

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

21 March 2022 – At a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester and via Microsoft Teams. Virtual participants are indicated with an asterisk below.

Present:

Committee A

Mrs Bell – Jewish
Mr Edmondson – Humanists UK
Mrs Flood – Roman Catholic*
Mrs Ghundale – Sikh*
Rev Higgin-Botham – United Reformed Church
Rev Pitkeathly – Free Churches*
Mr Sheldon – Baptist Union*
Major Warner – Salvation Army

Committee B

Mrs Black – Church of England
Rev Higgins – Church of England
Mrs Smith (Vice-Chairman) – Church of England*

Committee C

Ms Barker – Teacher Representative (NEU)*
Ms Elphick – Teacher Representative (Special)
Rev Millwood – Teacher Representative (Secondary)*

Committee D

Cllr Ali – Local Education Authority
Cllr Burgess – Local Education Authority*
Cllr Burrett (Chairman) – Local Education Authority
Cllr Jupp – Local Education Authority*
Cllr Nagel – Local Education Authority*
Cllr Pendleton – Local Education Authority*
Cllr Quinn – Local Education Authority*

Co-optees

Ms Tulloch

Apologies for Absence:

Ms Hock (Quaker), Mrs Jones (Baha'i) (Committee A); Mr Simpson (Committee B); Mr Bird (Teacher Representative - Primary) (Committee C); Cllr Lord (Committee D).

Absent:

Rev Carn (Methodist) (Committee A); Mr Cornford (Teacher Representative) (Committee C).

21. Chairman's Welcome and Introductions

21.1 The Chairman welcomed all members of SACRE to the hybrid meeting being held in the Council Chamber and on-line. He also welcomed Ms Joanna Tulloch from the University of Chichester.

22. Membership Updates

22.1 The Chairman reported that there had been no confirmed updates to the membership since the last meeting. However, he invited the members of the Council to meet Ms Tulloch who had applied to be a member of SACRE and it was considered that she could best serve as a co-optee. Ms Tulloch reported that she is responsible for RE training for primary school trainee teachers at the University and had a background in teaching RE.

22.2 Resolved - That Ms Tulloch be appointed to SACRE as a co-opted member.

22.3 Ms Barker asked for clarity on the remit of Committee C and was informed that the Committee represented teachers, school sectors and teachers' unions. Currently there were two vacancies for union representatives and Ms Barker agreed to invite colleagues from other unions to try and fill the vacancies.

23. Members' Interests

23.1 Mrs Smith and Rev Millwood declared personal interests in Agenda Item No 8, on School Workforce Data, as the data included information from the schools where they were employed – Bishop Luffa School, Chichester, and Holy Trinity School, Crawley. Ms Barker declared a general interest in the same item as a teacher at Felpham Community College.

24. Minutes of the last meeting

24.1 Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2021 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

25. Agreed Syllabus Update

25.1 Mrs Hammond reported that one primary network meeting, on the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and its impact, had taken place since the last meeting. Twenty-six places had been registered for out of the maximum 30 but only 19 attendees had turned up, with a number of late apologies. Evaluation of the feedback had been extremely positive. Training materials were available for those who had attended the training. The next training session for primary schools is scheduled for 14 June 2022.

25.2 It was agreed that training for secondary schools on the Agreed Syllabus was important and the Church of England Diocese had recently established a secondary network for heads of RE and colleagues, which could be a channel for engagement.

25.3 Mrs Hammond advised SACRE that consideration needed to be given to what a future training programme might look like. Feedback from schools was that they were adapting to the new Agreed Syllabus but there were other pressures on schools including Covid, staffing and budgets. Some schools also expressed difficulties accessing some of the faith communities because of their geographical location.

25.4 Members of SACRE offered opportunities to link their organisations with schools for visits and resources. Consideration would be given as to how SACRE could run resource day activities and support schools.

25.5 Ms Tulloch expressed a wish to involve trainee primary school teachers from the University of Chichester with the work of SACRE and agreed to discuss with Mrs Hammond how that might happen.

25.6 Mrs Hammond suggested it might be an idea for SACRE to work up a Development Plan to give a clear reflection of where they were and aspirations for the future. She would reflect on the issues and points raised at the meeting, have some conversations with SACRE members and report back to the next meeting.

26. SACRE Annual Report

26.1 Mrs Hammond reported that she had attended a training session on annual reports run by the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE). She reported there were various sections of the report to complete, some could be completed easily but the analysis of examination results could not happen until late August. Mrs Hammond suggested that work should begin on the annual report with the intention of completing it by the end of September 2022. She felt it would be good to start by completing a self-evaluation to establish how things currently stood, to form some small sub-groups to provide feedback and evidence gathering, and produce a development plan for what SACRE would like to deliver in the future, e.g. evaluating the impact of the new Agreed Syllabus, training opportunities, looking forward to the launch in 2025 of the next Agreed Syllabus, how schools were supported by SACRE.

26.2 SACRE members were encouraged to review other SACRE annual reports to gain ideas of the topics that could be included in the annual report.

26.3 Resolved – That Mrs Hammond circulates the self-evaluation tool and the annual report framework, and members of SACRE are asked to volunteer for the sub-groups.

27. Update from Director of Education and Skills

27.1 The Director of Education and Skills was unable to join the meeting so Mrs Hammond updated the meeting that the briefing note for County

Council Members on how to utilise conversations on RE with their local schools would be circulated soon. Cllr Jupp agreed to follow up with the Director to ensure despatch.

27.2 Further to minute 18.2 of the minutes of the meeting on 22 November 2021 there had been no engagement with the West Sussex Youth Cabinet as they had been undertaking elections in March 2022. Mrs Hammond agreed to pick up with the Director once the elections were over.

27.3 Referring to minute 19.3 of the minutes of the meeting on 22 November 2021, SACRE discussed ways of gathering an overview of what is happening in schools and a mechanism of gathering information. It was agreed there were options through the Schools Forum, Executive Headteacher meetings and governor training.

28. School Workforce Data for 2020

28.1 The meeting reviewed further the School Workforce Data for 2020 from a sample of secondary schools collated by the National Association of Teachers of RE. It appeared, from the voluntary responses, that academy schools had not contributed information. SACRE members felt that they would have to seek out some statistical data to understand how much time schools were giving to teaching religious education in schools. The Covid pandemic had meant that many of the normal inspections, e.g. SIAMs, had not taken place so information was scarce.

28.2 Resolved – That gathering information on the proportion of time schools are giving to teaching religious education within the curriculum be investigated and included in the proposed development plan.

29. Any Other Business

29.1 Mrs Hammond reported on an approach from Peter Hemming from the Department of Sociology at the University of Surrey, who was keen to make links with local SACREs and RE/PSHE teachers/co-ordinators in local schools. Mrs Smith agreed to take Mr Hemming's details and share with schools.

29.2 Mr Edmondson asked whether SACRE had considered the 2018 CoRE report? SACRE felt it had been discussed when it had been published and would direct Mr Edmondson to the appropriate minutes.

30. Dates of Future Meetings

30.1 SACRE noted that the next meeting would be held on 20 June 2022. The meeting agreed to continue with the meetings in person at County Hall, Chichester, with the hybrid option for joining being available for those who required it.

The meeting ended at 12.14 pm

Chairman