

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Tuesday, 5 February 2019, County Hall, Worcester - 2.00 pm

Minutes

Present:

Mrs Lindsay Thorne (Chairman), Mr Robin C Lunn (Vice-Chairman), Mr Graham Bounds, Ms K Cope, Mr Chris Giles, Mr M Jenkins, Mrs Tasnim Khawaja, Mrs Tracy Lister, Mr K Pollock and Dr Yvonne Stollard.

Also attended:

Mr S Pett, RE Today - Adviser to SACRE
Kate Griffiths – Committee Officer

647 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies were received from Ellie Hill, Jatinderpal Loyal, Christine Parker and Kerry Poole.

The Chairman welcomed Kate Cope, the new Church of England representative who worked alongside Tracy Lister helping teachers in Church of England schools.

648 Confirmation of the Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2018 were agreed to be a correct record of the meeting and were signed by the chairman.

649 Annual Report and Exam results

The Annual Report had been discussed at previous meetings and would be updated with figures for exam results for 2017/18.

Chris Giles distributed information which showed the number of students entered for exams and the results in 2018 in Worcestershire. At GCSE level Worcestershire was maintaining its standards with 4% more than the West Midlands figure gaining a level 5, and the same percentage gaining a level 8. The A level figures showed a large drop in the numbers taking the exam. Stephen distributed figures which showed the numbers of students who were entered for RS exams from individual schools. The percentages varied greatly.

Monitoring the teaching of RE was one of SACRE's duties and Chris Giles and Stephen Pett agreed to carry out further work to look at why the numbers of A level students had fallen and whether schools were fulfilling their statutory duties in teaching RE.

ACTION: a report would be brought to the next meeting covering suggestions for what action could

650 Future Support for Teachers / Conferences

be taken to support schools to fulfil their statutory duties.

Regional Ambassadors

NATRE had divided the Country into regions and appointed an RE Ambassador in each region. Chris Giles was the Ambassador for the West Midlands and helped support local groups so that every teacher can join a support group within a half an hour drive. Culham St Gabriel was supporting the Ambassadors and a strategy was being developed. Teachers could apply for grants to set up a local group and would receive cover for one day a month.

Primary Conference

Stephen Pett had met with Margaret James from the Diocese and they would co-ordinate their efforts.

Hub Leaders

Ellie Hill and Stephen Pett had spoken at a conference in Crewe to describe how they had set up the Hub Leaders project. Ellie would be publishing a research paper about it. The Rivers Church of England Multi Academy Trust, the Diocese and SACRE were now working more closely together to organise Hubs.

Secondary Students conference

Chris Giles had organised a successful network meeting that had been attended by the Mayor of Worcester as well as a press officer. Interesting questions had been asked such as whether there was any link between a lack of religious education and a lack of social cohesion.

The 2019 Student Conference would be held on 14 June at the University of Worcester and could accommodate up to 200 Students.

Secondary Teacher conference

Titled 'Deeper thinking: deeper learning' this conference would be held on 25 June at Puckrup Hall.

651 Agreed Syllabus Options

There was a legal requirement to review the syllabus every five years. RE Today worked with Worcestershire SACRE to develop the current Syllabus which runs from 2015-2020.

For 2020-2025 the options for SACRE to consider are to either:

- a) Renew the license with RE Today for the current syllabus. This would include a supplement to update the syllabus regarding the Commission on RE plus changes to KS 4 and 5 and assessments;
- b) Adopt RE Today's more recent Syllabus Model B. This incorporates more of the Understanding Christianity resource and a revised assessment model; or
- c) Commission a bespoke new syllabus.

Due to the considerable extra cost of option C, it was quickly assumed that the choice was in reality between options A and B.

Initial comments from members included:

- From a teacher's point of view it was felt that option B would be best as many schools were already using the 'Understanding Christianity' resource so the new syllabus would support that but would not be too large a leap away from what they were already using
- It was clarified that the Understanding Christianity resource was made available once teachers had completed 3 days of training. The majority of Church Primaries across England used the resource
- Syllabus Model B was more systematic than the current thematic Worcestershire syllabus
- It was felt that the description of the options did not include enough about other world views such as humanism; in response RE Today thought that both options did include other world views but it was not clearly represented in the overview of the options
- Members felt that it was important that pupils needed to learn about the basis of Christianity before they were able to compare it to other religions and world views.

Prior to the next meeting Stephen Pett would speak to more teachers in Worcestershire to gain their views and further information would be sought regarding the funding available.

ACTIONS:

- a) **At the next meeting there would be further discussion regarding the new syllabus**

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) The topics contained in the Option B syllabus should be emailed around to SACRE members c) A questionnaire would be sent to teachers asking their opinion of the syllabus d) The dates and details of the conferences would be sent to teachers and SACRE members.
652	Monitoring RE Provision in Schools	<p>As mentioned under the previous item a survey had been prepared to send to schools. The survey would ask what teachers thought of the current syllabus but it would also ask about how RE was delivered in each school to ascertain if schools were fulfilling the statutory requirement for teaching RE.</p> <p>ACTION: Once the results from the survey had been received SACRE would consider how to offer support to the schools who needed help to meet the statutory requirement.</p>
653	Feedback from Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasnim Khawaja reported that Bromsgrove and Redditch had welcomed 7 new people to Bromsgrove and 5 families in Redditch. She had an awareness raising presentation which she could deliver to schools in assemblies or in workshops • It was Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January and a large number of schools were involved in various events • On Sunday 10 February there was a Jewish Muslim Storytelling event • Worcestershire Interfaith Forum and Holland House were holding an event on 14 March – ‘Opening our eyes to each other’.
654	Any Other Business	None
655	Future Meeting Dates	<p>Wednesday 15 May 2019</p> <p>Wednesday 2 October 2019</p>

The meeting ended at 4.00pm.

Chairman