

Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 29th September, 2015 at 10.00 am
in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston**

Hinduism	Mrs H Shukla
Free Churches Group	Mr C Wills
Church of England	Ms M Pate Mrs H Sage Mr J Wilson Mrs J O'Rourke
Teacher Associations	Mr P Martin (ASCL) – Chair Ms J Crabtree (NUT)
LCC	County Councillor A Cheetham County Councillor K Ellard County Councillor Y Motala Mr F Williams

Officers in attendance

Mr J Hewitt – Head of School Improvement, Lancashire County Council, Children and Young People Directorate

Mr H Patel – Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council, Office of the Chief Executive

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Jo Busby, Ben McMullen, Steve Jones, Pete Baker, Reverend Phil Clarke, Kelsang Pagpa, Lisa Horobin, David Fann, Alice Robinson, CC Peter Buckley, Joanne Harris, Kath Cooper, Jacquie Clarke, Dr Malcolm Craig, Andrew Brennand and Rabbi Ephraim Guttentag.

The Chair welcomed Moira Pate (Diocese of Blackburn) to the meeting, and the board was informed that Rabbi Ephraim Guttentag would be attending as a representative of St Anne's Hebrew Congregation.

The board also noted that Reverend Phil Clarke and Kate Murry had resigned from their respective roles within SACRE, and the Chair reported of the death of Sue Greenhow in August.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

3. Report of the Quality and Standards Sub-group

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Quality & Standards Sub-group held on 6 July 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

4. Review of Agreed Syllabus for RE

The board considered the minutes of the QSS held in July, where members discussed the review and agreed that no major changes were currently required moving forward – the current Syllabus proved to be continuously successful in Lancashire and beyond.

Key questions from the HMI report were presented to the board, and it was suggested that a small working group of select members meet and review the syllabus to answer these questions.

Resolved:-

1. That the working group consists of the following members:
 - i. Peter Martin (Chair)
 - ii. CC Yousuf Motala (Vice-Chair)
 - iii. Moira Pate (Church of England)
 - iv. Harsha Shukla (Hinduism)
 - v. Jo Crabtree and Joanne Harris (Teacher Associations)
2. That a report on the Agreed Syllabus be presented at the annual general meeting of the SACRE, 23 November 2015

5. Visit to Schools - Autumn 2015

The board was asked if there were any trained members who wished to take part in visiting schools.

Resolved: That the following members be appointed to make visits:-

- Peter Martin (Chair) - The Hollins, Accrington
- CC Anne Cheetham - East Lancashire
- John Wilson - East/North Lancashire
- CC Peter Buckley - Fylde
- CC Yousuf Motala – unspecified

6. Draft Development Plan 2015/16

The board was asked to discuss the priorities of the Development Plan in groups.

Priority 1 – Members were informed of an issue under Objective D, whereby the monitoring of Primary schools' achievements was trickier due to the process of gathering information. Some teachers felt accessing the information on the SACRE website was difficult, and primary teachers currently need more time to carry out their analyses of results.

Priority 2 – The board discussed succession planning and asked if teachers had sources who could share any exemplification material with the SACRE – it was confirmed that this would be possible but not at present, due to capacity. With regards to Objective A, members asked if the password to access the Agreed Syllabus could be provided on Portal for teachers; The Board was made aware that the feedback from teachers on the website was generally positive, with the only issue remaining as the website being difficult to navigate.

The board was asked how feedback on the website would be collected, and an issue on the back of Objective D concerned the benefit and usefulness of visits to schools when schools don't use them to their full potential.

Priority 3 – Issues were raised on the provision of Collective Worship; it was uncertain if training had been issued to teachers, but members felt this could be looked at once the Syllabus has been reviewed. Another issue was the confusion between Collective Worship and RE.

The board was advised that the Diocesan Education Officer would be a useful resource when it came to visits and training for teachers.

Priority 5 – Members discussed that there was no mention of supporting inter-faith groups and other associations, which would prove difficult to develop contribution towards Community Cohesion – members asked if there should be more activity regarding contact with religious groups.

Members debated that teachers were in need of further guidance, but as the national direction changes the problems remain for schools and communities – one such problem, it was said, was the confusion children and teachers both faced when talking about religion. The board agreed that the essence of Community Cohesion should ideally start from the ground up when considered by the governing bodies of schools.

Resolved:-

1. The following actions be carried out per priority of the Development Plan:
 - a. **Priority 1**
 - i. That a reminder be sent out to primary teachers for the collection and collation of results alongside a specified, additional length of time

b. Priority 2

- i. That succession planning be discussed and considered for raising achievement in RE.
- ii. That the latest NASACRE report be considered for adding to the SACRE website for teachers to view.
- iii. That an invitation be provided to Afrasiab Anwar for the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group.

c. Priority 3

- i. That Collective Worship be considered for moving up the list as a priority.

d. Priority 5

- i. That the contribution of RE to Community Cohesion continues to be developed, whilst encouraging inter-faith groups to take part.

7. Annual Summary

Members discussed the DfE audit of SACRE Annual Reports and noted that the board was still required to send a copy of these to the Secretary of State by the end of each calendar year.

The overall feeling of the board was that the Lancashire SACRE didn't appear to have received any complaints when it came to the delivery of RE within the SACRE's syllabus; Members considered whether the SACRE does advise local authorities to the extent as stated in the report, but agreed that 'Standards and Quality of Provision' could easily be provided as Lancashire was considered a "good practice area".

Issues raised by members included the impact brought by the change of EBac, notably the replacement of short courses for full courses and non-compulsory RE within Key Stage 4, as well as the uncertainty of any determination within schools which comply with collective worship, although it was mentioned that Lancashire had received no complaints on collective worship to date. Regarding 'Management of SACRE', it was recognised that there was generally good attendance for each meeting, and on the 'Contribution of SACRE' members raised concern of a structural issue whereby the SACRE could not emphasise their particular strengths.

Resolved:-

1. That, looking at suggestion 3 of the report – 'Standards and Quality of Provision of RE' – with focus on EBac, some information be presented on its detrimental impact
2. That, looking at suggestion 7 of the report – 'Contribution of SACRE to the wider Local Authority agenda' – with focus on the aforementioned structural issue, some information on the SACRE's fortes be presented

8. Feedback on the Youth Voice Conference

This item was deferred to the meeting of the SACRE on 23 November 2015.

9. National Update

The board was informed of an issue, raised by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE), when going through the content on the SACRE website, suggesting that basic information be boosted for quicker viewing.

10. Members' News

Harsha Shukla reported that she had received an invitation to a meeting of the Inter Faith Network (IFN) Faith Forum in the near future.

11. Correspondence

The Chair informed the board of an email received from Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain MBE (Chair of the Accord Coalition for Inclusive Education) with regards to providing a 'local inclusive school' with national recognition.

12. Observers' Contributions

No observer's contributions were presented.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the SACRE will be held at 10:00am on 23 November 2015 in Cabinet Room B – The Diamond Jubilee room at County Hall, Preston – the Agreed Syllabus Conference will take place immediately after the meeting at 12:00pm.

Paul Bond
Clerk to the SACRE

County Hall
Preston