

MINUTES

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Meeting - 10 July 2013

Present: **Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf**

Barrie Scott, Sonia Andjelkovic, Diana Cutler, Tajinder Singh, Paul Lewis, G Devadason, Dr Laow, Liz O'Brien, Sam Phillips, Rosemary Woodward, Peter Davies, Tricia Budd, Liz Williams, Conor Wileman and Caroline Wood

Apologies for absence: Mick Dwyer, Ann Hewetson, Jane Essex, Christine Chadwick, Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal, Mary Gale, Terry Finn and David Williams

Also in attendance - Emma Jardine and Helen Phillips

PART ONE

25. Welcome to New Members

The Chairman welcomed new members of the SACRE and gave an explanation of the work it undertakes.

26. Minutes of the SACRE Meeting held on 13 February 2013

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 13 February 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

27. An Update on Key Issues

SACRE received an update on key issues that had developed or arisen since their last meeting. These included:

- a) Religious Education Council's (REC) charity walk;
- b) The REC review of Religious Education;
- c) Successful Teacher and Pupil Conference, giving details of two very successful conferences held before the Easter break;
- d) A journey into Islam, Entrust employee Mohammed Fahim shared details of a travelling exhibition he and colleagues take into primary schools, including the children's rucksacks and artefacts that are used to prompt discussion with the pupils; and,
- e) The Spiritualist Church, Julia Almond circulated resource materials for use in schools on Spiritualism and shared background details of the Spiritualist Church in Britain and her wish to support the work of SACRE.

RESOLVED – That the update on key issues be noted.

28. NASACRE Update

The Chairman gave an update on recent NASACRE developments, including:

- a) The current state of subscriptions made to NASARE, with Staffordshire having paid their subscriptions;
- b) The new NASACRE logo and revamped website which was now password protected to ensure only those SACRE's who had paid their membership could access the data; and,
- c) The NASACRE Annual General Meeting held in Birmingham, at which Alan Brine, HMI and Mark Chester addressed members.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

29. Staffordshire's First RE Quality Mark School

The Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM) had been developed to celebrate quality RE in schools. Schools applying to the scheme were assessed and if successful, could achieve either a bronze, silver or gold award.

SACRE heard that St Michael's CE VC First School, Stone, had received a Silver REQM award. This was the first Staffordshire School to receive a quality mark award and SACRE members congratulated Mrs Mary Gale, Headteacher at St Michael's , for this outstanding achievement.

SACRE members felt that the cost of the REQM assessment may prohibit some schools from applying and agreed that, should the SACRE Budget allow, they consider supporting one school per year in applying to be assessed for REQM.

RESOLVED – That: a) SACRE congratulate Mary Gale at the SACRE Awards for achieving the REQM; and
b) should the SACRE Budget allow, SACRE support one school per year to apply for the REQM.

30. SACRE Awards and Lecture

SACRE received details of the arrangements for both the SACRE awards and SACRE lecture 2013.

The SACRE awards were scheduled to take place at the conclusion of this meeting, giving an opportunity for SACRE Members to attend, meet nominees and join the celebrations whilst keeping the cost of the ceremony low.

Gill Vaisey, Early Years RE specialist, would be giving this years SACRE lecture on 17 September at the Kingston Centre, Stafford. The event was scheduled for a 4.00 pm start which it was hoped would be a more convenient time for teachers and encourage their attendance. The lecture theme had been chosen to attract primary school teachers as this group had not been specifically catered for in previous years. Members heard that this approach appeared to be popular as 15 bookings had already been received.

RESOLVED – That the arrangements for the 2013 SACRE awards and lecture be noted.

31. Applications for variation of practice

There were none at this meeting.

32. SACRE Code of Conduct

At their meeting of 13 February 2013 SACRE members agreed their Code of Conduct, subject to minor amendments. Following the amendments being made, and as agreed by SACRE, the Code was circulated to all existing members inviting them to sign up to the Code.

Copies of the Code were available for Members to sign during the meeting if they had not already done so.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

33. Agreed Syllabus Review

The Education Act 1993 required the Local Authority to institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus every five years after the completion of its last review. The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus had last been reviewed in September 2009 and a further review was therefore due in 2014.

Since the last revision a number of major changes had occurred that had a direct impact on religious education, these being:

- a) from September 2013 a new curriculum would be introduced for all schools (key Stage 1-4) with a clear focus on slimming down the curriculum to allow more cross curriculum dimensions and inter-disciplinary studies and the removal of levels of attainment. RE will need to take account of these changes;
- b) in 2012 the REC began a review of the current National Non-Statutory Framework for RE, which is the document that SACRE's must take account of and that is referred to in all national documentation relating to RE.

SACRE considered a number of options, including variable amounts of change to the local syllabus, to wait for the outcome of the REC syllabus review or to recommend no change.

As set out in Circular 1/94 the SACRE must convene an agreed syllabus conference to consider whether they wish to request the LA to review the agreed syllabus. Members were aware that this was likely to be necessary in the Autumn term and new members asked that they receive a briefing on the current Agreed Syllabus, highlighting those areas that were statutory and those areas that could be locally determined.

RESOLVED – That members receive a briefing on the Locally Agreed Syllabus and the process necessary to undertake the review.

34. NASACRE Award

In 2012 the Staffordshire SACRE had received a £5000 NASACRE award to produce a DVD resource pack for the National Memorial Arboretum.

NASACRE made such awards annually and at the SACRE meeting of 13 February Liz O'Brien and Jane Essex had agreed to consider possible projects for submission to NASACRE around parity in the provision of RE irrespective of ability.

Liz O'Brien shared some initial thoughts for projects with SACRE . Due to time commitments this term, it had not been possible for work to be developed but they hoped to be able to meet in the new term.

RESOLVED – That the update on a possible entry for the NASACRE Award be noted.

35. The SACRE Budget 2013-2014

Members received a breakdown of the SACRE budget for the financial year 2013-14 and noted the remaining funds.

RESOLVED – That the SACRE Budget 2013-14 be noted.

36. AOB

Dr Laow informed SACRE Members of a Buddhist festival on 17 August in Kings Bromley. He invited Members to attend and will forward details to the clerk for circulation to all SACRE Members.

**Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf
Chairman**

Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.