

SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY 2017 AT 6.35 PM

Committee Members Present

Group A

Christine Morgan	Free Church
Catherine Jinkerson	Free Church
Anju Sharma	Hinduism
Shahid Younis	Islam
Shira Solomons	Judaism

Group B

Lisa Cornwell	Church of England
Linda Galpin	Church of England

Group C

Stephen Vegh	Chairman Secondary RS Teacher
Celia Thatcher	Primary Headteacher

Group D

Philip Houldsworth	Wokingham Borough Councillor
Beth Rowland	Wokingham Borough Councillor

Clerk to Sacre

Anne Coffey

RE Advisor and LA Representative

Jan Lever

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chairman welcomed new member Councillor Houldsworth. Apologies were received from Rev Philip Hobday, Michael Freeman and Fr Bon Ndong.

2 MINUTES

Beth proposed that the minutes of the last meeting be accepted; Lisa seconded the proposal. All were in favour. The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3 MATTERS ARISING

Matters arising from the November 7th meeting were all listed on the agenda along with progress / outcomes as follows:

Jan had drafted a press release which was included in the pack.

Anne had emailed members a reminder of the February network meeting.

Anne had contacted Earley St Peter's Church re their hall; there is a cost involved and it is in use on Mondays. Members agree that WBC is a convenient venue.

Understanding Christianity training dates were addressed under item 8.

4 PAN-BERKS HUB UPDATE - JAN/STEPHEN

Jan summarised the notes from the Pan-Berks Hub meeting.

1. There is currently no induction for new members joining SACREs or refresher training for current members, so it was decided to run an induction session for an hour after the next Hub meeting at WBC, Tuesday 25th April, 5.45pm – 7pm. All are welcome to attend.

Action: Anne to send reminders.

2. As last year's Pan-Berks Conference in September was so successful, all Hub attendees agreed to hold another one. The venue will be the Holiday Inn at Winnersh Triangle, Thursday September 28th, 6pm – 8.30pm, including supper. It will be an opportunity to publicise the Crossing the Bridges project progress and take feedback on the revised syllabus.

4.1 Crossing the Bridges - Directory progress

Jan reminded members of the purpose of Crossing the Bridges, namely linking schools with places of worship willing to host school visits, and speakers from faiths who can visit schools. Training for hosts was needed to understand what children are trying to gain from their visit. A directory of places of worship and faith speakers was also needed, which has not been an easy task to create. Catherine took this on. She said it has been a slow but steady procedure but now she has around 30 places of worship agreeing to be involved. If our faith community is not represented, she asked us to encourage them. The directory covers different faiths and denominations across Berkshire. Catherine pointed out that there are three aspects to the directory: places of worship, organisations such as RE Inspired, and speakers.

Common booking forms were designed and subsequently revised but there are still some issues with them.

Action: Stephen asked if SACRE Members had contacts who were willing to be part of the Directory, could they complete the booking form or contact Catherine.

Stephen proposed a vote of thanks to Catherine for all her hard work.

4.2 Crossing the Bridges - host training feedback

The host training day on Thursday went well. There were about 20 attendees, who were mainly Christian as that is representative of Wokingham. Jan reported that there is now a total of 35 people trained in hosting school visits to their places of worship.

4.3 Crossing the Bridges - CPD on Location Day

Catherine commented that the Crossing the Bridges project is just beginning to take off while the funding is coming to an end. Jan thinks it may be possible to apply to Westhill again for continued funding; if not for that project, then maybe for a second CPD 'On Location Day' trip to places of worship for teachers. Westhill will be sending a mentor to the CPD day for teachers on Wednesday March 8th. This trip was quickly over-subscribed and a 33-seater coach is now full. There is a waiting list of 15; Shahid suggested teachers could use their own transport but Jan hopes a second trip can take place. Each teacher will be able to download and print 2 booklets. They will then be asked to choose 2 of the places of worship they are going to visit and complete the booklets with reference to the places, either writing as themselves or as their students. This will produce lots of examples which can be scanned and put on the website as sample case studies. Additionally, David (Jan's colleague) will take photos of the places visited and put them in a Powerpoint presentation format for uploading to the website and sending the link to schools. This adds a valuable dimension to the project at no extra cost. So far 9 places have been given this

treatment; another 4 will be added. Jan will send a report to Westhill after the trip, which we will be able to view on the Westhill website.

4.4 Agreed Syllabus action plan

All six Berkshire SACREs are working together on the revised syllabus (last revised in 2012). Each SACRE will contribute £1,700. This year the contributions have been used to run the Hub and the Crossing the Bridges project. For the coming year, all six SACREs have agreed to give the same amount but it will fund the Hub and the Revised Syllabus review.

Timeline for syllabus review: at the Hub meeting on April 25th Jan will take consultation and survey documents. During the summer term, Jan will implement the consultation and by the end of the summer term, she will have received responses from the initial consultation. At the September conference, Jan will take more responses and the rest of the autumn term will be spent revising and amending. Jan will bring the first draft to the spring 2018 Hub meeting for the six Chairs to study and make any amendments. By the summer term 2018, the revised syllabus will be ready to launch. The last time the syllabus was revised, representatives from each faith from each SACRE met to discuss how their faiths were presented in the syllabus, and the plan is to hold a similar event this time (date tba) as this was very valuable. Jan confirmed that all RE Coordinators/teachers would be asked for feedback.

5 SECONDARY FEDERATION INSET DAY FEEDBACK - STEPHEN

Stephen reported on the free Secondary Federation Inset morning, held on Monday February 20th. It was extremely interesting but unfortunately it was poorly attended, having a couple of schools drop out at the last moment. The main speaker was Stephen Pett, who spoke of the brain and how children learn. He also talked about the enquiry approach versus rote learning of facts. Catherine asked how the primary/secondary gap could be bridged. Stephen reported that Emily Waddilove (WBC) said that Wokingham had 76% of students entering RE GCSE, against a national average of 46%, and, that even with such a sizeable cohort the number of students achieving A or A* grades was 26.5%. The national percentage for A/A* grades at GCSE for RE is 27.5% but the average cohort entered is only 46%, showing that Wokingham achieves excellent grades as well as entering a large cohort.. He asked that if the money was available for a secondary event in future, how did we suggest it was used and how could we bridge the primary/secondary gap?

6 FINALISED DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND BUDGET - JAN

Action Plan: Jan commented that all actions on the current action plan had been completed. Section A included work by the Pan-Berks Hub which would have the revised syllabus review as their core task in the coming year; sections B and C were the usual ongoing actions, e.g. primary network meetings, which are well attended, and subject leader training for new RE subject leaders or as a refresher for others. There is nothing in the plan for secondary schools, so this needs thinking about at the next SACRE meeting. Discussion followed regarding lack of secondary engagement. Secondary network meetings were discontinued as they were poorly attended. Being academies did not apparently make any difference as academies did attend the September conference. Shira suggested that rather than a speaker visiting one school, it would be more efficient for several schools to combine and have one speaker visit a group of them. Stephen pointed out that secondary teachers were under enormous pressure, hence the low turnout for the Inset morning. Catherine suggested there could be a link with the primary network meetings.

Action: secondary RS teachers to be invited to primary network meetings.

Stephen pointed out that secondary attendance at the conference was good and teachers appreciated being able to meet faith representatives; perhaps an evening event would be better.

Beth proposed that we accept the draft action plan; all were in favour and the plan was approved.

Budget: Jan distributed the current and future budget sheets. Stephen mentioned that he had met with Emily briefly to try a different layout.

Most items under the current budget have been completed apart from the Crossing the Bridges project. The new SACRE budget is created according to the action plan and has provisional costings; most expenditure will be on the core actions and the revised syllabus. Jan agreed that donations of artefacts were needed; Beth said that Easthampstead Park used to have a collection. Discussion followed on how best to source artefacts; there is no budget to have a person dedicated to looking after them. Teachers do not have time or space to manage and store artefacts and would have concerns about loss or damage. Parents could be asked to lend items for short-term use. **Action: Jan to investigate Easthampstead Park, and suggest to teachers (at network meetings) that they may be able to approach parents from different faith communities for artefacts.**

NB 28/02/17

Jan contacted Easthampstead Park and they agree in principle, as does the Bracknell Forest SACRE, that opening up the RE resource centre to teachers in other areas across Berkshire would be welcomed and should be achievable. The resource collection is currently being catalogued online and Jan will discuss progress and details and bring a proposal to the next SACRE Hub meeting on April 25th.

7 NETWORK MEETINGS UPDATE - JAN

Stephen attended the last primary network meeting where he shared how he approached RS with his secondary students, which was well received by the primary teachers. Jan said that teachers still need support with understanding how to assess learning in RE. Three-quarters of local schools use Discovery RE, which has just been updated and had a new assessment process added. The finished version will be available to download in March and schools will be sent a link. Stephen commented that the primary teachers were so keen and passionate about teaching RE despite national constraints. At the next network meeting, Alison (Jan's colleague) will bring some artefacts and Stephen will offer some teaching. Jan invited SACRE members to the network meetings, pointing out that teachers really value members attending. Action: Anne to send network meeting dates out again.

8 NATIONAL UPDATES - JAN

RE Today, commissioned by the Church of England, has produced a resource for teaching Christianity which has now been launched. Schools buy into the training offered and then receive a resource of many teaching ideas. The training and resource are primarily for Church of England schools but others can attend; the next session is on March 17th. It is based on seven basic concepts and is meant to help teachers go deeper to help children learn about the core beliefs and concepts in Christianity. The resource is for KS1-KS3. The training has begun and will be rolled out through the Oxford Diocese locally and will take a year or so to cover the whole country through the dioceses. There is an expectation that church schools will use the resources. The concepts are covered in the syllabus.

9 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next meetings will be on Monday June 12th 2017, Monday November 13th, 2017 and Monday February 26th 2018. Lisa and Philip gave apologies in advance for the June meeting.

10 AOB

Beth informed everyone that the British Humanist Association had publicised on its website that last week all schools across Britain would receive a free copy of 'What is Humanism?' from them. As yet, she has not heard of any Wokingham schools having received a copy.

Stephen informed members of the new NASACRE constitution and suggested we respond to NASACRE with approval. He also mentioned the NASACRE survey which needs submitting by April.

Anne asked if there was any member who did not require a printed copy of agenda and papers at meetings; all require them.

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