

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
Wednesday, 8 June 2022, County Hall, Worcester,
2.00 pm

Present:

Minutes

Cllr. Mel Allcott (Chair), Cllr. Matthew Jenkins (Vice - Chairman), Mr Graham Bounds, Mr Chris Giles, Rev. Duncan Hutchison, Mrs Tasnim Khawaja, Mr Jatinder Loyal, Cllr. Emma Marshall and Mrs Christine Parker

Also attended:

Mr S Pett, Lisa Bradbury and Kate Griffiths

**732 Apologies for
Absence and
Substitutions**

Apologies for absence had been received from Danielle Evans, Ellie Hill and Dr Yvonne Stollard.

**733 Confirmation of
the Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 February 2022 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

**734 Update on
Primary and
Secondary
Conferences**

Stephen Pett gave an update on the Primary Conference which was taking place on 22 June. 44 schools had signed up for the conference.
The secondary conference was taking place on 23 June and would be in person and so far only 4 schools had signed up. Details of the conferences were being sent out in the Schools bulletin.

It was recognised that it was more difficult to attract teachers at secondary level so alternative ideas such as termly webinars were being considered for future.

735 Future Courses

SACRE funding was being used to run two 'Help! I'm the RE Subject Leader' course at the start of the Autumn Term.

The school improvement team were running curriculum courses which were supporting subject leadership. It was mentioned that Worcestershire Children First gave small schools release money to enable them to allow teachers to attend training courses.

**736 Updates on
other support
for schools**

Duncan Hutchinson updated SACRE that the Diocese of Worcester were about to publish its list of courses for the new academic year. The course list was being emailed to

		<p>all church schools. Non-church schools were also welcome to attend training courses but would be charged a fee to attend.</p> <p>Worcester Interfaith Forum offered support to schools in the form of Hub meetings, with some being online and some in person.</p> <p>Local NATRE groups also met, with the cross-phase group meeting next week at Aston Fields.</p> <p>There was a recognition that due to staff shortages and COVID causing pressure in schools, some groups such as Open the Book were finding it difficult to gain access to schools. It was hoped that the situation would be better from September.</p>
737	Feedback from NASACRE Conference	<p>The SACRE Chairman had attended the NASACRE Conference which had been held virtually on 23 May. The topics covered by the three keynote speakers were: Working together for high quality education in religion and worldviews; The substance of curriculum: high-quality RE and Ofsted's inspection frameworks; and National analysis of SACRE annual reports.</p>
738	Workforce Data: Survey questions to consider	<p>In response to the workforce data which had been considered at the previous meeting, Stephen Pett had created a short survey designed to find out what RE provision was being provided by schools.</p> <p>RESOLVED that SACRE agreed for Chris Giles to send the survey to schools and ask schools if their workforce data was accurate.</p>
739	National RE Report Card	<p>Stephen Pett updated SACRE on the RE Report Card produced by the RE Policy Unit together with NATRE and RE Today. The card could be used to talk to politicians and to encourage local MPs to support RE. The card showed parents the impact that good RE can have on students, but highlighted that nothing was spent on RE projects between 2016 and 2021.</p> <p>SACRE decided that in order to gain support for RE from local Councillors, that they could invite Tracey Onslow, the new Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to the next SACRE meeting. SACRE also felt that a letter should go to Robin Walker, as the MP for Worcester as well as the Minister of State for School Standards, explaining that RE should receive more support and to request that Ofsted help to enforce what schools should be doing in terms of teaching RE.</p>

740 **Introducing the
RE Council's
Draft Handbook
on religion and
worldviews**

RESOLVED that SACRE:

- a) **Agreed that the Chairman should invite Councillor Tracey Onslow, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills to the next SACRE meeting, and**
- b) **SACRE should send a letter, drafted by Stephen Pett, to Robin Walker MP, asking for support for RE in schools.**

Stephen Pett gave a brief presentation, explaining that a three-year project was underway on behalf of the RE Council, to promote their vision for a 'religion and worldviews' approach. The project built on additional work created for the REC since the 2018 Commission report, including a literature review, discussion papers and the production of a video. The current three-year Worldviews Project had developed a draft handbook, including a National Statement of Entitlement. This resource would be used by three teams who will develop frameworks for a worldview approach to RE in their context. The final Handbook and frameworks would be published in 2024.

The work on Worldviews would help to inform the next Worcestershire agreed syllabus which would begin to be developed in 2024. The word 'religion' was viewed by scholars as a European Protestant term, but there was increasingly a drive to look at traditions from where they came from in the world. Jatinder Loyal pointed out that Sikhs did not feel that they fit into 'Sikhism' they were not part of an ism, but rather had a rich history of what it meant to be a Sikh.

741 **Education
White Paper/
Education Bill**

Lisa Bradbury gave an update on the white paper, Opportunity for all – Strong schools with great teachers for your child, which was published in March. The chapters in the paper were:

- Chapter 1 – An excellent teacher for every child. This dealt with teacher recruitment and retention, covering subjects such as training and salaries of teachers.
- Chapter 2 – Delivering high standards of curriculum, behaviour and attendance. There would be a continued use of the English Baccalaureate, but RE would still not count as an EBacc subject.
- Chapter 3 – Targeted support for every child who needs it. There was a Green paper setting out suggested ideas for SEND (Special educational needs and disabilities). COVID had meant that it had been very difficult to meet the needs of every

		<p>child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 4 – A stronger and fairer school system. Every school was expected to be part of a strong MAT by 2030 and education investment areas had been identified to prioritise investment. It was clarified that Worcestershire was not classed as a priority area.
742	National News update	SACRE noted the national news items.
743	Feedback from Members	<p>Jatinder Loyal gave details of events organised by the Worcestershire Interfaith Forum. He explained that an event had been held at Worcester Cathedral to remember those Jewish families who had settled in Worcestershire and been persecuted. On Friday 22 July a plaque would be unveiled.</p> <p>The Interfaith Forum were also considering producing a video showing a Jewish and Sikh family taking part in project where they exchange their way of living for a period of time.</p>
744	Future Meeting Dates	The next SACRE meeting would take place at County Hall, on Tuesday 11 October, at 2.00pm.

The meeting ended at 3.50pm

Chairman