

Lancashire County Council

Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 28 November 2011 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'D' - County Hall, Preston

1. Present

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

Roman Catholic Church	Ms J Busby Mr B McMullen
The Free Churches Group	Mr P Baker Mrs A Tidswell Mr C Wills
Buddhism	Kelsang Pagpa
Teachers Associations	Ms J Crabtree (NUT) Mrs S J Greenhow (NAS/UWT) Mr P Martin (ASCL) (Chair) Mr R Waring (ATL)
Church of England	Miss L Fenton
Lancashire County Council	County Councillor P Malpas County Councillor Y Motala County Councillor A Thornton Mr F Williams
Co-opted Members	Mrs K Cooper (LASGB) Mrs J Sawyer (Teachers in the Primary Sector)
Observers	Mr A Brennand (Pagan Federation) Dr M Craig (Bahá'í Faith)
Religious Education Consultant	Mrs H Harrison
Officers in Attendance	Mr J Hewitt Mr J Mynott Ms K Dale

Four students from Broughton Business and Enterprise College attended the

meeting as representatives of the Youth SACRE, together with their teacher, Joanne Harris, Head of Humanities and RE.

Before the start of the meeting members welcomed new member Mr Pete Baker representing the Assemblies of God on the Free Churches Group within the group entitled 'Christian and other Religious Groups appropriately reflecting the Principal Traditions in the Area' and new member Mr Rob Waring representing the Association of Teachers and Lecturers on the Teacher Associations Group on the SACRE.

2. Nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair

RESOLVED: That:

i) Mr Peter Martin be appointed Chairman of the SACRE for the ensuing year.

ii) Mr Francis Williams be appointed Vice-Chairman of the SACRE for the ensuing year.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Mr N Anwar, Rabbi D Braunold, Imam O Data, CC K Ellard, Mr D Fann, Ms L Heaton, Mr S Jogi, Mrs J O'Rourke, Mrs K Parekh, Mr C Pountain, Mrs H Shukla, Mrs Y Taylor.

4. Minutes and matters arising

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Lancashire SACRE held on 26 September 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

5. Constitution of the SACRE - Guidance on Membership

Members considered and discussed in detail a draft protocol regarding requests for membership of the SACRE by groups not already represented. The draft protocol was as set out below:

Members of SACRE would review membership on a regular basis.

In dealing with approaches from faith or belief groups not currently represented on SACRE, the following process would apply:

1. The faith or belief group would be invited to the next convenient SACRE meeting to present to the committee.

2. Following that presentation, SACRE would determine whether an invitation should be extended to a representative of that group to join SACRE. In making its decision, SACRE would consider the following criteria:

- Would the addition of the group's representative benefit the teaching of RE in Lancashire schools?
- Did the group represent a significant faith or belief group in Lancashire?
- Had the group demonstrated a clear commitment to the principles, aims and objectives of SACRE?

3. The invitation would be to join on the basis of Observer status. SACRE may review this status at any time.

4. Observer places on SACRE were limited to a maximum of 5 at any time.

5. If an Observer failed to attend three or more meetings in a rolling 12 month period, Observer status would be withdrawn from that group.

6. If Observer status was declined or withdrawn, SACRE would explain the reasons for the decision to the group. An application to join from the same group could not be considered for at least 12 months.

RESOLVED: That the protocol for dealing with applications for membership of the SACRE by groups not already represented be approved.

6. Report of the Quality and Standards Sub-group

Members noted the minutes of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group which had taken place on 8 November 2011.

7. Update on the Implementation of the SACRE Development Plan 2011 - 2013.

The Quality and Standards Sub-group had considered the Development Plan in detail at its meeting on 8 November 2011 and updated it by stating whether each action was on track or not. It was envisaged that this exception report model would be the mechanism used for reporting on the implementation of the Development Plan to the SACRE in the future.

It was reported that with regard to 'Priority 2: Management of Lancashire SACRE and Partnership with the LA and other Key Stakeholders', the Youth SACRE had agreed to look at developing links with parents more broadly than just via the web site.

Members discussed 'Priority 5: Contribution of SACRE to the Social and Racial Harmony Agenda' in detail, commenting as summarised below:

- Whether the renamed and re-launched DIFA website would be password protected. DIFA (Diversity, Inclusion, Faith and Action) had originally been envisaged as a database of people/organisations able to provide faith links with schools or receive school visits. DIFA had now been made part of the support materials for the 2011 RE Syllabus to maximise the number of hits it received and the aim was to make it part of the core of the syllabus.
- That there was a need for a mechanism which would facilitate visits by SACRE members to schools to observe and take part in Collective Worship. Such visits would enable the SACRE to carry out its monitoring role, raise the profile of RE and provide the opportunity to share good practice. It was suggested that the Quality and Standards Sub-group look into setting up a system for dealing with requests from schools and this could be linked into the Collective Worship CD, Mirrors and Doors.

RESOLVED: That the Quality and Standards Sub-group be asked to look into setting up a system for dealing with visits to schools by SACRE members to observe and take part in Collective Worship.

8. SACRE Annual Report 2010 - 2011

Jonathan Hewitt, Officer to the SACRE, gave a power point presentation on the analysis of attainment in Lancashire at the end of Key Stage 4 and at Key Stage 5 which would be included in the Annual Report. The data was as yet provisional, to be confirmed in January 2012.

A query was raised as to the number of students progressing from A Level to RE related courses in Higher Education. This data is not collected by Lancashire but officers agreed to look into any other sources of this information.

A copy of the presentation is available in the minute book.

The final draft of the Annual Report had been available on the web site for members ' consideration and it was proposed that this now be approved by the SACRE.

RESOLVED: That the SACRE Annual Report 2010 – 2011 be approved.

9. Getting to Know You

County Councillor Peter Malpas gave a talk about himself and how he felt his role as a representative of Lancashire County Council fitted with the SACRE.

Councillor Malpas was from a Lancashire family but had moved to Shropshire as a child before returning to the North West as an adult to work in the retail sector

and in particular electrical goods. Upon retirement he had moved into politics becoming a Borough Councillor in Chorley and a County Councillor representing Chorley West.

Councillor Malpas felt that he represented the non-faith community on the SACRE.

RESOLVED: That County Councillor Peter Malpas be thanked for his interesting presentation.

10. Youth SACRE/Youth Voice

It was noted that the Youth SACRE had now moved into its third phase and that the first meeting of eleven schools had taken place on 11 November 2011 at the Vajravahhi Buddhist Centre, Preston. Members were asked to let Helen Harrison have ideas for the theme of this year's Youth Conference and also to let her know if they were able to offer a suitable venue for the next Youth SACRE meeting which was due to take place in mid January 2012.

Four representatives of the Youth SACRE from Year 9 Broughton Business and Enterprise College gave a presentation, which incorporated a video with carefully chosen music, on the importance of RE and expressing delight that the SACRE was willing to listen to the views of teenagers and at the opportunity to work as a partner to the SACRE.

Members expressed their appreciation of the work being carried out by the Youth SACRE and thanked the Youth SACRE representatives for making such a carefully considered presentation.

RESOLVED: That members of the Youth SACRE be thanked for the work they carry out in partnership with the SACRE and for making such an interesting presentation.

11. Activity based on the Updated Mirrors and Doors CD

Due to time constraints, this item was deferred until the next meeting.

12. Feedback on the Agreed Syllabus

Jo Crabtree presented the feedback received from schools on the newly revised Agreed Syllabus for RE. The generally positive response to the Syllabus was highlighted. It was reported that guidance was to be produced to help subject leaders convey how to use the syllabus to other teachers and to help them understand the field of enquiry.

Key issues had been identified as follows:

- Complication of the web site – work on simplification was needed to reduce the number of 'clicks' required to access different information
- Gaining access – the core of the syllabus as a pdf version was now easier for teachers to locate on the web site.
- Requests for access:
 - i) It was recommended that the pdf document could be provided free of charge to students, for example, who would be using it as part of their studies
 - ii) It was recommended that those requesting access to the larger web site be charged as the revised syllabus provided a service by being constantly updated. It was felt that there was now a need for the SACRE to consider marketing, giving consideration to access and deciding on a fee structure. A sample of the syllabus could be put on the web site with purchasers being provided with a password which could be updated periodically.

It was noted that about 20 primary schools had given feedback on the syllabus in the Burnley and Rossendale area.

As exemplification materials were added, the syllabus would evolve and feedback from teachers was necessary to ensure that needs were met.

Members noted that Helen Harrison had been providing training on the syllabus which had so far been delivered to around 100 schools.

13. Information to Secondary Schools on Curriculum Changes

It was reported that the Chairman had drafted a letter to secondary school head teachers clarifying the position of RE and the curriculum with regard to the English Baccalaureate. It was suggested that this letter ought to be shared first with the Lancashire Association of Secondary School Headteachers.

The comment was made that the letter ought also to be copied to the Chairs of school governing bodies and be made available on line in a password protected area.

RESOLVED: That the Chairman send the letter clarifying the position of RE and the curriculum, with regard to the English Baccalaureate, to Lancashire secondary head teachers.

14. Members News

- The chairman urged members to complete the petition on line regarding the proposals for the English Baccalaureate which could be found at the following address: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/129>
- It was reported that there had been a showcase of primary school work in Burnley for Interfaith Week, which had taken place 20 – 27 November 2011.

15. Correspondence

- A letter had been received from Lancaster Quaker Meeting requesting Observer status on the SACRE. Following discussion and with regard to the protocol for requests for membership from faith groups not already represented on the SACRE, it was suggested that they be invited to the next meeting, scheduled for 6 February 2012, to make a presentation, in support of their application.
- Email correspondence had been received from the Chaplain of Preston College requesting membership of the SACRE. Following discussion, it was suggested that officers respond requesting further information as it was not clear, at this point, where a college chaplain would fit within the groups making up the SACRE.

RESOLVED: That a representative of Lancaster Quaker Meeting be invited to make a presentation in support of their application for Observer status on the SACRE, at the next meeting scheduled for 6 February 2012.

16. Any Other Business

It was reported that Farmington Institute, Oxford, was making bequests to fund RE teachers to carry out research into RE for a term. Further information was available on their web site at the following address:

http://www.farmington.ac.uk/fellowships_and_awards/fellowships.html

17. Date and Venue of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Lancashire SACRE was noted as Monday 6 February 2012, to take place at 10am at the Vajravarahi Buddhist Centre, 38 West Cliff, Preston, PR1 8HU.

County Hall, Preston
November 2011