

Appendix A

Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education

Notes of an informal meeting of the Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education held on Monday 14th November 2022, at 6pm Fourth Floor Meeting Room Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford TF3 4NT

Present: Jacquie Osmund-Smith (Chair), Carol Morgan, Jon Rawson, Diane Whiteley, Sajid Younis, Mary Jennings, Mark Harrington and Councillor Veronica Fletcher

In Attendance: Rhys Attwell (Democracy Officer), Sam Yarnall (Democracy Officer) and Rebecca Carey (School Performance Team Leader)

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillor S Reynolds, Councillor R Mehta and Dave Rolfe

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Members of the SACRE noted that the minutes of the last meeting were a true reflection and were to be approved at the next formal meeting.

3. SACRE Membership

SACRE received a proposal to co-opt Michelle Parker onto the SACRE Membership.

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

4. Matters Arising

Members of SACRE discussed whether Teaching Units for Special Educational Needs had an inclusive curriculum which facilitated Religious Education, and to what standards. Following a discussions at the previous meeting of SACRE, members had offered to go into the Special Educational Need Schools (SEN), and work alongside staff to hold events. At the time of the meeting no school visits had occurred.

Training had been offered to SACRE members in relation to the holding of events, and the delivery of the Religious Education syllabus. The training sessions were scheduled to take place remotely over Microsoft Teams, beginning in the spring term with the programme covering all faiths groups. A discussion took place around the setting up of working groups to discuss projects involving SACRE in upcoming programmes. It was agreed that this would take place after the Christmas period.

A discussion took place on the possibility of sending out a survey to schools, asking whether the Religious Education taught in Schools was compliant with the agreed

syllabus. SACRE discussed whether there was a need for a representative from the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASCRE) and if there would be any available funding from the SACRE budget to pay for a representative. The School Performance Team Leader would enquire about the SACRE budget and report back at the next meeting.

An update was received on the proposed White Paper previously discussed at the meeting on 25 May 2022 in relation to the Government plans to restrict SACRE's ability to interact and feed into the Religious Education curriculum. The geographical boundaries of School Trusts could change, which would leave the role of SACRE in the school syllabus unclear. In addition, it was noted that Parliament in seeking to move Religious Education Curriculum to a national level may affect SACRE's ability to feed in to the curriculum locally.

SACRE acknowledged that a number of changes introduced under the Summary of changes in Science and RE inspection society (SIAMS) had been well received and Local Authority Maintained Schools now had denominational Religious Education. It was requested that further information was sought on how the curriculum was received by students. However, they were informed that Local Authority Maintained Schools did not hold data on Religious Education as it was not a requirement.

Members expressed an interest in potential routes to lobby Parliament. It was suggested that this be discussed at the next meeting.

5. SACRE Annual Report

Item deferred to the next meeting.

6. Feedback from Conference on Climate Change 2022

Item deferred to the next meeting.

7. Proposed Conference Dates

SACRE Members discussed potential dates for a conference on inequality within society. Some concerns were raised about the theme of Inequality within society and how it may link to SACRE objectives of advising on Religious Education.

The Chair explained to SACRE members that the proposed conference on inequality within society would operate within the same framework of the climate change conference recently held. The objective of SACRE was to discuss inequality within society, while maintaining a Religious Education theme and to ensure that the conference maintained a Religious Education centric theme, and not enter into socio-economic debate. It was agreed that Religious Education should relate to the real world, however the title of the conference should be changed to reflect that it would be a Religious Education event. Members agreed that "Faith values and inequality" was a workable title.

SACRE members agreed the Conference would be discussed further at workshops planned for January 2023.

8. NASACRE Briefing

The Chair provided members with NASCRE training dates.

SACRE Members highlighted that collective worship was a legal requirement in all Local Authority maintained Schools, and it was also expected to take place in Academy Schools. There was a discussion about what national guidance was provided on collective worship in schools. It was confirmed that national guidance was only provided to religious schools. Members discussed the past role of SACRE in providing that guidance when required, and the possibility of providing such guidance in the future.

An upcoming training session was due to take place on 14th March 2023 on the current status of collective worship. The Chair expressed an interest in attending the training.

9. Any Other Items of Business

An update was received in relation to applying to the Religious Education Leadership Programme, and how their professional development was progressing. Research was being undertaken on Religious Education and how RE lessons in schools were being delivered. A National Association Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) local group would be set up to share and discuss RE subject within Schools.

The School Performance Team Leader provided SACRE with an introduction into the role they would be playing in SACRE going forward, including looking after matters relating to school improvements and provisions for Religious Education in schools.

SACRE members felt they could help to inform schools on ways in which they can improve recycling. This could be done via an invite to schools and circulating information. They also discussed how to raise the profile of SACRE. It was felt this could be done by liaising with organisations and groups and by contacting elected representatives in Parliament.

The meeting ended at 7:33pm

Chairman:

Date: