

Minutes



STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Tuesday 14th June 2016 at 7.30pm

Present: Mrs R Johnson (A) Mrs M Cockram (C)
(Groups in Rev D Smith (A) Mr P Henry (C)
brackets) Mr K Siddiqi (A) *from 7.45pm* Cllr R Broadbent (D)
Mrs C Smyth (B) (Vice-Chair)
Rev M Williams (B) (Chair) Cllr M Burstow (D)
Miss V M Stone (C) *from 8.00pm* Miss H Ramsey (D)

Apologies: Ms M Cucharo (C) Cllr S Gordon (D)
Cllr N Patel (D)
Mrs Sharon Roberts/Mrs Alison Day
– LA School Improvement Team

In attendance: Ms P Smith-Orr - Consultant/Observer
Mrs P Garry - Clerk

	ITEM	ACTION BY
1.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS Councillor Ramsey and Mr Siddiqi were welcomed to their first SACRE Meeting.	
2.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies had been received from Ms Michaela Cucharo, Councillor Nali Patel and Councillor Sunita Gordon and were consented.	
3.	MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 23RD FEBRUARY 2016 Minutes were agreed and signed as a true record. Some actions had been completed, others are further discussed under Matters Arising below.	
4.	MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE IN THE AGENDA Item 5 from Minutes - Meeting the Challenge document Item 8 of document - in respect of the promotion of SACRE to Councillors and Schools RB had emailed all Councillors with a link to the SACRE website. It was unclear whether KE had forwarded the SACRE leaflet to schools.	

	<p>Action: PS-O will re-send the leaflet to the Clerk who will forward to the Interim School Improvement Heads to circulate.</p> <p>Item 1 of document - Increase SACRE Members from other faiths The meeting were pleased to welcome Mr Siddiqi who had been appointed through the Muslim Cultural and Welfare Association of Sutton. It was also explained that Cllr Patel's contact for a prospective Hindu representative had moved away</p> <p>Action: HR to contact Paul Scully for suggestions as to contacts from the Hindu community.</p> <p>Getting School Re Co-ordinators to attend network meetings PS-O explained that the co-ordinators are often changing. She does have a lot of email contacts and will continue to try and engage schools</p> <p>Item 12 of minutes – AOB It was unclear whether SG had been successful in her request to Andrew Theobald (Chair of FOSG) in promoting SACRE</p> <p>APPOINTMENT OF SACRE REPRESENTATIVES The Chair pointed out that organisations appoint representatives to SACRE for a period of four years. Many members had been on SACRE for much longer without formal re-appointment.</p> <p>Action: This issue to be an agenda item to be explored at the Autumn term meeting.</p>	<p>PS-O/PG</p> <p>HR</p> <p>PG</p>
5.	<p>REPORT BACK FROM NASACRE AGM</p> <p>RJ gave a verbal report on the AGM which she had attended in May. Her written report will be circulated with these minutes. There were discussions in response to the reports presented and the plan is that NASACRE will feedback views to the government. The conference was very focussed on government policies. One speaker commented that people are passing off secularism as neutral and recommended that instruction in RE should form part of on-going workplace training alongside things such as health and safety, diversity etc in order to promote understanding about the beliefs of their colleagues.</p> <p>There was also some defensiveness about having a national curriculum as it was felt that this would affect SACREs.</p> <p>The attendees from Sutton SACRE felt that the conference was not as good as in previous years, when activities and networking had been the style of the conference.</p> <p>Recordings of the speeches given at the conference are available to access on the NASACRE website.</p> <p>The White Paper has a lot of references to RE in terms of the syllabus and SACREs.</p>	

<p>6.</p>	<p>UPDATE ON RE COORDINATORS NETWORKS</p> <p>PS-O had held a network meeting on 3rd May and RJ had also attended to talk to co-ordinators about whether they were interested in Ambassadors of Faith and Belief.</p> <p>Action: Ambassadors of Faith and Belief will be taken forward over the coming months.</p> <p>The Chair of Merton SACRE also came and presented the Merton syllabus which will be launched in July. The group then did some activities on sacred writings.</p> <p>The Croydon Faith Education Resources centre has closed so resources were brought to the Sutton network for teachers to have. The few remaining items were passed to Nicola Emms at Victor Seymour who has a set of resources (which teachers are welcome to access).</p> <p>Teachers asked for a workshop on the implementation of the new syllabus and this was held on 23rd February.</p> <p>PS-O had also attended the Headteacher's breakfast meeting. She talked about SACRE and the new syllabus. Some good feedback was received about the syllabus.</p> <p>In respect of the secondary syllabus PS-O has sent PH the Croydon and Bromley ones to have a look through. However, due to time constraints PH has not yet had a look through. The assessment sections of the syllabus have changed and there are pressures to demonstrate progress over a longer period.</p> <p>There is a meeting of the secondary RE co-ordinators on 22nd June at 2pm and PS-O will try to attend.</p>	<p>PS-O</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN SUTTON (ENCLOSURE B)</p> <p>Discussions took place at the NASACRE AGM around whether or not collective worship should be done every day in schools (as is currently a legal requirement). It is commonly known that schools are not complying with this requirement. The suggestion is that the government should abolish the law.</p> <p>PS-O referred members to the set of questions she had prepared to form a survey about RE and SACRE to which she had added a question about collective worship.</p> <p>RJ felt that the questions would be better as "open" questions in order to elicit more information from those completing them.</p> <p>MB suggested that the comment about a visit from SACRE members was re-worded to read "SACRE member" and to be phrased that it is more as an offer of help and guidance rather than a check/inspection style visit.</p>	

	Action: PS-O to re-word the survey questions in a survey monkey and send the link to SACRE members to check.	PS-O
8.	<p>UPDATE ON MEETING THE CHALLENGE DOCUMENT FROM THE NOVEMBER MEETING (<i>ENCLOSURE C</i>)</p> <p>There had been no changes to the document and it was included as a reference since it had been used to feed into the development plan.</p>	
9.	<p>SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE</p> <p>The plan was discussed and updated with any relevant progress. (see Enclosure D)</p>	
10.	<p>RULING ON THE SUBJECT OF HUMANISM BEING STUDIED IN RE (<i>ENCLOSURE E</i>)</p> <p>Following the High Court ruling advice had been published by Satvinder Juss in respect of the ruling. This advice was sent to SACREs and schools but syllabuses have not yet been developed to meet the requirements.</p> <p>NASACRE had also suggested at the AGM that it was just the opinion of one particular person.</p> <p>LB said that the idea that Humanism should balance the teaching of other religions. He added that the idea of a legal challenge is not good but the BHA has the legal ruling that Humanism should be taught and there may be a test case if schools do not teach it.</p> <p>LB further suggested that SACRE might want to keep a record of what non-religious teaching is taking place. PH added that the current situation is that schools teach to their locally agreed syllabus (or whichever syllabus they use). PS-O clarified that they do already teach children that there are groups of people who do not follow any of the religions and there is information in the Sutton syllabus about Humanism. There is an added issue of the fact that exam boards set their questions to these syllabuses and there will not be any direct questions in relation to Humanism.</p> <p>It was pointed out that the new guidance for exams was that there must be two religions taught in addition to Christianity but the government have not issued any real guidance into the other input.</p> <p>LB said that the Humanist movement is growing but MB countered this by saying that her view was that there were more people saying they had no faith which may not be the same thing. Members also felt that there was a debate to be had around whether Humanism should be included in the discussions around “Religious Education” as it is not a religion and perhaps more a “Philosophy” subject.</p> <p>In summary, it was agreed that RE is not about promoting a particular religion.</p>	

11.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>Future of SACRE Funding from LA RB had spoken to Colin Stewart, Head of Education at the local authority who had indicated that there would be no change to the funding for support to SACRE.</p> <p>Action: RB and MB will formally raise the question of SACRE funding at the CFE meeting on 16th June when the Education Services spin-out proposals are to be discussed.</p>	MB
12.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Tuesday 4th October 2016 at 7.30pm <i>Venue – Room 2, Ground Floor, Civic Centre</i></p> <p>Tuesday 28th February 2017 at 7.30pm</p>	

Closing Time of Meeting: 9.00pm

Chair's Signature Date.....