

**Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 7th June, 2011 at 10.00 am at the Cabinet Room 'C' - County Hall, Preston**

**Present:**

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

Roman Catholic Church

Ms J Busby  
Mr B McMullen  
Mr B Stuart

The Free Churches Group

Mrs Y Taylor (Methodist Church)  
Mr C Wills (United Reformed Church)

Islam

Mr S Jogi

Hinduism

Mrs K Parekh

**Teachers Associations**

Ms J Crabtree (NUT)  
Mr D Fann (NAHT)  
Mrs S J Greenhow (NAS/UWT)  
Mr P Martin (ASCL)  
(Chair)  
Mrs A Robinson (ATL)

**Church of England**

Mrs J O'Rourke  
Mr C Pountain

**Lancashire County Council**

County Councillor P Malpas  
County Councillor Y Motala

**Co-opted Members**

Ms J Clarke (NATRE)  
Ms L Heaton (Teachers in the  
Secondary Sector)

**Observers**

Dr M Craig (Bahá'í Faith)  
Mr F Williams

**Religious Education Consultant**

Mrs H Harrison

**Officers in Attendance**

Mr J Hewitt  
Ms J Anderson  
Ms K Dale

## 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Mr N Anwar, Rabbi D Braunold, Mr A Brennand, Mrs K Cooper, Ms I Hussain, CC K Iddon, Kelsang Pagpa, Ms C Mercier, Mrs H Sage, Mrs H Shukla, Mrs J Singh, CC A Thornton and Mrs A Tidswell.

## 2. Minutes and matters arising

With reference to the minute regarding Members' Details for the Web Site for RE and Lancashire SACRE, it was noted that all members had received with their agenda papers, a members details form with a request for those members who had not already completed one to do so.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Lancashire SACRE held on 7 February 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

## 3. Constitution of the SACRE

Members noted the appointment on 22 March 2011 of Mrs Anita Tidswell, representing the Methodist Church, to the Free Churches Group on the SACRE within the group entitled: Christian and Other Religious Groups appropriately reflecting the Principal Traditions in the Area.

Members then considered the appointment of two co-opted members to the SACRE:

- **Co-opted member representing NATRE:** it was recommended that Jacquie Clarke, who represented teachers in the primary sector and who had now been appointed as a Head teacher, be appointed as the NATRE representative on the SACRE, a place which had been vacated by Claire Willis in November 2010.
- **Co-opted member representing Teachers in the Primary Sector:** following advertisement of this position on the schools portal it was recommended that Mrs Julie Sawyer be appointed to fill the place made vacant by Jacquie Clarke.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed that:

- i. Jacquie Clarke be appointed as co-opted member representing NATRE on the SACRE
- ii. Mrs Julie Sawyer be appointed as co-opted member representing teachers in the primary sector on the SACRE.

#### **4. Future Support for SACRE**

Jonathan Hewitt, Head of Quality and Continuous Improvement, Officer to the SACRE, Directorate for Children and Young People, gave a power point presentation on future support that would be available to the SACRE since the post of Lancashire Consultant for RE and Collective Worship ceased to exist on 31 March 2011. The support offered was the result of discussions which had taken place at the Quality and Standards Sub-group on 9 March 2011.

Support would include:

- Clerking support
- Administrative Support in working with schools on RE and the Agreed Syllabus
- Support and advice on strategic developments in teaching and learning and the curriculum.
- Specialist RE support from an RE consultant and from ASTs

Specialist support for the SACRE would include:

- Specialist RE advice and back-up support for 3-6 SACRE meetings a year
- Specialist RE advice and back-up support for the preparation and publication of the SACRE Annual Report

Specialist support for the ASC would include:

- Specialist RE advice and back-up support for ASC meetings
- Specialist RE advice and back-up support for reviewing the Agreed Syllabus, preparing and publishing the reviewed syllabus and disseminating it to schools

Specific tasks to be carried out by the RE consultant would include:

- Attending all SACRE and Quality and Standards Sub- group meetings, support for planning and following up issues arising
- Advising SACRE on issues relating to monitoring and evaluation and formulating the development plan
- Leading on areas related to the Agreed Syllabus, RE and collective worship
- Providing information on local and national RE developments relevant to the work of the SACRE
- Drafting and editing the Annual Report of the SACRE
- Working with the Advanced Skills Teachers to support the teaching and learning of RE in schools
- Supporting the work of the Youth SACRE and organising the Youth SACRE conference
- Advising on the further development of the Agreed Syllabus

- Working with schools requesting a determination in relation to collective worship

Members welcomed the positive response of the Authority for support for the SACRE and ASC and thanked Jonathan Hewitt for the detailed succession planning as presented.

Members commented and raised questions as summarised below:

- **The newly revised syllabus and training** – schools would be charged for training on the syllabus. Gillian Sharples had been gathering feedback on the syllabus and one of the main issues to arise related to training. Another concern was that the syllabus was only available on line and Gillian had therefore collated the core of the syllabus and converted it into a pdf document. Academies would be able to buy into the service but with an additional cost. It was envisaged that training would be carried out by the RE consultant but this was yet to be finalised.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – it was hoped that the link to the Authority through Quality and Continuous Improvement would facilitate monitoring

A copy of the presentation by Jonathan Hewitt on Future Support for SACRE is on record in the minute book.

**RESOLVED:** That future support for the SACRE as presented by Jonathan Hewitt be noted and welcomed by members.

##### **5. Report of the Quality and Standards Sub-group, including consideration and approval of the draft SACRE Development Plan 2011/12/13**

Members noted the minutes of the meetings of the Quality and Standards Sub-group which had taken place on 9 March and 17 May 2011.

The meeting of the 9 March had dealt with the issue of future support for the SACRE and ASC in the form of dialogue between members and Jonathan Hewitt, Head of Quality and Continuous Improvement.

The meeting of 17 May had reviewed the SACRE membership and attendance at meetings which had generally been found to be good and had also included consideration and updating the SACRE Development Plan 2011/13. The columns in the Development Plan: 'Costing' and 'People' had been left blank until personnel and costing implications were known.

Members were then asked to divide into groups to consider four priorities of the Development Plan, excluding Priority 4: Collective Worship, as the organisation RE Today Services would have completed an update of the Collective Worship CD 'Mirrors and Doors' by the end of the Summer Term 2011.

Members were asked to consider whether each area remained appropriate, to suggest any changes and to report back their findings both orally to the meeting and in writing. Groups reported back and commented as follows:

#### Priority 1: Standards and Quality of Provision of RE

- How to collect data from schools, particularly primary schools
- How to find out about subject specialism in schools
- Accountability – implementation of the Agreed Syllabus – it was suggested that this could be carried out by writing to governors through Governor Services and perhaps asking how governing bodies evaluate the teaching of RE
- Recognition that training needs differ between high school/primary school
- Need to raise the profile of RE within schools – being statutory

#### Priority 2: Management of Lancashire SACRE and Partnership with the LA and other Key Stakeholders

- Suggestion that the development of the SACRE should be done by the Authority in tandem with development of the curriculum
- How to evaluate the contribution of RE to school improvement over a certain period – use of network groups as support system
- Aspiration to involve more schools in the Youth Conference
- Involvement of parents was considered important and a web forum could be a useful tool, or even formal meetings. As an example of good practice, members noted that one school already sent questionnaires to parents on RE and then provided them with feedback.

#### Priority 3: The Effectiveness of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus for RE

- Concerns were raised over the time available to support the delivery of the syllabus – RE Consultant, ASTs and Gill Sharples time was limited. If schools had to opt in to buy training how would SACRE know that the syllabus was being delivered – teachers needed support
- The revision of the syllabus was as yet unfinished
- Members were concerned about the situation of RE nationally
- Who would continue to develop exemplification?
- Could the SACRE develop awards for good practice/good work (Liverpool Anglican diocese was currently piloting an RE mark)

#### Priority 5: Contribution of SACRE to the Social and Racial Harmony Agenda

- Members commented that the DIFA web site was an excellent resource for teachers in helping to find people willing to come and talk to children face to face about their organisation/faith. There was, however, a need to raise the DIFA profile, possibly by advertising through the Schools Portal to Heads and teachers and even changing the name to make the content

more obvious. Information about DIFA could also be included in the newsletter.

- SACRE members could email Gillian Sharples with any events happening locally for possible inclusion on the SACRE web site – but monitoring could be an issue

**RESOLVED:** That the Development Plan be updated with regard to members' comments

## **6. Reports from the Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs)**

### **Jo Crabtree, AST Primary**

Jo was continuing to write exemplification for the new syllabus and was writing planning grids from the old scheme of work. 44 grids had been written so far including those by the teachers' group and Lat Blaylock. 18 remained to be written.

Jo had run a network meeting in Burnley and Rossendale on the new syllabus and how to introduce it into schools. Summer term network meetings would consider issues arising from the new syllabus.

Stubbins County Primary School had booked Jo for four half day sessions and she would be introducing the new syllabus to staff in preparation for implementation in September.

At an AST conference, Jo had been assured that funding for ASTs was available for another 12 months. She had also received training on how to support newly qualified teachers and SEN training on teaching children on the autistic spectrum.

As a member of NATRE Jo had developed resources on how to deal with controversial issues and these were almost ready to go on line.

Jo continued to answer email queries and telephone calls on RE – with how to deliver the syllabus remaining the main issue.

### **Laura Heaton, AST Secondary**

Since Christmas Laura had worked to ensure the syllabus was on line by March, attending BLASST meetings led by Helen Harrison every Friday. Laura had written exemplification packs, secondary, for the syllabus which included planning grids, schemes of work and full resource packs and had written the Able, Gifted and Talented section for the web site, including advice on planning, assessing, teaching and resourcing. Laura had also included exemplar resources.

The moodle was now live and teachers at those schools using the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus were able to access it. Laura demonstrated the resources

section on line. There was a media library set up for all to add in clips and share resources.

Laura had led the Spring Central Network Meeting and was also running the East network meeting on 30 June.

Over the next half term Laura would be going into a local special school, currently in special measures, to support the RE Department and had initially requested four half days to do this.

There followed discussion as to whether Academies and other schools outside the county could make use of the Moodle. This required legal clarification due to copyright issues.

**RESOLVED:** That the reports of the AST Primary and the AST Secondary be noted.

#### **7. Request for an assessment for a renewal of a Determination regarding Collective Worship from Whitefield Infant School, Nelson**

Members noted that Helen Harrison, RE Consultant, had visited Whitefield Infant School, Nelson on 28 March 2011 following a request from the Headteacher for a renewal of their determination regarding collective worship. Further to review, it was recommended that there was no need for a further determination and the request was withdrawn.

**RESOLVED:** That the withdrawal of the request for a renewal of the determination regarding collective worship at Whitefield Infant School, Nelson, be noted.

#### **8. RE National Update**

Helen Harrison, RE consultant, updated members on the national RE situation.

John Keast had been elected as Chairman of the Religious Education Council (REC) of which the Pagan Federation had recently become a member. With the demise of the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency, the REC was considering its role since it was now the only voice for RE nationally.

NATRE surveys of secondary schools had shown that the proposals for the E Bacc could result in RE being dramatically reduced in Key Stage 4. Much lobbying had taken place regarding the E Bacc. It was noted that the Chair had not yet received a response to his letter of 27 January 2011 regarding the proposals from the Secretary of State for Schools. Members again expressed concern at the proposals and the consequences they could have for RE.

Ofsted had made Spritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) the main focus for judgements about personal development and no longer made reference to community cohesion or Every Child Matters. RE in academies would be judged against national expectations as set out in the Non Statutory National Framework for RE.

Members were informed that there was the possibility of a government review for RE in the future.

A copy of the presentation by the RE Consultant is on record in the minute book.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the update report on RE nationally be noted.
- ii) That the Chair write to the Secretary of State for Schools asking for a response to his letter of 27 January 2011 regarding the proposals for the E Bacc.

#### **9. Dates and Venue of the Next Schedule of Meetings 2011 - 2012**

The dates of the next meeting schedule of meetings of the SACRE were agreed as below.

|                          |      |                 |
|--------------------------|------|-----------------|
| Monday 26 September 2011 | 10am | County Hall     |
| Monday 28 November 2011  | 10am | County Hall     |
| Monday 6 February 2012   | 10am | To be confirmed |
| Monday 11 June 2012      | 10am | To be confirmed |

Ian Fisher  
Clerk to the SACRE

County Hall  
Preston