

# Minutes



## STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 7.15pm held virtually using Google Meet

Present: Revd. D Smith (A) (Chair) Ms Rebecca Bishop (C)  
(Groups in Mrs R Johnson (A) Mrs Justine Speck (C)  
brackets) Mr Mukesh Rao (A) Mrs A Huneke (D)  
Mr L Bracken (A) Cllr N Patel (D)  
Mrs M Cockram (C) Cllr C Williams (D)  
Miss V M Stone (C)

In attendance: Mrs Penny Smith-Orr (Consultant)  
Mrs Penny Garry (Clerk)

Apologies: Mr S Ellingham (C) Mr Paul Solomon (A)  
Cllr M Gonzalez (D)

Absent: Mr Lesley Kemp (A) Mr L Morrell (B)  
Mrs Usma Hussein (A) Mrs Uzma Mobin (C)

	ITEM	ACTION BY
1.	<b>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</b>  The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting including the new prospective member Mr Saleem Uddin.	
2.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  Apologies had been received from Mr Ellingham, Mr Solomon and Cllr Gonzalez. After the meeting apologies were received from Uzma Mobin and Christine Smythe.  The meeting was, again not quorate as there was no representative from Group B.  <b>Action: PS-O will contact Southwark Diocese about representation for Group B.</b>	<b>PS-O</b>
3.	<b>MINUTES OF MEETING 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021</b>  The minutes were agreed and will be signed as a true record.	
4.	<b>MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE IN THE AGENDA</b>  There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.	

5.	<p><b>APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR</b></p> <p>The Clerk had emailed asking for nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair from Autumn 2021 as Revd. Smith was stepping down from the role, and indeed from SACRE.</p> <p>Miss Stone had agreed to stand for election should there be no other candidates and was proposed by DS and seconded by RJ and duly elected by the members.</p> <p>Two members, Mr Rao and Mrs Cockram had expressed an interest in the Vice-Chair role and it was proposed by PS-O and seconded by DS and members agreed that they would be Co Vice-Chairs.</p>	
6.	<p><b>APPOINTMENT OF SACRE MEMBERS</b></p> <p>The Clerk reported that she had received the letter of recommendation for Mr Rao.</p> <p>Mr Uddin had contacted SACRE to express his interest in joining. Members were pleased to welcome him as a member of Group A.</p> <p><b>Action: Mr Uddin will arrange for a letter of representation to be sent to the Clerk.</b></p>	SU
7.	<p><b>MONITORING RE AND CW IN SUTTON</b></p> <p>PS-O updated members that schools' websites had been checked and it had been decided that, due to Covid, letters will be sent in the Autumn term.</p> <p>Members also heard that three of the RE teachers at the RE Co-ordinators meeting had said that they were going to look at their websites.</p> <p><b>Action: PS-O will write a letter highlighting SACRE's work, the Agreed Syllabus and the need to check the school's website and VS will sign it electronically.</b></p>	PS-O
8.	<p><b>WIRE AWARD</b></p> <p>DS was able to deliver (post) the WIRE Award certificate to Bandon Hill. It would be good if the Chair or Vice-Chair of SACRE could present it to schools going forward.</p> <p>RB said that her school, Cheam High, is currently working towards submitting their application.</p> <p>Robin Hood Infants, Overton Grange and Culvers House had all started the process and were told that they could have extra time to gather their evidence due to Covid.</p>	

9.	<p><b>UPDATE ON SUTTON FAITH &amp; BELIEF FORUM</b></p> <p>Mr Solomon was absent from the meeting so it is hoped that he will be able to update at the next meeting.</p>	
10.	<p><b>UPDATE ON RE AMBASSADORS</b></p> <p>JS informed members that the pupils are still being kept engaged but it has not been possible for them to go into schools because of Covid.</p>	
11.	<p><b>RE CO-ORDINATORS MEETINGS AND SCHOOL VISITS</b></p> <p>Another virtual meeting has taken place this term and 10 teachers had attended.</p> <p>The Ofsted research review was discussed and teachers were pleased to note that the Sutton Agreed Syllabus is fit for purpose. Teachers worked with each other in break out rooms on an activity using signs and symbols and also discussed items for development i.e. assessment and progression and things that are going well i.e. pupils are enjoying their lessons and there is better focus and lessons continued during lockdown using some creative teaching. It was noted that it is difficult to monitor RE through the school at present due to class bubbles and that thought will need to be given to maintaining contacts and having virtual visitors in school.</p> <p>There was a question about the name “Religion and World Views” and this is mentioned in the Ofsted report. DS commented that RE is about learning about religions and world views could be covered in other subjects. RJ agreed but said that it is not always recognised. PS-O added that there is also Humanism in the Sutton Syllabus and that it is a world view and it would be expected that there was some discussion of atheists.</p> <p>LB said that 53% of people now have no belief in religion. RJ said that it will be interesting to see the latest census information when it is available.</p> <p>LB noted that he did not think that atheists were mentioned in the syllabus. DS said that as a world view it would be mentioned in classes that not everyone believes in religion.</p> <p>JS advised that non-religious world views are included as part of GCSE RS. Humanism wasn’t included the first time and so the publication of the GCSE was held up so this is an important issue.</p>	
12.	<p><b>NASACRE REPORT ON SACRE SPENDING</b></p> <p>Members had received the report and noted the vast difference in spending on SACREs across the country from the lowest being £105 to the highest being £95,000. PS-0 and the Clerk had provided information to Cognus on the expenses for SACRE i.e. the costs for the adviser, the Clerk, annual membership of NASACRE and attendance (for up to two members) at the NASACRE Annual AGM. There was no cost incurred for producing the revisions to the Agreed Syllabus last year. Members recognised that with additional funding they could do more work on Religious Education in</p>	

	<p>Sutton.</p> <p>However, there is no indication of how much is actually allocated to Sutton SACRE.</p> <p>MC said that there would be an allocation from the government to the Local Authority but CW said that this could be part of a much bigger pot.</p> <p>SU said that the report says that the suggested amount to be allocated is 2% of the CCSB to enable local authorities to adequately fund SACREs.</p> <p><b>Action: CW to contact Cognus and ask them for information on the budget allocated to SACRE.</b></p>	CW
13.	<p><b>REPORT ON NASACRE AGM</b></p> <p>The AGM was held virtually this year and PS-O attended. The summary has been circulated to SACRE members including some links to some presentations.</p> <p>The Ofsted Research report was discussed and members had welcomed this as there had not been one for some time. Inspectors are being trained on what RE should look like.</p> <p>PS-O had attended a break out room discussing world views and it was clear that people do not really understand what it means.</p> <p>PS-O had also attended the “using data” workshop which she had found very interesting. There is another one being run online on 22<sup>nd</sup> June.</p> <p>RJ commented on the workshop that had talked about working in Berkshire to create some video clips and these are available to all SACREs. It would be good to direct schools to this if they ask about virtual visits.</p> <p><b>Action: PS-O will look into this and see if the video clips can be used.</b></p> <p>SU said that he had welcomed the statement within the Question Time section <i>“The importance of recognising the end goal of RE and avoiding generalisation of “all Muslims” “all Christians” was pointed out”</i>.</p>	PS-O
14.	<p><b>OFSTED RESEARCH REVIEW</b></p> <p>PS-O noted that an RE review had not been done for a very long time and the last report had said that RE was the worst taught subject. This new report does not say that. VS said that it is good to draw attention to RE.</p> <p>PS-O presented a brief summary that had been sent out to London advisers by TES.</p> <p>There were six main findings and these are set out in Appendix 1 of these minutes</p>	

15.	<p><b>SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021</b></p> <p>The 2021 plan was reviewed and most updates had been discussed as part of the item discussions. These updates will be added to the plan.</p> <p>There was also a suggestion that a document could be produced for teachers on local places of worship that are available to visit (either in person or in some virtual way).</p> <p><b>Action: The Clerk/PS-O will update the plan with progress and circulate to members.</b></p>	Clerk/PS-O
16.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>There was no other business to discuss.</p> <p>Members thanked Dave Smith for his very long service to SACRE and for his role as Chair over the last two years.</p>	
17.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 7.15pm</b></p> <p><b>Venue: To be confirmed but likely to be held virtually using Zoom.</b></p>	

Closing Time of Meeting: 8.45pm

Chair's Signature ..... Date.....

## APPENDIX 1

<https://www.tes.com/news/ofsted-six-ways-improve-re-teaching>

Here are the main findings Ofsted has identified [in its review of research](#) into RE teaching:

### 1. 'Ambitious' RE needs adequate curriculum time

The review found that adequate curriculum time should be given to RE, so that leaders can deliver an ambitious curriculum.

It says that most locally agreed syllabuses recommend spending the equivalent of approximately 60 minutes a week on RE at key stage 1 and about 75 minutes a week at key stage 2.

The review highlights the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education's (NATRE) view that a significant number of schools give insufficient curriculum time, according to its regular primary school surveys.

For NATRE, insufficient time is considered to be fewer than 45 minutes of teaching time a week. Its surveys have suggested that a quarter of primary schools were in this category last year.

### 2. 'Sensitive' topics need proper sequencing

Ofsted has said it is important that schools have a well-sequenced RE curriculum that gives pupils the knowledge they need to be able to understand new topics.

It adds: "The importance of this is very clear in the case of controversial and sensitive topics.

"Leaders and teachers might identify the necessary background knowledge that pupils need to learn for a topic and make sure that the curriculum is ordered to accommodate this."

### 3. Avoid 'superficial' coverage

Ofsted has warned against covering excessive amounts of material superficially.

Its review says schools should cover the "substantive content and concepts collectively or 'collectively enough'."

It adds that the content of lessons should be sufficient for pupils to grasp a bigger picture about the place of religion and non-religion in the world.

### 4. Prevent misconceptions about religion

Ofsted says that what is taught and learned in RE should be grounded in what is known about religion and non-religion from academic study.

It says that this helps teachers to prevent pupils from developing misconceptions about religion and non-religion.

## 5. Specialist teachers and training is needed

Another area highlighted in the Ofsted review is the need for sufficient training and professional development in order for teachers to have appropriate subject professional knowledge in RE

The report says having subject-specialist RE teachers can also contribute to high-quality provision. Ofsted says school and subject leaders have to make decisions about how specialist staff are distributed across a timetabled curriculum.

It adds: "Following this decision process, pupils in RE classes are often the ones deprived of a main or specialist teacher."

## 6. Pupils need knowledge, not 'mere facts'

The review refers to three different types of subject-specific knowledge that pupils learn in RE. It says each of these is powerful and should not be confused with "mere facts".

- The first is "substantive" knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions.
- The second type is "ways of knowing", where pupils learn "how to know" about religion and non-religion.
- The third type is "personal knowledge", where pupils build an "awareness of their own presuppositions and values about what they study".