



Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date Thursday 2 March 2017
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 3 November 2016 (Pages 3 - 6)
3. Declarations of interest, if any
4. Matters Arising
5. Chairs Comments
6. Revision of the Agreed Syllabus (Pages 7 - 8)
7. RE Subject Advisors Report (Pages 9 - 12)
8. RE Conference - Mutual Respect and Tolerance of All
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

22 February 2017

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

1. Church of England

N Chapman, K Passmore, R Sansom, P Snowden and C Weir

2. Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

J Bainbridge	-	Methodist Church
S Brown	-	Assemblies of God
G Chaundy	-	The Salvation Army
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
C Newton	-	RE Curriculum Group
P Welch	-	NUT

4. County Council Representatives

Councillors P Brookes, M Dixon, A Liversidge and W Stelling

Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)

Isobel Short

Contact: Paula Nicholson

Tel: 03000 269710

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.

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

2 March 2017



Revision of the Agreed Syllabus

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Purpose of the Report

1. The Council is asked to consider the following **recommendation** in relation to the Revision of the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education:-

That a Standing Agreed Syllabus Conference for the Review of the Agreed Syllabus should be convened with the intention to hold meetings in March 2017, June 2017 and November 2017 after SACRE meetings and a further meeting in January 2018, and for other meetings to be convened if necessary.

Recommendations

2. In order to expedite the business of the review process SACRE members are asked to stand as Agreed Syllabus Conference members.

Contact: Paula Nicholson Tel: 03000 269710

RE MATTERS

The RE Adviser Report

Spring Term 2017

RE Networks

Education Durham (formerly Education Development Service) continues to run networks each term, led and supported by the RE Adviser.

The following **secondary** RE networks have taken place:

- **Talking Secondary RE. 16th January.**
This is an informal after school network where ideas and queries can be shared. Whilst attendance figures are low evaluations show that opportunities to meet with and form links with other RE colleagues is really appreciated, especially as RE teachers are often working in isolation in their schools. The Talking RE networks this year have been mainly attended by new Heads of RE.
- **RE Leaders Network. 13th February.**
Agenda items: local and national updates, making RE real and relevant, good practice case studies, transition between KS2 and KS3. 15 colleagues attended, 8 from Durham schools with 7 from other areas (Sunderland, Middlesbrough and Darlington).

Evaluations remain good for these networks. Secondary RE Leaders are asking for more network opportunities for colleagues to share resources and lesson materials especially of GCSE Religious Studies. These may take place more regularly in schools across the region.

Two **primary** RE networks are held each term:

- **RE Co-ordinators.** This will take place on 15th March between 1 – 4pm. Agenda items will: planning materials for teaching about Easter, local and national updates, using outside spaces to enhance RE, presentation on the RE conference.
- **Talking Primary RE.** This is similar to the secondary Talking RE, is an informal after school network where ideas and queries can be shared. This took place on 18th January and attendance was good.

A termly RE network exclusively for **special** schools is still offered but there is no or little attendance at these. Education Durham will keep offering these networks next year but as 'drop-in' sessions where RE colleagues can meet and work with the RE Adviser if they wish to.

Easter Planning Materials

What is the meaning of Easter?

Our Agreed Syllabus in Durham plans for continuity and progression between and across key stages. The Syllabus recommends that each year group in primary schools focuses on a different question to help pupils explore how and why Christians celebrate both Christmas and Easter. The RE Adviser has produced planning materials to support this work. These include: guidance on a whole school approach to teaching about Easter, lesson plans, subject information, suggestions of creative activities which support literacy and/or personal reflection, a Headteacher 'script' which could be used in an Easter assembly / school presentation.

These materials are available to schools and are on Durham's Local Authority Education Portal.

The unit questions for each year group:

Reception: How is Easter a special time?

Year 1: What is the Easter story?

Year 2: How do Christians celebrate Easter?

Year 3: What do Christians remember on Palm Sunday?

Year 4: Why is Lent such an important period for Christians?

Year 5: Why is the Last Supper so important for Christians?

Year 6: Why are Good Friday and Easter Day the most important days for Christians?

Colleagues at the secondary RE network discussed briefly how they could build on this work at Key Stage 3, possibly by enquiring into questions such as: What are the themes of Easter? Why does the resurrection matter?

Christmas Planning Materials

I reported in the November 2016 Adviser report that I had distributed planning materials for teaching Christmas in RE in primary school. These are similar to the Easter planning materials (see above). The materials have been well received by RE Co-ordinators and Headteachers and have led to a more consistent and cohesive approach to this aspect of RE teaching in schools.

Andrea Swift, Headteacher of Easington CofE Primary School reported:

We used Isobel's Christmas planning units as suggested by Isobel. The children really enjoyed receiving their question in Collective Worship at the beginning of Advent. The units were very well planned and ensured progression throughout school. Each unit was planned around a key question which gave structure for teachers. Our children enjoyed finding the answers to the questions and although the Christmas story is well known to them these units gave them the opportunity to think deeper and personally reflect on the impact of the story for themselves. The children shared their work during our Advent

Service at St Mary's church which was attended by parents, family members and parishioners. Every child shared their work and comments received from parents were very positive.

One Day Conference on Progression and assessment in RE

AREIAC (Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants) is holding its annual conference in York on Monday 3rd and 4th July. The Monday will run as a one day standalone conference on what good progress and assessment looks like in RE. Various models for progress and assessment will be presented and explored throughout the day.

Speakers include: Dave Francis, Dilwyn Hunt, Verity Holloway, Pat Hannam.

AREIAC are opening this conference to non-members and would welcome attendance from all local RE leaders, teachers and SACRE members.

Venue: Park Inn Hotel York (5 minute walk from York Station)

Date: Monday 3rd July

Time: 9.45 until 4pm

Cost: £140

I am encouraging as many Durham RE leaders to attend as possible. I think this conference will prove useful for our Agreed Syllabus revision. If you want more information please contact me on isobel.short@durham.gov.uk

RE Conference 10th March

Our RE conference is now fully booked for 10th March at DLC, supported by Durham SACRE and Education Durham. This is the first time we have run a conference like this which combines both a pupil conference and training for teachers. The conference explores the British values of mutual respect and tolerance of other faiths and beliefs and gives opportunities for teachers and pupils alike to meet various faith members and explore

questions and ideas together. 24 schools (5 secondary, 19 primary) will attend with 2 pupils and one teacher from each school. All pupils and teachers will make a peace mala in the afternoon. We will report on the conference at the next SACRE meeting in June 2017.

I remain very grateful to all SACRE and faith members for their support and their willingness to give up their time to meet pupils and teachers.

Sharing Good Practice

Evaluations of our most recent RE networks show RE Leaders are really appreciating the opportunity to hear from others and share good practice. Several RE colleagues have presented aspects of their work and have really helped all of us to think about ways we can develop and resource our own work. Recent presentations have been made by:

- Gemma Orchard, Head of RE , Parkside – curriculum, development and action planning
- Amy Hart, Staindrop School, helping students understand the big picture on Christianity
- Beth Watson, Head of RE, Wellfield School – soul spaces in RE
- Abbi Allen, Head of RE, Haughton Kepier School, Sunderland – RE and Interfaith Week in school.

REdiscover Middlesbrough

Acklam Grange School through Middlesbrough SACRE applied for Westhill/NASCRE funding to develop a digital resource to show religious affiliation and communities across Middlesbrough. The digital map will show religious life in the town both in the past and present. It is anticipated that this will be an ideal teaching tool for community groups and schools and will help pupils here in County Durham to appreciate religious diversity on the north East. This exciting resource is being launched on March 16th and members are invited. Please see Isobel for further details. Lisa Antill, the Head

of RE at Acklam Grange, has agreed to talk about this resource at the next secondary RE network in July.

Bridging Primary to Secondary RE

Durham Agreed Syllabus and SACRE have always been committed to supporting work which enables good transition in RE between primary and secondary phases. I have again distributed to schools our latest planning materials for the statutory bridging units in Year 6 and Year 7. The two units identified in the Durham Agreed Syllabus are:

Year 6: So, what do we now know about Christianity? (bringing together learning throughout the primary phase and introducing the RE concepts)

Year 7: How do the RE concepts help us understand religion? (building on Year 6 work and developing understanding of how religion can be defined through the RE concepts)

I recommend:

- that all primary schools use these planning materials and showcase pupil work to the secondary partner schools
- that secondary RE teachers refer to this work with their Year 7 pupils and use this to plan their Year 7 work
- that contact is made between the RE co-ordinators in each phase and that overview planning is shared

It may be that Durham SACRE could evaluate transition work in RE is taking place and what further support could be offered.

