

Agenda Item 2

SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 1 MARCH 2021 AT 6.15 PM

Committee Members Present

Group A

Christine Morgan	Free Church
Catherine Jinkerson	Free Church
Beth Rowland	Free Church
Anju Sharma	Hinduism
Shira Solomons	Judaism

Group B

Lisa Cornwell	Church of England
Linda Galpin	Church of England

Group C

Stephen Vegh	Chairperson Secondary RS Teacher
Julie Easton	Primary RE Teacher
Philippa Chan	Primary Headteacher

Group D

David Hare	Wokingham Borough Councillor
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Clerk to Sacre

Catharine Newport

LA Link / RE Advisor

Angela Hill

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Welcome to Catharine Newport – our new clerk since Anne Coffey retired last year.

Apologies were received from Philip Hobday and Paris Finnegan

Michael Freeman has sadly resigned after many years of chairing and being an active member of SACRE. We are so grateful for his commitment and all he has contributed to SACRE moving it forward during his years of service and making it a much easier transition for Stephen to take on the role of chair from him. He will be missed.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 9th November 2021 were approved, proposed by David and seconded by Christine

3 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Members to let Catherine know of links with places of worship.

Action ongoing

4 CATHERINE TO INVESTIGATE LINKS ON MINDFULNESS, CBT ETC.

Catherine shared the information below:

Lots of appropriate links in the following:

<https://www.annafreud.org/>

thenationalcollege.co.uk

Good CPD in various areas across education, including health & wellbeing. Schools need to sign up.

OLT - found in the Wokingham directory, link below. (I've recently completed a 12 week Mental Health course)

<https://directory.wokingham.gov.uk/kb5/wokingham/directory/service.page?id=A2ksTY-dsjE>

5 MEMBERSHIP

Stephen to follow up NQT interest; Beth and Philip to approach contacts

Due to pandemic it is a difficult time to get in contact with potential members and they are also less likely to have time to commit. Action ongoing

6 STEPHEN TO TAKE RESOURCES PLATFORM IDEA TO THE HUB MEETING FOR DISCUSSION

Action ongoing

7 MEMBERS TO SEND INFORMATION TO BETH REGARDING IT PROVISION FOR PUPILS

Beth has not received anything. She understands things are getting better but there are still many pupils without IT access. As a Trustee of United Charities in Wokingham she advised that they are in discussion with schools at the moment regarding putting a fund together to meet the need.

8 MEMBERS TO LET EMILY KNOW IF THEY HAVE ANY IDEAS TO CONTRIBUTE TO, OR WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED IN, THE PROJECT KEY CONCEPTS FOR RE

This comes up later in item 7 of the agenda

9 SPRING TERM 2021: HOW ARE THINGS FOR WOKINGHAM SCHOOLS?

January was a very difficult start to the term because schools thought they were opening after the Christmas break and then there was a government announcement on first day of school that children would not be returning to school and that learning had to be done remotely. This meant that schools had to rapidly adapt and set up this provision and Emily believes that their response and the quality of the provision has been amazing in many cases. The additional challenge is that schools have had 2 systems going on with some children coming into school such as the vulnerable and those of key workers and for some schools this has been a very high number, with schools having to run a mixture of remote learning and provision in school. Most schools had some element of live interaction with children, and teachers were working incredibly hard to ensure that the provision was of the highest standard with many having to spend some time coming into school to be with the

pupils whilst also providing remote provision for the other students. All whilst some staff and pupils were testing positive for the virus with schools having to do the contact tracing and arranging for the appropriate children and bubbles to isolate.

Schools are now preparing to fully reopen from 8th March 2021. All primary children will be expected to return to school full-time on this date. Secondary students meanwhile have to be tested 3 times in school a few days apart before they can attend school full-time. After that there will be twice weekly testing for secondary school children and all school staff at home and it has recently been announced that families of school going children can also be tested. This will result in schools being informed of test results and managing the outcomes with respect to contact tracing etc. There will still, therefore, be a need for remote learning, perhaps for individual children at times or for bubbles.

As with the arrangements for the Autumn term, children and staff will be working in bubbles in school. Schools will be implementing strategies around ventilation, teaching in a socially distanced manner, staggered starts and ends to the school day and lunchtimes to avoid crowding, enhanced cleaning, remote staff meetings.

Staff will be concentrating on identifying gaps in learning as well as being mindful of well-being of both staff and children.

There will be no exams but lots of teacher assessments to identify gaps and assess where the children have got to by the end of the school year. Teachers will be providing grades to exam boards for GCSEs and A levels.

Generally, schools will be a long way from running normally and it will be a long time before things are completely back to normal. Although there will be much gladness amongst pupils and staff to be getting back there will also be some anxieties.

Regarding visitors in schools – in the Autumn term schools could have visitors although they did want to minimise the number and visits had to be done inline with school risk assessments. The Wokingham Schools Improvement team are thinking they will probably not visit schools until September. It is unlikely that visits from SACRE members will be considered until well into the Autumn term.

Catherine suggested it would be really nice if places of worship were able to be proactive in seeking ways to offer support and asked how and when SACRE could communicate with them. This would take the pressure off schools to invite places of worship to come in and instead have the offer sent to them. Catherine can put together a list of contacts and draft an email. Julie suggested that the email could suggest 'visiting' the school online or by recording, as physical visits are still not possible. Stephen suggested that this might be something the Hub would like to do as it could benefit the whole of Berkshire

ACTION: Stephen and Angela to bring suggestion to the Hub

10 DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND BUDGET

Angela – The SACRE managed to achieve nearly everything we intended to this year with just a few exceptions due to the pandemic-

- The federation secondary INSET day did not go ahead this year.
- Members were getting ready to go and visit schools but this came to an abrupt halt.

- Support for secondary schools – The SACRE normally contributes financially to the secondary federation inset day so that they can book speakers for their inset day. But this was cancelled this year. It has also been cancelled for next year so we need to bear this in mind when planning support for secondary schools for the coming financial year.

Membership – see document in agenda pack indicating vacancies

We have tried to recruit a Buddhist to group A but have not been successful. Let us know if you know anyone.

2 teacher association memberships to fill, now that Michael is standing down
We would like another secondary teacher and primary teacher.

Already engaged with Julian Bushell to try to recruit a secondary teacher but no success so far.

Please note, members of Group C don't have to be directly teaching RE

Development plan for the coming year – also see later item.

Conceptual understanding project– primary and secondary – see later item.

We will need to consider how we can offer remote support to schools. There is no guarantee that schools will be happy to have visitors from September so how can we make best use of the online platforms and technology that we have at our disposal? How can we best support schools and how can we encourage schools to support SACRE and be more aware of what is going on in RE?

Budget update

After expenses expected to be incurred during this month, we have a surplus of around £2000 for this financial year. Angela explained that possibilities for spending this, in terms of what RE Today can offer, are:

- Training on a resource called 'Understanding Christianity'
- Anti-racist RE – could be cross-phase training
- RE Today offer various membership packages to schools which could be subsidised

Emily stated that

- This money cannot be easily carried over to the new financial year. We would have to put a case forward to commit the money now for an event in the future which could be a difficult process.
- If we do not use the money it should not impact on the amount we receive next year.

Beth stated that the Hub has been making some films and there may be some further costs in this respect.

General discussion took place with ideas of how to best use this surplus. Ideas included:

- RE Today training and/or resources for schools
- The conceptual development project (only a little money required)
- Continuing the Hub project/ launch event

- A Muslim speaker for schools
- Resources for schools - from RE Today/ an artefacts library (does the Bracknell Forest library still exist?)
- Training for SACRE members

ACTION: This money cannot be easily carried over. We would have to utilise this surplus; we need to have a purchase order raised before 31st March 2021. Members are invited to please forward suggestions of how best to spend this money as soon as possible to Stephen and Beth, Angela and Emily, who will meet soon to further discuss this

11 FEEDBACK FROM TEACHER NETWORKS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

3 events to update SACRE on –

- 16th November 2020 - GCSE training. Only 4 teachers attended but gave very positive feedback. Disappointingly low number of attendance possibly due to the fact that there was a CPD event run by one of the exam boards the same week. We are therefore considering possibly offering the course again in the summer term
- 1st December 2020 RE Network Meeting for Primary Teachers – 15 attended with positive feedback
- 21st January 2021 Re Subject Leaders training – really well attended with 20 delegates and very positive feedback

Need to improve on numbers of delegates providing constructive feedback so measures will be put in place to encourage this.

12 SACRE PROJECTS

A booklet was produced in Wokingham last academic year, on key concepts in the foundation subjects. RE is not currently included. A project took place which brought together Primary and Secondary teachers to discuss what are the key concepts that children need to understand by the end of year 6 in order to be ready to make the most of the curriculum at key stage 3 in that subject. The purpose is to make transition seamless and avoid the dip in achievement that often happens between Primary and Secondary. The aim of the project was that Primary teaching staff would be better able to plan their curriculum if everyone is agreed that these are the ‘big ideas’ that children need to understand by the end of year 6, and secondary schools would have a really clear idea of where the children are starting at the beginning of the key stage 3 curriculum. So, the booklet was produced with a page for each foundation subject with information on what the national curriculum states that children have to learn and what are the big ideas, the concepts, that we in Wokingham have agreed children need to understand by the end of year 6.

As RE is missing from this, we are planning to work on this at the coming RE Primary Network meeting on 23rd March, which SACRE members are welcome to join. We have invited Secondary School teachers to join as well and plan to work on a page to add to that booklet on RE. This will relate of course to the local syllabus rather than the national curriculum, but the process will be the same as for the other subjects. Angela will take away a draft page from the meeting and after working on it will share a draft which we hope to finalise at the summer term network meeting. It would be great to have SACRE

members contribute to that meeting. If you would like to attend, it will be held at 4pm on 23rd March, please email either Schools.Teams@wokingham.gov.uk or catharine.newport@wokingham.gov.uk for a TEAMS link.

Anju asked whether there would be any expense for this as we still have money to be spent this financial year. Emily could only think that a relatively small amount would go to Angela for her time.

13 BERKSHIRE SACRES HUB UPDATE - FEEDBACK FROM HUB MEETINGS

Has met regularly throughout lockdown producing films and guidance.

The films produced so far are a useful tool for Primary colleagues. The hub is looking to secure further funding to produce more films potentially for Secondary schools

The hub also has surplus funding and are approaching a catholic church in Windsor and possibly other places of worship in this respect.

Future plans

The hub is looking to host the film resources on the NATRE website, alongside other good teaching materials for RE such as Anti bullying resources.

The hub has been asked to present on the West Hill Project at the NASACRE conference 24th May 2021.

Virtual launch of videos will be held online on 28th April at 4.00pm – 5.30pm assuming copyrights and other legal issues with the films have been resolved.

14 FINAL ANNUAL REPORT ON PREVIOUS ACADEMIC YEAR

Everyone was emailed the financial report in December. If anyone did not receive it, it is available on the Schools Hub on the SACRE page.

15 NATIONAL UPDATES RELATING TO EDUCATION AND RE

Updates are in the agenda pack.

It has been confirmed that subject knowledge enhancement funding will be made available from government for RE. This will assist teachers who wish to teach RE with confidence in schools but are non-specialists.

24 hour residential symposium proposed for the Autumn term, next academic year. Only 25 places available requiring a high level of commitment for anyone applying and there will be pre-event tasks set.

Art in Heaven competition is continuing and proving very popular

New NATRE chair appointment confirmed

Katie Freeman – Primary School Teacher will be stepping up as chair. Ben Wood – Secondary Teacher is outgoing chair.

Joanne Harris – Secondary vice-chair

Naomi Anstice– Primary vice-chair

RE Today and NATRE are continuing to produce distance learning and home learning resources on website.

The Culham St Gabriel's RE Leadership programme continues.

Inspiring RE (£60 per delegate) is still set to go ahead on 21st April –Sarah Payne the regional ambassador is keen for it to happen face-to-face, but we will have to wait and see if that can go ahead or if it will need to be postponed.

16 NASACRE UPDATES

Updates are in the agenda pack

EGM minutes will be sent out to members

AGM will be held online on 24th May. SACRE members who wish to attend please email Emily or Catharine. Funding is available for places for all who wish to attend.

17 DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR COMING FINANCIAL YEAR

We will continue to deliver our standard work such as Primary Network meetings. As the Federation inset day is not happening, we need to consider more support for Secondary Schools. Angela has offered to do the GCSE training in the summer term when there is no exam board training. It would be good to consider who SACRE can support in a remote way. Ideas are welcome.

18 RE GCSE PROVISION IN WOKINGHAM SCHOOLS

A brief confidential discussion took place about provision for RS at KS4 in Wokingham secondary schools. Stephen is to consider this further and will perhaps draft a communication to schools.

19 AOB

Meeting finished at 7.53pm

20 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Summer term meeting – Monday 14th June 2021 tbc (Depending on WBC meetings); Monday 8th November 2021 tbc; Monday 7th March 2022 tbc

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