

**West Sussex Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education**

26 February 2018 – At a meeting of the West Sussex Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

**Present:**

**Committee A**

Jenny Cole	-	Quaker
Mr Firoozmand	-	Baha'i
Mr Ward	-	Catholic
Maj Warner	-	Salvation Army

**Committee B**

Rev Higgins	-	Church of England
Mr Simpson	-	Church of England

**Committee C**

Mrs Macrae	-	Teacher Representative
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**Committee D**

Mr Burrett (Chairman)	-	Local Education Authority
Mrs Jones	-	Local Education Authority
Mrs Pendleton	-	Local Education Authority
Mr Petts	-	Local Education Authority
Mr Quinn	-	Local Education Authority
Mr Simmons	-	Local Education Authority
Mr Smytherman	-	Local Education Authority

**Co-opted Member**

Mr Smith	-	University of Chichester
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**Apologies:** Mrs Bell, Mrs Edwards and Mr Syed (Committee A), Mrs Cumming and Mrs Smith (Committee B), Rev Millwood and Mr Turney (Committee C)

**Absent:** Lt Cdr Atkins (Committee D)

In the absence of the Vice Chairman, Mr Simmons took the Chair during the item on Inspection Reports for West Sussex Schools as the Chairman had to leave for another meeting.

**Membership of SACRE**

36. SACRE agreed the co-optation of Dr Graeme Smith (Head of Department, Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies at the University of Chichester) to SACRE.

37. Unsuccessful attempts had been made to contact UNISON's Joint Consultative Committee for four more teacher representatives and the Methodists for a Methodist representative. Further attempts would be made.

## Declarations of Interest

38. Mr Smytherman declared a personal interest in respect of item 6 (Inspection Results for West Sussex Schools) as a Foundation Governor of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Worthing (Bosco Catholic Education Trust).

## Minutes

39. Resolved – that the minutes of both the 12 June 2017 and 20 November 2017 meetings were agreed as accurate records and that they be signed by the Chairman.

## Progress Statement

40. The following actions/updates were recorded: -

- Victoria Ludlow to: -
  - Check whether the SACRE Annual Report had been finalised
  - Liaise with the Chairman over best practice as discussed at the regional SACRE meeting in October 2017 before the next regional meeting on 9 April
  - Look into why GCSE grades in RE had gone down whilst the number of pupils taking the exam had increased
- Youth SACRE Conference
  - The Chairman agreed to open the conference
  - Most of the speakers had been booked, although there were a few spaces to fill – Barbara Bell offered the services of Professor Ben MacArthur, Head of Quantitative Biology, University of Southampton. Bob Smytherman and Peter Ward offered to speak to Dave Carter from St Philip Howard Catholic High Academy about him attending the conference. Jacky Pendleton offered to speak about religion in the penal system
  - **ACTION:** Victoria Ludlow to find out which budget was used to pay speakers' travelling expenses last year and see if the same could be done this year
  - **ACTION:** Rob Castle to pass the Youth SACRE Conference updates to Angela Smith.

## Inspection Reports for West Sussex Schools

41. SACRE considered a report by the Director of Education and Skills (copy appended to the signed minutes) which was introduced by Victoria Ludlow, who told SACRE that: -

- There had been more inspections this academic year than in the last one
- There had been a change in the inspection system whereby schools that were rated 'Good' still had a short inspection (Section 8), but if the inspector decided the rating needed to change, the school would receive a letter telling it that a further, longer inspection would take place within two years. If the inspector had major concerns, a full inspection would take place immediately
- If desktop data raised concerns with OFSTED, a full Section 5 inspection would take place at once.

42. The following points were covered in discussion: -

- Inspections would look thoroughly at safeguarding and radicalisation issues, often questioning members of staff on these matters – if issues were detected there would be tight recommendations for schools to follow to resolve them. School staff were also trained on possible issues specific to their school's location
- Regarding the problems at Littlegreen Special School, Compton, the Local Authority had removed the Governing Body and replaced it with an Interim Executive Board (IEB) and a safeguarding team had gone in to address concerns – **ACTION**: Victoria Ludlow to update SACRE on the situation at the next meeting
- OFSTED inspections of independent schools would cover spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and collective worship in the same way that they did for other schools – **ACTION**: Victoria Ludlow to find out how many children at independent schools were funded by the Local Authority, where the schools were located and whether they followed the Authority's Agreed Syllabus for RE.

43. Resolved – that SACRE notes the report.

### **Results in Public Examinations**

44. SACRE considered a report by the Director of Education and Skills (copy appended to the signed minutes).

45. The following points were covered in discussion: -

- The disparity between the number of exams taken at GCSE and grades obtained (although improving) was being investigated as it was expected that West Sussex would be above the national average, not below
- Only 40% of pupils were taking RE at GCSE which begged the question of whether the other 60% are studying RE and if so, to what degree?
- Faith schools enter over 90% of their pupils for the exams, thereby skewing the percentage for schools overall
- Parents might influence pupils' choice of exam subjects
- Academies should teach RE with the same criteria as the Agreed Syllabus
- A-Level results might be slightly down for several reasons: other subjects having higher profiles, less able students taking the exams, quality of teaching and whether the Agreed Syllabus was being taught/fit for purpose
- It was hard to continue RE in colleges due to the narrow range of subjects available.

46. Resolved – that SACRE:-

- i. Notes the report
- ii. Would like to receive evidence from schools as to how they follow the Agreed Syllabus then visit a number of schools to see how RE (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and collective worship) is taught as part of its 2018 review of the Agreed Syllabus.

**Date of future meetings**

10.30 am, 11 June 2018

10.30 am, 19 November 2018

10.30 am, 25 February 2019

The meeting closed at 11.45am.

**Chairman**