

SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 6.15 AM

Committee Members Present

Group A

Christine Morgan	Free Church
Anju Sharma	Hinduism
Sukhdev Bansal	Sikhism

Group B

Lisa Cornwell	Church of England
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Group C

Michaela Watters	Secondary RS Teacher
Stephen Vegh	Chairperson Secondary RS Teacher
Celia Thatcher	Primary Headteacher
Michael Freeman	Representative for the ATL section of NEU

Group D

Clerk to Sacre

Anne Coffey

RE Advisor and LA Representative

Alison Harris

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chairman welcomed members and introduced guests Julian Bushell, Chairman of the Secondary Federation and Sherrie Newell, Manager of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Apologies were received from Cllr David Hare, Cllr Philip Houldsworth, Beth Rowland and Rev Philip Hobday.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Stephen and Beth were the only nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Stephen explained that he will shortly be working at a Bracknell school and will no longer be Head of RS at Waingels College; however, he is a Wokingham primary school governor and can remain in Group C under the constitution rules. This has been confirmed with the LA. Michael proposed that Stephen be re-elected as Chair and Beth as Vice-Chair; Anju seconded the proposal. All were in favour. Although the group was not quorate due to the absence of either of the Group D members, it was believed their presence would not have affected the outcome as there were no other nominations for the positions.

3 LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

Sherrie Newell gave an interesting presentation about the Local Safeguarding Children Board, summarising the work they do and the agencies they work with. Wokingham

Safeguarding Children Board, West Berkshire Safeguarding Board and Reading Local Safeguarding Children Board have joined to form Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Board.

Sherrie emphasised that safeguarding children was every person's responsibility and that we should all know the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) to whom any concerns should be reported. She also referred us to a new government guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', which was published in July. Sherrie was keen to get SACRE members thinking how we could become more aware of safeguarding issues. Stephen explained how Crossing the Bridges involves school visits to places of worship and asked if that would be relevant. Sherrie suggested that we should consider how we can become aware of any gaps. She said there would be wider groups in future and we need to think about how we communicate with each other. Michael thought the Hub should discuss this.

Action: Stephen to take this to the Hub for discussion. Sherrie will contact Stephen in a couple of weeks. Sherrie will send the presentation to Anne for distribution to SACRE members.

Sherrie asked if anyone would be interested in joining the PREVENT group. Some members may be; Sherrie is happy for them to email her for further information.

Action: Members interested in joining the PREVENT group to email sherrie.newell@wokingham.gov.uk

Stephen thanked Sherrie for an informative presentation.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting were approved; proposed by Lisa and seconded by Catherine.

5 MATTERS ARISING

Matters arising from the June meeting were listed on the agenda along with progress / outcomes as follows:

5.1 Membership - amendments to constitution accepted by WBC

Stephen informed members that the amendments to the SACRE constitution regarding widening membership requirements had been accepted by WBC.

Beth is no longer a Councillor but will remain on the SACRE in Group A.

Michael said that from January 1st he will represent the NEU on Group C. (NUT and ATL combined to form the National Education Union).

5.2 Revised Syllabus launch

The launch in July went very well and teachers have been enthusiastic about the syllabus.

5.3 Letter to NASACRE

Stephen has drafted a letter to NASACRE and will show it to Emily Waddilove.

Action: Stephen to pass NASACRE letter to EW for review.

6 FEEDBACK FROM RE SUBJECT LEADER TRAINING AND NETWORK MEETING

Alison reported that primary teachers were very keen on the subject leader training; 14 teachers attended. One delegate misunderstood the purpose of the training and thought it was about the revised syllabus, so Jan Lever arranged for Alison to deliver an additional

session for her. Information on the training was included in the papers accompanying the agenda.

Network meetings were well attended as usual and Alison was pleased to note that SACRE members David and Catherine also attended. SACRE members are always welcome at network meetings. Notes from the meeting are included with the agenda, as well as a sheet of questions which teachers filled in with their answers, using resources provided by Alison. At the network meeting, Julie Easton gave a presentation on her Farmington Fellowship project; she is going to join the SACRE and will give the presentation at the next SACRE meeting. The next network meeting will be on Thursday February 7th, venue to be confirmed.

Stephen explained that Alison has been working with primary teachers on the appendices for the syllabus, stemming from her work at the RE network meetings. In addition, Wokingham SACRE gave its support that the appendices should be teacher-led, not advisor-led. The teachers are keen to support the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub. The Hub has also agreed to continue supporting the Crossing the Bridges project and has discussed whether there should be just one person continuing it or one person in each SACRE.

A third project considered was how to make people more aware of the existence of SACREs. The Hub has suggested that one person in each Berkshire SACRE develops this in their own LA; however, there is no funding for such a project. Alison indicated that West Berks has someone who is going to contact various people and publicise the West Berks SACRE.

Stephen asked for ideas and suggested each member is emailed for their response; Michael pointed out that lack of response should not mean assent.

Anne suggested the flyer should be updated.

6.1 KS4 and KS5 discussion

Stephen began by asking Julian what we can do to engage secondary schools. Julian wondered what level of engagement we are looking for; Stephen explained that previously we had invited secondary RE teachers to the Secondary Inset day and provided speakers but uptake was very low. Michael and Julian both wondered if schools now becoming academies could be an influence. Anju added that many primary schools are also becoming academies. Stephen felt that supporting the secondary inset day was not necessarily the best use of the available amount for secondary schools and asked for more project ideas.

Action: all to think of ideas for engaging secondary schools and let Stephen, Beth or Anne know.

Stephen asked Julian about the uptake for other subject meetings; Julian said there was good support where there were keen teachers ensuring staff became involved. Michaela said that Jan Hayes was coming to Piggott, which she felt could be an incentive. (*Jan has worked for two examination boards; written several textbooks for both GCSE and KS3 Religious Studies to support schools, and co-authored the new AQA GCSE textbook*).

Julian thinks the most important aspect is commitment from RE teachers. He commented on the fact that RE does not appear to be a minority subject in Wokingham schools, with all schools offering GCSE Religious Education and numbers of students doing 'A' level RE ranging from 13 at one school to 24 and 28 at others. However, the number of RE teachers varies; one school has 6 specialist teachers, another only 3. Julian would be pleased if the SACRE could help with the secondary inset day as he has only a shoestring budget. He is happy to write to secondary Heads of RE and get a commitment, and will also report to the Federation. Stephen agreed that the SACRE would like input. Secondary schools would also appreciate input from primary schools; there needs to be more

crossover. Catherine mentioned how useful it was when Stephen attended a primary RE network meeting. Alison has discussed this with Emily Waddilove, who is going to email some primary RE teachers. Lisa felt that teachers needed to value their CPD opportunity. Julian asked if there was any way of committing the funds but as the SACRE was not quorate, there could not be a commitment at the meeting. Stephen will confirm the amount of funding available and let Julian know. A vote was taken in principle, with all in favour apart from one abstention.

7 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT

Alison has taken over from Jan and has been working on the annual report. She summarised it briefly; it is very similar to previous years. There is a membership section; how the SACRE has fulfilled the schools' entitlement; how the SACRE has listened to teachers; provided network meetings and given teachers ownership of the syllabus. Hub meetings have been synchronised with SACRE meetings; WBC has been helpful; NASACRE conference was attended by a member who provided feedback; guests have been invited to meetings; and Crossing the Bridges continues. There remain some items to complete, e.g. Chair's foreword, membership attendance figures and exam reports.

Action: Stephen to provide foreword; Anne to provide missing figures.

8 DRAFT DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND BUDGET FOR NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR

The figures in the budget for the next financial year are based on last year's figures. Alison reminded members that Jan's contract will end in March. Alison will also be finishing as adviser at the end of the financial year, due to personal reasons. David Rees has been accepted as RE Adviser to West Berks SACRE; he is happy to replace Alison in Wokingham but Stephen, Beth and Emily will have to meet to discuss if the position has to go to tender. We would prefer to work with someone we know. Michael pointed out that WBC made the decision when Jo Fageant was hired and she was interviewed by the SACRE.

Alison explained that the launch, training session and network meetings were not on the budget plan as they had not yet been invoiced.

Stephen noted that there was a small surplus which could be used for a project; Anju suggested something to do with safeguarding, in response to Sherrie's request for the SACRE's involvement. Anyone with further ideas, please let Stephen know.

Action: all to think of ideas for a project and let Stephen know.

9 NEXT MEETING

The next SACRE meeting will be on Monday March 4th at WBC Civic Offices, Shute End.

10 AOB

Michael showed members his copy of Laudato Si, an encyclical about climate change written by Pope Francis. He urged members to read it as it is very well-researched and a powerful document. He highly recommends it.

Michael mentioned that Dr Antony Lewis, the regional officer for Humanism, cited the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub as being the most advanced in the country. Reading SACRE has a good Humanist contact and Michael thinks it might be time to revisit co-opting a Humanist member. Stephen agreed and suggested that Michael emails him, Beth and Anne with any contact details he can ascertain from the Reading Humanist. A Humanist could then be invited to give a presentation at the summer meeting.

Action: Michael to provide contact details for a Humanist.

Stephen informed all present that Sukhdev has been awarded the Mayor's Award for teaching Punjabi for 35 years to the Borough's children, a well-deserved award. Stephen congratulated Sukhdev and all applauded her for this achievement.

The meeting closed at 8pm.