

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held in Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham on Thursday 3 November 2016 at 1.30 pm

Present:

P Welch (Chairman) In the Chair

Church of England

N Chapman and R Sansom

Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

G Chaundy	- The Salvation Army
W Gray	- Buddhism
J Kidd	- Methodist Church
J Pallister	- Roman Catholic

Teachers Associations

V Bain	- NUT
A Hartley	- NASUWT
S Lupton	- RE Curriculum Group
C Newton	- RE Curriculum Group

County Council Representatives

Councillors M Dixon and A Liversidge

Specialist Advisor (Religious Education)

Isobel Short

1 Introductions, Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for absence had been received from J Bainbridge, S Baker, V Gallant, J Nicholls, I Osborne, K Passmore, Bhakti Rasa, P Snowdon, C Spencer, M Turner and I Hunter-Smart.

The Chairman welcomed Captain G Chaundy to the meeting who is the new Salvation Army Representative. Everyone introduced themselves and gave a brief description of their background.

2 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2016, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

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

4 Matters Arising

Councillor Dixon asked for an update on Islamophobia feelings within the County with regard to education and how Brexit had impacted on schools.

The Subject Improvement Advisor responded that nothing had changed since the last meeting with regard to Islamophobia.

Councillor Dixon was advised that some schools did have discussions with children about the vote and some children had changed their minds since the vote had taken place, but no concerns had been raised.

5 Chairs Comments

The Chairman advised Members that he had met with The Subject Improvement Advisor and they are planning an Interfaith event which will be held on 10 March 2017.

He also advised Members of an Interfaith Event organised by the County Durham Faiths Network which would be held on 14 November 2016 at Alington House, Durham.

Councillor Dixon referred to the Syrian refugees who would be coming to Newton Aycliffe later this month. All the children would be attending the same school and he asked that SACRE offer support to the school. Members agreed to send an e-mail to the Head of Partnership and Community Engagement to advise that SACRE was available to support the school and children if required.

6 Agreed Syllabus Review

The Chairman advised Members that they needed to commence the review of the Durham Agreed Syllabus as it is statutory for an Agreed Syllabus to be reviewed every 5 years. The whole review including the legal process would take some time and it was proposed that the first Agreed Syllabus Conference would be held on 2 March 2016.

Members discussed the current Agreed Syllabus and what changes may be required. Several members stated that they thought the current Agreed Syllabus contained many very good elements that would not need to be changed but that

revision and review would be needed in some areas, for example assessment, Key Stage 4, progression linked to the new GCSEs.

It was agreed that the Local Authority be advised that SACRE were to commence the review of the Agreed Syllabus.

7 RE Inspector Report

Members considered the report of the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education which was the RE Advisor Report for November 2016 (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

The report contained the following items:-

- RE Networks (Autumn Term)
- What is the Meaning of Christmas?
- Agreed Syllabus Review
- Interfaith Week
- Mutual Respect and Tolerance of Other Faiths and Beliefs
- RE Conference
- Contracts
- Rise in Entries for GCSE Religious Studies

Members discussed the contents of the report.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

8 NASACRE Proposed Constitution 2016

NASACRE had asked SACREs to take their new constitution to their Autumn term SACRE meeting and to vote to either agree to the new constitution or not. A copy of the Constitution had been circulated with the papers.

Members raised no issues or concerns with NASACRE's revised constitution.

9 Discussion Item 1: SACRE Members as an Active Resource

The Chairman asked Members to divide into two groups and for each group to discuss one of the discussion topics which were 'SACRE Members as an Active Resource and 'SACRE Response to the Commission of Religious Education".

Councillor Dixon chaired the discussion group on SACRE Members as an Active Resource.

Following the discussion, W Gray advised Members that the group had made the following comments:-

- Faith Members visiting schools was very useful.

- Establish a Directory or Database of who is available from each faith. A presentation from K Passmore on her organisation would be helpful.
- Promote the Subject Improvement Advisor.
- The recent completed questionnaire from the Subject Improvement Advisor was a very valuable resource and should be extended to people in SACRE member's faith communities.
- Sharon Lupton could do a presentation on how she organises Interfaith events at her school, which could be used as a model.
- Café Society – Invite teachers and older children to have talks 2 or 3 times a year.

10 Discussion Item 2: SACRE Response to the Commission on Religious Education

Mr P Welch, Chaired the meeting on the discussion surrounding the response to the Commission on Religious Education.

From the discussion the following points were raised:-

- Percentage of schools that buy into the Agreed Syllabus endorses the quality of the document.
- SACRE members have a lot of expertise and are very representative.
- Meetings are always quorate and well attended with volunteers who care.
- SACRE models community cohesion for the area and focuses on education.
- The Local Authority supports teachers with training, CPD and through network meetings which SACRE supports.
- SACRE is open to include Academies.
- The barriers are recruitment and retention of RE teachers and the limitations to challenge academies.

11 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of SACRE will be held on 2 March 2017.