

Lancashire County Council

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 7th February, 2011 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'D' - County Hall, Preston

Present:

1.

Christian and other Religious Groups appropriately reflecting the Principal Traditions in the Area

Roman Catholic Church

Ms J Busby
Mr B McMullen

Baptist Church

Rev S Crawford

United Reformed Church

Mr C Wills

Islam

Mr N Anwar

Hinduism

Mrs H Shukla

Teacher Associations

Ms J Crabtree (NUT)
Mrs S Greenhow(NASUWT)
Mr P Martin (ASCL)
(Chairman)
Mrs A Robinson (ATL)

Church of England

Miss L Fenton
Mr C Pountain

Local Authority

County Councillor K Ellard
County Councillor K Iddon
County Councillor P Malpas
County Councillor A Thornton

Co-opted Members

Mrs K Cooper (LASGB)
Ms L Heaton, AST, Secondary
Ms C Mercier, Higher Education Sector

Officers in attendance

Mrs H Harrison
Ms J Anderson
Mrs K Dale

Mr A Brennand representing the Pagan Federation, and Mrs S Miley representing the Bahai Faith attended the meeting as Observers.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Jas Singh, David Fann, Iffat Hussain, Yvonne Taylor, Joan O'Rourke, David Braunold, Helen Sage, Kailash Parekh, Kelsang Pagpa and Owes Data.

The Chairman welcomed new member Reverend Sandra Crawford, representing the Baptist Faith to the meeting and also Mrs Sylvia Mylie, who was attending the meeting as an Observer representing the Bahá'í faith.

3. Minutes and matters arising

With reference to the minute regarding the Report of the Quality and Standards Sub-group, members noted that the data returned in the SIPs questionnaires by the Diocesan Schools would be collated and only sent to the Diocesan representatives. Regarding the minute 'National Update' members noted that a letter had been sent to Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, regarding the level of support for RE and requesting continued support and that this letter would be copied to all Lancashire MPs, and that the Youth SACRE would be asked to endorse this.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Lancashire SACRE held on 29 November 2010 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

4. National Issues - Update

Helen Harrison gave a power point presentation updating members on national issues. A copy is available on record in the minute book. Members raised queries and commented as follows:

- Academies
NATRE had received clarification from Lord Hill's office: where an Academy had not been designated with a religious character the Academy must provide RE in accordance with the national legal requirements for RE. Trust schools that are designated faith schools had to teach RE in accordance with the tenets of their faith.
- English Baccalaureate
The announcement in 2010 that full course GCSE RE did not count towards the proposed English Baccalaureate and the review of short course GCSEs had serious implications for the future status of RE. The announcement of the curriculum review, however, made clear that the government did not intend to make any changes to the statutory basis for RE.
- In Lancashire, the SACRE had been given an assurance by the Authority that it would continue to be supported and Jonathan Hewitt, Head of Quality and Continuous Improvement, Directorate for Children and Young People, would be attending the next meeting of the Quality and Standards

Sub-group on 9 March 2011 to discuss the level of support to be provided after the 31 March, when the post of Lancashire Consultant for RE and Collective Worship would cease to exist.

5. Youth SACRE/Youth Voice

The members of the Youth SACRE had been busy planning the Youth Conference which was taking place on 25 March 2011 at the Gujarat Hindu Centre in conjunction with the launch of the revised Agreed Syllabus for RE.

Helen Harrison would produce a legacy document about the Youth SACRE for the web site. Members asked that their thanks to the Youth SACRE for all the hard work they had done in the past be noted.

RESOLVED: That thanks to the Youth SACRE for all the hard work they had done in the past be noted.

6. Report from the Advanced Skills Teacher, Primary

Jo Crabtree, AST, Primary, gave a brief update on her activities as Advanced Skills Teacher. Jo explained that as an AST, one day of her working week was dedicated to outreach work throughout the County.

As promised at the last meeting, Jo had sent an invitation to Nick Gibb via Deborah Weston at NASACRE, to visit a primary school to see how RE worked, but as yet her offer had not been taken up.

As well as her work for BLASST, Jo had been writing exemplification for the revised Agreed Syllabus and working on it with teachers. Via the network groups, Jo would be able to deliver some training on the new syllabus during March and April.

Jo had again contributed to the Lancashire RE Primary Conference which focused on RE's contribution to Community Cohesion and SMSC. She had run a workshop on SMSC for inspection which had been well attended and received excellent feedback.

For NATRE, Jo had been writing resources on controversial issues using children's literature. Jo is an executive member of NATRE.

RESOLVED: That the report from Jo Crabtree, AST Primary, be noted.

7. Report from the Lancashire Consultant for RE and Collective Worship

Helen Harrison gave a power point presentation on her activities since the last meeting incorporating a detailed update on the position of the SACRE three year Development Plan. A copy of Helen's report and update on the Development Plan is on record in the minute book.

In addition to taking the revision of the syllabus to both primary and network groups, Helen had organised a Primary Conference – Spirited RE – Knowing me Knowing You and had received outstanding feedback on this. Helen, had attended many meetings including Diocesan, Trans Pennine AREIAC, REC and Youth Voice. Helen expressed her thanks in particular to Jo Busby and Helen Sage for all the work they had carried out to support Youth SACRE and the annual Lancashire SACRE Youth Conferences.

Preston Faith Forum had asked Helen to provide training for their faith visitor project but as Helen now had no capacity for this, she asked that if any SACRE members could help with this, to let her know.

Helen also requested that any faith representatives who had not yet been able to submit a local snapshot of their faith for inclusion into the revised syllabus to do so.

Finally Helen thanked all members who had contributed to the work of the SACRE during her time as Lancashire Consultant for RE and Collective Worship.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Lancashire Consultant for RE and Collective Worship be noted.

8. Report from the Advanced Skills Teacher, Secondary

Laura Heaton presented a report on her activities as AST, Secondary, since the last meeting.

As part of Lancashire SACRE's development plan, Laura had been running an Able, Gifted and Talented project and worked with secondary teachers, CLEO's Roger Lang and Teacher Adviser Janet Gaskell on this. Laura had written a document on how to plan lessons for gifted pupils.

She had also worked with Rowena Prior of the Lancashire Grid for Learning to develop an RE Moodle as part of the 2011 Lancashire Syllabus for RE, Searching for Meaning. Moodle, Laura explained, was a virtual learning environment where resources could be accessed and ideas and activities shared by teachers. There would also be a section where teachers could ask for help. The Moodle, as yet, was still in draft form and not yet live on the internet.

In response to a query as to whether this facility would be available for Church Schools to use, it was explained that it would initially be available only to the schools that use the RE syllabus. There could also be some copyright issues if it did not remain password restricted.

The RE Moodle would go live with the launch of the revised syllabus on 25 March 2011.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Advanced Skills Teacher, Secondary, be noted.

9. Celebrating RE Month, March 2011

The RE Council of England and Wales, as the organisers of Celebrating RE month, had requested that those members who had been involved in organising any events for this, log on to the Celebrating RE web site to provide details, so that a legacy document could be created. The web site could be found at the following address: <http://www.celebratingre.org/>

10. Update on Revision of Agreed Syllabus for RE

Helen Harrison updated members on the revision of the Agreed Syllabus by way of a short power point presentation which is on record in the Minute Book.

The new revised syllabus was an on line model and the basic core of the syllabus was now ready for consideration and approval by the Agreed Syllabus Conference. An array of support material and exemplification would be available and added to as an evolving on line resource. This included the RE Moodle.

There would be a need to raise the profile of the new revised syllabus and training of teachers could be an issue after 31 March 2011. There was the possibility of liaising with the Learning Excellence team on training issues and it was noted that any SACRE member was also welcome to help if they were able.

11. Members' Details for the Web Site for RE and Lancashire SACRE

Those members who had not already submitted a completed details form for inclusion on the SACRE web site together with a photo were urged to do so.

It was suggested that member's details forms be sent with the next SACRE agenda as a reminder.

RESOLVED: That member's details forms be sent out with the next SACRE agenda together with a request for members who had not already submitted one to do so.

12. Report of the Quality and Standards Sub-group

The Chairman presented a report from the Quality and Standards Sub-group.

Regarding monitoring, members of the QSS had voiced concern that nationally RE was being excluded from the curriculum at secondary stage, having been left out of the Humanities list for the proposed English Baccalaureate. The Chairman had therefore written, through the Lancashire Association of Secondary School Headteachers, to all County schools reminding them that RE remained a statutory requirement and should continue to be taught at Key Stage 4.

The QSS now recommended to the SACRE that the requirement for schools to submit data at the end of every Key Stage be kept but that the requirement to send in a Self Evaluation Form (SEF) be removed.

Members noted that the QSS had updated the SACRE SEF, but were unable to update the Development Plan as funding for the next financial year was not yet known.

It had been agreed to hold a further meeting of the QSS on 9 March to which Jonathan Hewitt, Head of Quality and Continuous Assessment would be invited to discuss future support for the SACRE after 31 March 2011.

RESOLVED: That, with regard to the SACRE's monitoring role, the requirement for schools to submit data at the end of every Key Stage be kept but that the requirement to send in a Self Evaluation Form (SEF) be removed.

13. Advice to Schools about Key Stage 4

As RE remained a statutory part of the curriculum, teachers were being encouraged to write to the Secretary of State for Education to voice their concerns about the proposed English Baccalaureate and the exclusion of RE from it.

14. Observers' Contributions

Sylvia Mylie representing the Bahá'í Faith offered to contact Dr Malcolm Craig who was in China, to ask if he would be able to provide a local snapshot of the Bahá'í Faith for the revision of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus for RE.

15. Correspondence

Correspondence had been received from:

- Lancashire Forum of Faiths regarding the Faith Education Programme which was now being delivered in partnership with Preston Faith Forum and the SACRE to develop a group of Faith Volunteers to visit primary and secondary schools across the County. The Partnership was asking for volunteers to undertake school visits.
- NATRE: regarding The North of England RE Conference 'Challenging RE' taking place on 7 and 8 May 2011 in York.
- NASACRE: regarding a conference 'Whose RE is it Anyway?' which would take place on 31 March 2011 in Birmingham. The Chair of the SACRE had agreed to attend this conference.

16. Any Other Business

The Chairman reported that this was to be the last meeting that Helen Harrison would attend in her role as Lancashire Consultant for RE and Collective Worship as the post was to be disestablished after 31 March 2011. Members joined with him in thanking Helen for the vast amount of work she had done for the SACRE with great passion and leadership over the past years.

17. Date and Venue of the Next Meetings

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 6 June 2011 at 10am to take place at County Hall, Preston.

Members were asked to consider a proposed schedule of meeting dates for the SACRE and to inform the Clerk if any clashed with religious festivals. The dates were as follows:

Monday 26 September 2011	10am
Monday 28 November 2011	10am
Monday 6 February 2012	10am
Monday 11 June 2012	10am

I M Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor
Clerk to the SACRE

County Hall
Preston
February 2011