

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Tuesday, 3 October 2017, County Hall, Worcester - 2.00 pm

Minutes

Present:

Mrs Lindsay Thorne (Chairman), Mr Robin C Lunn (Vice-Chairman), Ms Stephanie Boulter, Mr Chris Giles, Ms Ellie Hill, Mr M Jenkins, Mrs Tracy Lister, Mrs Christine Parker and Dr Yvonne Stollard.

Also attended:

Stephen Pett and Kate Griffiths

598 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence had been received from Charlotte Betteridge, Graham Bounds and Tasnim Khawaja.

599 Confirmation of the Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9 June 2017 were confirmed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

600 SACRE Development Plan

SACRE noted the development plan. The remaining agenda items would deal with the individual points from the plan.

The Chairman commented that the Commission on RE quoted Nick Gibb as saying that Local Authorities would continue to receive funding for SACREs.

601 Evidence of quality RE and SMSC in Worcestershire- an analysis of Ofsted reports

Ellie Hill presented information regarding 'Monitoring standards' in the Development Plan. She had interrogated the Ofsted database for Worcestershire schools who had been inspected during 2016/17 and had either received a grading of 1(Outstanding) or 4 (inadequate). Key words which were searched for included terms such as 'religion', 'spirituality', 'belief' and 'faith'.

It was confirmed that the Ofsted Inspectors handbook stated that for schools of Religious Character the Inspectors should not comment on religious teaching; schools without a religious character must conform to the Locally Agreed Syllabus but nothing was recorded in the reports about the specific teaching of RE.

The keywords highlighted some references in the reports to the teaching of SMSC rather than RE. All the reports were a general assessment of the school rather than a judgement on the teaching of RE. It could therefore be

602 Visits to places of worship

assumed that the teaching of RE and SMSC was suitable. The inadequate schools had references to SMSC as well as the outstanding schools.

Members agreed that it would be possible to monitor schools on a 3 year cycle but it was difficult to find out about the quality of RE from the Ofsted reports. It would be useful to note the schools with an inadequate rating and ensure they were offered help such as invitations to join hub support groups or attend conferences. The outstanding schools could be noted and asked to spread examples of effective teaching.

RESOLVED that:

- a) Monitoring reports for Church of England Schools be considered at the next meeting (Ellie Hill and Steph Boulter);**
- b) Schools rated inadequate to be invited to take part in meetings by Hub leaders,**
- c) Ofsted reports to be reviewed on a regular basis.**

Tracy Lister distributed the list of Places of Worship. The list had been compiled by recommendations from teachers and delegates who had attended the RE Today Conference.

SACRE members were asked to send any further details to Tracy by half term and Steph Boulter had a list of 'Dos and Don'ts' for schools visiting places of worship which would be useful for schools and could form part of the list.

Chris Giles reported that students from South Bromsgrove school had visited places of worship in Birmingham; a Sunni Mosque, a Shia Mosque and a Church of England Church. The visit had been very positive and the students found it very enlightening to hear directly from people with a faith.

The Chairman suggested in the future it would be good if a video could be made of the pupils' response to the visit and be made available on a website along with the list of places of Worship.

RESOLVED: that

- a) Any further details about places of worship should be passed to Tracy Lister before half term (23 – 27 October),**
- b) After half term the list is to be circulated to SACRE members with a view to then being**

made available to Worcestershire Schools.

603 Hub Leaders project

Stephen Pett reported that progress was now being made on this project. Recruitment had started with the initial schools being invited to take part and ethics approval had been received from the University of Worcester which allowed the project to be recognised as a research project.

RESOLVED that SACRE noted this update.

604 Conferences

Primary Conferences

The primary conference had taken place at the Pear Tree Inn on 19 June and had been a positive event although the number of attendees had been small. Tracy Lister reported that from a delegate's point of view the Conference had provided useful strategies and an opportunity to share good practice.

Lat and Fiona from RE Today had already agreed to take part in a conference next year if SACRE agreed it would be a good idea.

The Secondary Conference

The conference organised by RE Today together with South Bromsgrove High School, entitled 'RE to Life', was held on 29 June and had gone well. 20 teachers from Worcestershire Schools had attended, along with a larger number of teachers from neighbouring counties.

Future Conferences

Worcester Cathedral were holding an Conference on 19 October.

Worcester University were planning an A level conference for March 2018.

RE Today were proposing a special school conference be held on 27 March at the Buddhist Centre in Malvern. Schools from Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire would be invited.

RESOLVED: that

- a) **SACRE agreed that RE Conferences were helpful for teachers and they supported the**

proposal that RE Today organise further conferences in 2018; and

- b) Relevant people and organisations needed to keep each other informed about upcoming conferences and Steph Boulter agreed to pass on information from the Church of England to RE Today, South Bromsgrove School and the University.**

605 National RE

Stephen Pett distributed information from the 'State of the Nation' report. The report had been covered by the BBC who had checked the statistics. The report highlighted the lack of provision of RE in English schools and raised the pressure on the Government and the Department for Education to take some action.

The report recommended that data should be published to allow SACREs to monitor provision in their local area more easily. Workforce data and GCSE data were distributed for schools in Worcestershire. The information suggested that a number of schools did little or no RE.

It was recognised that some schools lacked specialist teachers and that some Head Teachers did not give RE due importance. SACRE members felt that something should be done to make schools fulfil their obligations with regards to RE, although it was recognised that Ofsted were reluctant to become a compliance organisation.

Stephen Pett suggested that SACRE write to schools to enquire further about what RE they were providing, while pointing out the positives of RE and how it could add value to SMSC and the benefits it would bring to pupils and parents.

The document 'RE for REal' showed the benefits of RE and would be discussed at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that

- a) Stephen Pett would email members to arrange a sub group of SACRE to look at writing to schools regarding their RE provision;**
- b) Ellie Hill would provide a precis of RE for REal for the next meeting, and**
- c) An update would be received at the next meeting.**

606 Feedback from

None

	Members	
607	Any Other Business	None
608	Future Meeting Dates	Dates 2018 Wednesday 14 February at 2pm Tuesday 15 May at 2pm Tuesday 2 October at 2pm

The meeting ended at 4.10 pm

Chairman