

**Minutes of a meeting of the**  
**Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education**  
**held on Wednesday 1 March 2023, at 6pm**  
**The Telford Room Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way,**  
**Telford TF3 4NT**

**Present:** J Osmund-Smith (Chair), J Rawson, Cllr S J Reynolds, M Harrington, C Pocock, S Younis, C Landau, M Parker, D Rolfe.

**In Attendance:** R Attwell (Democracy Officer) and R Carey (School Performance Team Leader)

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor R Mehta, T Carter, C Downes and D Whiteley

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

**RESOLVED-** that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

**3. SACRE Membership**

The Chair proposed to SACRE members that the Committee co-opt Michelle Parker, the former Local Authority Officer responsible for SACRE, onto SACRE following her retirement from the Council.

Members agreed that SACRE would benefit from Ms Parker's expertise and experience on SACRE.

**RESOLVED** that Michelle Parker be co-opted as a Member of the Telford & Wrekin SACRE.

**4. Matters Arising**

Members of SACRE discussed how best to approach teaching units for children with Special Educational Needs, as part of an inclusive curriculum which facilitated Religious Education in line with the agreed RE syllabus.

The School Performance Team Leader provided an update regarding GCSE results from schools within the Borough; not all schools had reported their results from RE examinations and GCSE uptakes. Obtaining accurate figures from some schools had also proved difficult due to RE being placed within the overarching Humanities based subjects such as History and Geography.

Members raised concerns around individual schools' removing RE as a potential GCSE option. The School Performance Team Leader explained to members that Schools would make the decision without Local Authorities or SACRE input.

## **5. SACRE Annual Report**

Members received the SACRE Annual report, which covered the academic year 2021-2022. The report briefly recorded the work of the Advisory Council within this period and set out any proposed priorities for the upcoming academic year, 2023-24

**RESOLVED- that SACRE noted and agreed the contents of their Annual Report.**

## **6. Attendance at LA Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee**

The Chair explained that she had recently attended Telford & Wrekin's Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee (CYP) and had delivered a presentation on the background of SACRE and the work which had been undertaken. The presentation had been well received.

**RESOLVED- that the Chairs update on the attendance at Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee be noted.**

## **7. SACRE Member's Visits to Schools**

Following a discussion at the previous meeting of SACRE, it was decided that some members would make school visits. Members discussed how best to liaise with schools to build a mutually beneficial relationship.

Members noted SACRE's legal obligations to locally maintained schools and how it was the role of SACRE to evaluate how RE was taught in schools and not to inspect the national curriculum. It was proposed that school visits should look into the essentials including assemblies, lessons or discussions on respect/kindness and learning about different faiths.

Members discussed the timescales for any planned visits, and wished to hold visits to schools in summer term 2023, after exams had taken place. Members proposed liaising with the Governors of the schools they may visit, in order to establish a network for any feedback.

Members wished to link planned school visits to the "RE quality mark", which resulted in free awards for schools who had been engaging with students around the subject of RE. A discussion took place regarding the logistics of a "RE quality mark", and what sort of awards could be offered, it was agreed that a Gold, Silver and Bronze award system should be implemented.

## **8. Working Group Report**

A discussion took place on the survey which had been sent out to schools before the agreed syllabus was updated. Members agreed that re-sending this survey with updated questions to see how schools had been found the agreed syllabus would be beneficial.

Some members of SACRE had been conducting their own survey, with the intention of surveying RE teachers and suggested it would be useful to combine both projects which was agreed and that SACRE members involved with the working group would meet at a later date to discuss further.

#### **9. Collective Worship**

SACRE members discussed the legal obligation for collective worship in schools. SACRE members discussed the content of the 1994 Collective Worship Guidance, and how all maintained schools must provide religious education, daily collective worship and promote pupil's spiritual, moral and cultural development. A discussion took place regarding the requirement for worship to be of a broadly Christian character.

Members discussed academies and free schools and queried the collective worship guidelines for these schools. It was noted that in the 2012 Guidance, "Religious education (RE) and collective worship in academies and free schools", the requirements were the same as for maintained schools.

Members agreed that an agenda item would be added to the next meeting's agenda to discuss support for children whose parents or careers had withdrawn them from collective worship.

#### **10. NASCRE Bulletin 34**

The NASCRE National Conference was expected to take place at Fishmongers' Hall, London, on Monday 22 May 2023. SACRE members discussed who would attend as SACRE representatives. It was agreed that Mr J Rawson would attend, with Ms M Parker as second choice in case of absence.

#### **11. Any Other Items of Business**

SACRE had been given the opportunity to review the content of the Interfaith Council workshops on each of the main religions.

The Chair had requested that a date for an inclusive education lecture be circulated to all members who wished to attend.

#### **12. Date of Future meetings**

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 8 June 2023

The meeting ended at 19:53

**Chairman:** .....

**Date:** .....