

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

27 February 2023 – At a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education held at 10.30 am in Committee Room 3, County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.

Virtual participants are indicated with an asterisk below.

Committee A:

Mrs Bell – Jewish
Mrs Hock – Quaker
Revd Pitkeathly – Free Churches
*Mr Soni – Hindu
Major Warner – Salvation Army

Committee B:

Mrs Black – Church of England
Revd Higgins – Church of England
*Mr Simpson – Church of England
Mrs Smith (Vice-Chairman) – Church of England

Committee C:

*Ms Barker – Teacher Representative (National Education Union)
Mr Cornford – Teacher Representative (NASUWT)
Ms Elphick – Teacher Representative (Special)
Revd Millwood – Teacher Representative (Secondary)

Committee D:

Cllr Ali – Local Education Authority
Cllr Burgess - Local Education Authority
Cllr Burrett (Chairman) - Local Education Authority
Cllr N Jupp - Local Education Authority
*Cllr Lord - Local Education Authority
*Cllr Nagel - Local Education Authority
*Cllr Pendleton - Local Education Authority

Apologies for Absence:

From Committee A - Mrs Flood (Roman Catholic), Mrs Ghundale (Sikh), Mrs Jones (Baha'i) and Mr Syed (Muslim).
Other - Ms Tulloch (Co-opted).

24. Chairman's Welcome and Introductions

- 24.1 The Chairman welcomed all members of SACRE to the hybrid meeting being held in Committee Room 3 and online.
- 24.2 The Chairman welcomed officers attending in-person: Mr Paul Wagstaff, Assistant Director of Education and Skills, and Ms Yasmin Maskatiya, Head of Standards and Effectiveness (Children, Young People and Learning).

25. Membership Updates

- 25.1 Members of the Council noted that Revd Sheldon has stood down from Committee A and that Revd Higgins would stand down from Committee B following the meeting.
- 25.2 Mr Wagstaff confirmed that Mr Edmondson was asked to resign from Committee A by his group (Humanists UK).

26. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 26.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2022 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

27. Update from Assistant Director of Education and Skills

- 27.1 Mr Wagstaff reported that the West Sussex Education and Learning Strategy 2023-2025 was considered by the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee on 18 January. He explained which stage the online strategy is at and added that the focus for SACRE is to monitor the quality of RE provision embedded in schools.
- 27.2 Mr Wagstaff informed the Council that the Agreed Syllabus and Collective Worship guidance will be made available to parents and carers once published online in Autumn 2023.
- 27.3 In answer to a member's question, Ms Maskatiya clarified that there is a rising trend of schools identified as 'Requires Improvement' and that there are around 50 schools in need of support.
- 27.4 SACRE noted the update.

28. Draft Questionnaire on the delivery of Collective Worship in Primary and Secondary Schools

- 28.1 Members gave feedback on review of the draft questionnaire and suggested that:

- The questionnaire is split into two sections, one for head teachers and the other for RE leaders.
- RE and Collective Worship questions are separated.
- This is used as an opportunity to promote SACRE's purpose, aims and to ask for general feedback as part of an honest appraisal.
- It is converted into an online questionnaire for ease of completion.
- The title of the draft questionnaire should be amended to reflect its coverage of wider RE, in addition to Collective Worship.
- An approximate completion time is added at the beginning.
- Less yes/no questions should feature and instead more open-ended questions should be incorporated.
- Drop-down boxes are included to make it easier to analyse responses and collate feedback.
- Additional quantitative options for answers are included.
- The final version should be sent to either RE subject leaders, deputy head teachers or governing bodies, given head teachers already receive a lot of email traffic.

Action: Mrs Hammond welcomed members' comments and assured that they would be taken into consideration. She also acknowledged that Questions 21 and 22 were duplicated.

28.2 In answer to a member's question, Mrs Hammond clarified that the purpose of the questionnaire is two-fold. Firstly, to inform SACRE about the current provision of RE in West Sussex schools. Secondly, to assist the working group which will be established, to consider updating the Agreed Syllabus to support the needs of the schools in the Local Education Authority.

28.3 Members were cautious of the limited responses received previously and discussed which format the questionnaire should take.

28.4 The Chairman invited volunteers to form a working group to co-develop the questionnaire and support Mrs Hammond.

28.5 Resolved – That the following members are appointed to the working group: Mrs Bell, Mrs Black, Mr Cornford, Revd Millwood, Revd Pitkeathly and Mrs Smith.

Action: Mrs Hammond to lead on the coordination of the working group.

28.6 Ms Maskatiya left the meeting at the end of the item.

29. West Sussex SACRE Draft Annual Report 2022/2023

29.1 Mrs Hammond invited members' feedback on the draft report.

29.2 Members queried the total number of primary schools recorded in the table at the bottom of page 23.

- 29.3 The Chairman thanked Mrs Hammond for her work in drafting the report.
- 29.4 Resolved – that SACRE approves the report, subject to the correction of primary school figures.
- 29.5 Mr Wagstaff left the meeting at the end of the item.

30. The Role of SACRE

- 30.1 Mrs Hammond delivered a presentation to the Council, of which hard copies were also tabled to members.
- 30.2 The presentation covered the following:
- The definition of a SACRE and its statutory responsibilities.
 - The composition of West Sussex SACRE, its representation and decision-making.
 - The purpose and role of a SACRE.
 - West Sussex County Council's responsibilities in respect of administering West Sussex SACRE as the Local Education Authority.
- Action: Mrs Hammond suggested that West Sussex SACRE's Terms of Reference require updating and agreed to lead on this.
- 30.3 In reference to the Academies row on Slide 16, 'funding' was pointed out as a typo and that it should be amended to 'finding'.
- 30.4 Members commented that there are too few teacher representatives who currently sit on SACRE.
- Action: Mrs Hammond agreed to take the lead on developing a newsletter, targeted at RE leaders, including links to agendas and the Agreed Syllabus in an attempt to boost SACRE's profile.
- 30.5 There was general agreement that members should take it upon themselves to visit and engage with local schools and promote the work of SACRE.
- 30.6 The Chairman thanked Mrs Hammond for her presentation.

31. Any Other Business

- 31.1 It was suggested that a World Faiths roadshow aiming to facilitate world views is organised at the beginning of the Summer Term for the benefit of schools and teachers. The event could feature display stands, promote resources and present networking opportunities. Tanbridge House School in Horsham and Bishop Luffa School in Chichester were suggested as potential venues.

- 31.2 It was suggested that consideration is given to a broader scope of venues, such as village halls.
- 31.3 Cumbria County Council was given as a case study which has pre-recorded faith messages known as 'virtual voices' to improve engagement.
- 31.4 The Chairman suggested that any creative ideas for engagement are followed up with Mrs Black after the meeting.
- 31.5 The Chairman thanked Revd Higgins for her contribution to SACRE over a number of years as this would be her last meeting.
- 31.6 Members suggested that consideration is given to holding future meetings of SACRE during evenings at school venues to help accommodate members' work commitments.

32. Dates of Future Meetings

- 32.1 SACRE noted that the next meeting would be held on 29 June 2023 at County Hall, Chichester, with the hybrid option for joining being available to those who require it.

The meeting ended at 12.31 pm

Chairman