank you for your letter of 21 July, and Mr Welch's earlier letter of 24 March, about the future funding and role of the Durham Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

I was glad to receive your feedback and I have noted your concerns about resources. We are aware that many individual SACREs, along with NASACRE, are working hard to make academies aware of the advantages of teaching the agreed syllabus and to encourage them to participate in the family of schools that their local SACRE supports. NASACRE is also identifying and disseminating good practice that can help SACREs develop constructive working relationships with academies in their local areas. We will consider what more we can do to encourage academies who wish to work more closely with their SACRE and also to ensure that academies are aware of their statutory duties to provide Religious Education (RE) for all their pupils.

I am pleased that you support our proposal to commission an analysis of Annual Reports. As you know, local authorities have a statutory responsibility to support their SACREs, which includes providing sufficient financial support. The analysis of the SACRE reports will help us to identify good practice and will also help to ensure that all local authorities are fulfilling their statutory duties, including providing the appropriate level of assistance and resource to their SACRE. If the analysis of the annual reports does identify any significant problems, then we will consider what further action is necessary to address these.

With regard to your specific concern about additional religious education training places, I can confirm that there are providers of school direct RE training in the North East. To check RE course vacancies in your area, you can visit the UCAS Teacher Training website: <http://tinyurl.com/ols65e2>. I would encourage you to work with the schools that currently provide schools-based RE training to accommodate this need. You may also be interested in viewing the published 2015/16 allocations for training places at: <http://tinyurl.com/nozdugu>.

Officials are still allocating RE places to higher education institutions and school-led sectors for the 2015/16 academic year. This means that an Initial Teacher Training provider or lead school can request additional RE places for either the provider-led or School Direct routes through the data management system in order to accommodate additional recruits. Once the request has been forwarded to the National College for Teaching and Leadership, we will assess it against our set criteria.

Thank you for writing to me on these important matters. I hope this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN NASH

The RE Inspector Report

Durham SACRE

Autumn Term 2015

Durham RE Networks

The Autumn Term RE networks have taken place. The special schools network has not taken place this term but will resume next term.

PRIMARY

29th September 2015. 31 delegates. Agenda items:

- What do we know about RE? (quiz in order to help new RE Co-ordinators)
- Sample plan – How and why do religious people show care for others? (Year 4 unit)
- Frequently asked questions – queries raised by delegates e.g. Is RE taught in Early Years Foundation Stage?
- Presentation by Elizabeth Baker, local storyteller on teaching about the northern saints in RE

Evaluations were good. Delegates asked for more skeleton plans for the units in the Agreed Syllabus.

SECONDARY

21st October 2015. 19 delegates (12 from Durham schools, 9 from other local authorities). Agenda items:

- Qualitative analysis of GCSE results, summer 2015. This was an opportunity for delegates to evaluate their results and reflect on reasons for successes and failures based on school provision.
- Spiritual development and RE. Discussion on how RE can make a unique contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Some practical activities given.

- The new GCSE specifications for RS. A brief look at the draft specifications for Full Course GCSE from September 2016: Edexcel, AQA, OCR, WJEC.
- Provision for RE at Key Stage 4. Discussion on the differing models for meeting the statutory requirement for RE, advantages and disadvantages of each model. (please see separate agenda item).

NETWORK ATTENDANCE

I have briefly analysed attendance at Durham's secondary RE networks over the last year (March, July, October 2015):

- 17 Durham schools have attended one or more meetings.
- 4 schools attended all 3 meetings.
- 8 schools attended 2 meetings.
- 5 schools attended one meeting
- 8 Durham schools have not attended a meeting in the last year.
- 15 schools from other local authorities (4 Darlington, 1 Middlesbrough, 2 Newcastle, 2 Northumberland, 1 Redcar and Cleveland, 5 Sunderland) have attended meetings. All of these schools have a service level agreement with Durham (they pay a fee to receive support from Durham Education Development Service). Again, not all external schools send a delegate to each meeting.

Attendance at network meetings does raise some questions and issues:

- Is the RE network the only source of subject support and training that RE leaders receive and if so why is attendance spasmodic?
- Why do some schools never attend meetings?

- Is the content and quality of what delegates receive appropriate?
- Do senior leaders encourage subject CPD?

RE Courses

There are 3 courses/conferences due to take place this year:

- **New to teaching RE/Geography/History** - 1st December 2015. This course is mainly for NQTs or Teaching Assistants who are given these curriculum areas to teach. This is the first course I have run which acknowledges that in many schools RE is taught by Teaching Assistants in teacher PPA time (time for planning). Currently there are very few delegates for this course.
- **Teaching Christianity**. This course mainly focuses on subject knowledge and is suitable for both primary and secondary teachers. It was due to take place in January but I have postponed to later in the year (June) due to poor uptake.
- **GCSE RS Conference** - 18th March 2015. This will be advertised across the region and is to help secondary RE leaders prepare for the new specifications they must all teach from September 2016.

RE Contracts

Demand for one-to-one support for RE remains high, particularly in primary schools with a focus on planning materials to teach effective RE. I have had one request for support over collective worship.

Several secondary schools are requesting support (usually just for 3 hours) for a new RE Leader.

A lot of schools are now requesting training and support in developing effective SMSC and the promotion of British values. This is a remit beyond RE but RE has a key role to play in helping schools develop good provision for the British value of 'mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs'.

School Queries

I continue to be contacted by school leaders on a range of queries relating to parental queries about the nature of RE and/or collective worship/assemblies and the withdrawal of their children from RE and/or Collective Worship. Some of these queries demonstrate that there is still some confusion amongst parents and staff in schools about the nature and purpose of RE in maintained schools and non-faith based academies.

Interfaith Week

The Annual Interfaith Week in England is taking place from 15-21 November. The 3 aims of Interfaith Week are:

- strengthening good interfaith relations at all levels
- increasing awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK
- increasing understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs.

The Interfaith Week website encourages all sorts of groups to become involved, attend and organise events. It has suggestions for the sort of events that could take place. Whilst Durham LA and SACRE are not holding a Student Interfaith Conference this year, SACRE may wish to remind schools of this and suggest some ways in which they can mark Interfaith Week in an educationally appropriate way.