

SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 6.15 PM

Committee Members Present

Group A

Christine Morgan	Free Church
Catherine Jinkerson	Free Church
Beth Rowland	Free Church
Shira Solomons	Judaism

Group B

Lisa Cornwell	Church of England
Linda Galpin	Church of England

Group C

Michael Freeman	NEU Representative
Julie Easton	Primary RE Teacher
Louisa Gurney	Primary Headteachers

Group D

David Hare	Wokingham Borough Councillor
Graham Howe	Wokingham Borough Councillor

Clerk to Sacre

Anne Coffey

LA Link / RE Advisor

Angela Hill

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Vice-Chair welcomed members, new members Louisa Gurney and Philippa Chan and guests Diane Thompson-Bowen and Philip Theobald. Apologies were received from Stephen Vegh (Chair), Philip Hobday and Anju Sharma. **Please note:** Shahid Younis was present at this meeting but his name does not show in Group A above.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Lisa nominated Stephen for Chair and Beth for Vice-Chair; Michael seconded the nominations. No other nominations had been received and Stephen and Beth were willing to stand again so they were re-elected, unanimously agreed by the membership.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

NB Shahid's name was omitted from the minutes of the June meeting and the agenda for this meeting due to technical issues. I can't now add his name to the system for

retrospective meeting dates but please note that he was present at the June meeting and this one.

4 MATTERS ARISING

Matters arising from the June 3rd meeting had all been actioned.

5 DEVELOPMENT/ACTION PLAN AND BUDGET

Angela reported on the development/action plan (in the agenda) and budget (copies handed out). Budget sheets will be transferred to spreadsheets in future. The RE Subject Leader training on 15th October had not been as well attended as expected (it had been publicised from September 12th), affecting the projected budget calculations. Reading and Bracknell had been invited to send delegates but did not respond. Members suggested it might be more useful to advertise sooner.

Angela's company had not yet sent their invoice in, so Emily had over-projected in anticipation.

Angela explained that under Core Business, Item 3 in the Actions column referred to an idea tried before, i.e. encouraging SACRE members who are not directly involved with schools to visit a school or schools to observe an RE lesson and feed back to the SACRE. Emily and Anne will facilitate if interested members contact them. Offers were made by Christine (for a Wokingham Primary school); David (Maiden Erlegh), Shahid (a secondary school in Woodley) and Linda (primary school). **Action: Anne to liaise with Emily regarding setting this up.**

Under Aim B, action 3 is to develop annual support for secondary RE teachers/heads of RE. Angela suggested running a day or half-day CPD course, focussing on KS3 and the RE syllabus; she believes that secondary schools prefer CPD opportunities which help with GCSE grades. Shira pointed out that there is a gap in teaching about Islam and that schools should be asked what they want. Beth added that RE fits in the new Ofsted framework differently now. It might be useful to send a survey to schools and/or include in Education News (the weekly e-bulletin to schools). Louisa commented that transition is very topical and a tick-box survey could be useful with regard to RE. It is good to get primary and secondary schools working together.

6 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT

The annual report is in draft form and lacks exam results and images at the moment. Catherine referred to the images from school visits to places of worship but pointed out that there is a gap in Crossing the Bridges where the SACRE puts schools in touch with places of worship but then is not involved in further communications between the two parties. The process was created a few years ago and needs to be reviewed and updated to enable SACRE to be aware of its effectiveness. **Action: Catherine to review and advise SACRE.**

7 FEEDBACK FROM TEACHER NETWORKS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Angela provided reports on the network meetings, training session and Pan Berkshire Hub activity. RE teachers find the network meetings very helpful to support each other and are enthusiastic. Angela's format is to begin with general introductions for new people, discuss what is going well for teachers and provide a training focus. At her first network meeting teachers looked at a philosophical dialogue and discussed training. At the meeting on 15th

October assessment training was discussed. The next meeting will cover dealing with Ofsted and implications around the new framework.

The RE Subject Leader training was discussed earlier.

Pan-Berkshire Hub – Beth informed members that a professional camera operator had been hired to film the interviews set up at Maidenhead Synagogue for the ‘*Real People, Real Faith*’ project. Anne Andrews (Oxford Diocese, an RE Adviser on the Hub) was happy with the event. It is hoped that the next venue might be the new Wokingham Mosque. The next Hub meeting is on November 27th. Venues still need to be found in the Reading and West Berks areas for further filming. The project is being funded by a Westhill award. Catherine asked that she be informed of any venues interested in being involved as she could encourage them to be in the Crossing the Bridges Directory if they are not already. She reported that some teachers had contacted places of worship in the directory and sometimes had no response, (many contacts are volunteers), so she is writing letters to places of worship as well as emailing them. Hopefully, this will have more effect. **Action: members to let Catherine know of any venues interested in being involved with the ‘Real People. Real Faith’ project.**

Shahid suggested asking faith members of the SACRE for contact names for their faith communities, in order to approach the right person. However, as the directory covers the whole of Berkshire, it may be even more useful to ask Hub members for contacts. **Action: Beth to raise at the Hub meeting.**

8 NATIONAL UPDATES RELATING TO EDUCATION AND RE

Angela provided a comprehensive report on national RE updates. One of the main items is the new Ofsted framework which was introduced at the beginning of term. There is a strong drive towards good RE teaching in schools and even where there is no ‘deep dive’ by Ofsted into the subject, schools are being challenged on any lack of pupil understanding with regard to religion and culture. School leaders, including governing bodies, will be held to account during an inspection where lack of training for teachers has a negative impact on pupils.

Angela has discussed this with Emily and it was agreed to circulate information to head-teachers. She has considered finding the data for Wokingham; primary teachers are enthusiastic but secondary schools are possibly more detached. Perhaps a secondary CPD session or meeting could get teachers to complete a survey in their schools. Lisa thought management may be unsupportive; Shahid is a secondary school governor and could look into the state of RE in the school. Shira pointed out that in some schools the pupils learn about RE in a round-about way in cultural studies lessons as opposed to RE lessons. All agreed that we want to support our schools. **Action: Shahid to investigate the status of RE teaching in the secondary school of which he is a governor.**

Michael raised the subject of assemblies/collective acts of worship in schools and that it is one of the SACRE’s statutory duties to monitor them. He stated that the issue must be addressed as it is the law and asked if we should do some observation. Apparently, Ofsted inspectors do not want to tackle the issue. Michael asked that we think about this and address the issue. At the 2012 NASACRE Conference, everyone thought it should be scrapped but the government have not done anything. The majority of Wokingham secondary schools are now academies and although they are not obliged to follow the local syllabus, Angela pointed out that it is part of their funding agreement to have assemblies. In Catherine’s ongoing Crossing the Bridges work, she has added a useful question which asks the place of worship if they are linked to a local school and if so whether they have input to assemblies. Louisa suggested asking secondary schools how

they practise collective worship – a good link would be to contact the Secondary Federation. **Action: Anne or Angela to raise with Emily about approaching secondary schools or the Secondary Federation regarding collective worship.**

9 NASACRE UPDATES

No NASACRE updates to report. Anne sends out SACRE briefings from NASACRE on a regular basis and will send out new login details for the NASACRE website shortly.

Action: Anne to send out NASACRE login details.

10 SACRE PROJECTS

Beth asked for ideas on possible projects for the SACRE if we can find sufficient funding to cover costs. Crossing the Bridges is ongoing and can be developed further.

Michael asked about another conference but the Hub discussed this and ruled it out for this year.

Shahid suggested a video of what the SACRE does, which could be done by members and uploaded to social media. Beth suggested that it would be better to focus on a project for children.

7.30 Christine left.

Louisa asked if we could provide RE resources for teachers. Easthampstead Park used to lend out resources but it is not known if this is still the case. Catherine pointed out that schools following the same syllabus would all need to borrow resources at the same time, which could be a problem. Philip talked about peer reviews and schools working together on enquiry questions; leaders dig deep into the question and develop CPD, which has had a positive impact on teachers. Philippa thought it could be trialled.

11 AOB

Michael: Michael reported that the Anglican Church is very keen on combating climate change and he asked members to think about climate change and whether there is some action the SACRE could take to show our care for the environment. **Action: Members to consider how the SACRE could show its support for tackling climate change.**

Beth: dates for the next SACRE meeting need to be changed as Angela is unable to manage the original dates. March 2nd will change to March 16th and June 8th will change to June 15th. This was acceptable to all although David has a party meeting on one of the dates.

Shira: wanted to know which vacancies we still have on the SACRE membership. **Action: Anne to send a membership list out.**