

Lancashire SACRE - Quality and Standards Sub-group

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 17 July 2012 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'D' - County Hall, Preston

1. Present

Present

Mr P Martin
Mr A Brennand
Mrs K Cooper
CC P Malpas
Mr H Mulla
Mrs H Sage
Mrs E Saunderson
Mr R Waring
Mr F Williams

Representing

ASCL (Chair)
Pagan (Observer)
LASGB
Lancashire County Council
Islam
Church of England
Society of Friends (Observer)
ATL
Lancashire County Council

Officers in Attendance

Jonathan Hewitt
Josh Mynott

Officer to the SACRE, CYP
Democratic Services

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Ms J Clarke, Dr M Craig, CC K Ellard, Mr D Fann, Miss L Fenton, Ms C Mercier, CC Y Motala, Mrs J O'Rourke, Kelsang Pagpa, Mr C Pountain, Mrs J Sawyer, and CC A Thornton.

Apologies were also received from Helen Harrison, RE Consultant.

3. Minutes and matters arising

It was noted that Mrs Helen Sage had presented her apologies for the meeting on 17 May 2012 but that this had not been shown in the minutes.

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2012, subject to the amendment being made, be agreed as a true record.

4. Review of the Lancashire SACRE Development Plan 2011 - 2013

Members were invited to discuss the Development Plan and the comments made by SACRE members at the meeting on 18 June. A number of comments were made in relation to the five Priorities, summarised as follows:

Priority 1: Standards and Quality of Provision of RE

- It was recognised that the issue of gathering data on RE was complex. Quantitative data was available on a Lancashire-wide basis, but qualitative data was largely unobtainable.
- It was felt that school governors played a key role in monitoring and improving the quality of RE in individual schools
- An opportunity would arise in the new term to raise the issue with schools due to the implementation of the new syllabus
- SACRE could receive exception reports from Inspections, where RE had been particularly highlighted as an issue
- Information on SACRE could feature in training for governors and senior leaders in schools.
- The arrangements for self-sustaining networks of teachers following the ending of the AST posts were explained.
- It was confirmed that SACRE has no influence on Academies, free schools or independent faith schools
- The work of Youth SACRE was recognised for its excellent work in engaging with young people.
- In terms of dealing with individual schools which may not be performing well in RE, it was up to those schools to self-identify and approach SACRE, based on a universal offer from SACRE to all schools.

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

- Information on website hits was currently being compiled
- It was up to schools whether they would wish to link to SACRE on their websites to raise the profile of SACRE, especially with parents. However, the local authority was giving advice to schools on website content to help schools meet Ofsted expectations, and the option of linking to SACRE is raised.
- The possibility of SACRE providing a presentation or information at school parents' evenings was discussed. It was recognised that this would need to be driven by the schools, and that it would need to be personalised to the individual school. It was agreed that some initial approaches could be made to some of the schools known for their excellent RE to invite them to consider this option.
- In terms of schools inviting parents in to RE lessons, this was a matter for individual schools
- There was perhaps an opportunity to engage with Headteachers through the RE Quality Mark. It was noted that the Lancashire Association of

Secondary School Heads (LASSH) included Headteachers from schools that were not within the remit of SACRE.

Priority 3: The Effectiveness of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus

- The importance of the role of Governors was again emphasised
- It was noted that questionnaires to schools are not particularly effective, largely owing to the large number that schools can receive and the limited time they have to complete them. It was agreed that the option would be explored, but it was recognised that the likely response from schools was that it would not be prioritised.
- Recognising good practice could be achieved through existing mechanisms – notably via the Learning Excellence Awards.

Priority 4: Collective Worship

- Training offered on "Mirrors and Doors" has not been particularly well taken up, but it is not clear what the reasons for this are (although there has generally been a decline in the take up of training across all areas)
- It was important to recognise that, just because schools may not be using Mirrors and Doors, that this did not mean that Collective Worship (CW) was not excellent in many schools.
- A training session on CW for SACRE members would be delivered at the next full SACRE meeting.

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

- Feedback from schools suggested that they would like help in identifying individuals willing to come to schools to talk about different faith perspectives.
- Whilst this could be facilitated through the SACRE website, caution would need to be exercised to make it clear that SACRE or the Local Authority offered no endorsement or support for any individual. The service would need to be a signpost, with a disclaimer.
- It was suggested that any website could allow comments to be posted by schools to recommend particular speakers.
- On attendance at SACRE, it was highlighted that a full membership review took place every four years and that it was open to the committee to make changes to membership or the rules and guidance of members if it felt it appropriate to do so.

Resolved: That the comments made feed into the plan to be presented to SACRE in September.

5. Protocol for school visits by SACRE members to observe Collective Worship

Members considered the draft protocol for school visits to observe Collective Worship (CW) by SACRE members. It was emphasised that the intention was not to monitor or observe, but for members to share in a school's CW.

Whilst it was clear that it would be schools who would initiate invites to SACRE members to share their CW, it was recognised that schools would need to be made aware of the offer, and this would be communicated through existing routes and networks.

It was also suggested that a record of schools visited would need to be maintained, and that this could be achieved simply by SACRE member copying correspondence to the administrative officers supporting SACRE.

It was finally noted that training on CW for SACRE members was due to appear on the next SACRE agenda.

Resolved: That the Protocol for School visits by SACRE members to observe Collective Worship, as presented, be considered by SACRE

6. RE Quality Mark

This item was deferred to a future meeting, due to Helen Harrison's absence.

7. SACRE membership

Members considered the vacancy that has arisen for a Co-opted member of SACRE to represent the Secondary Sector. It was reported that a potential group of candidates had been identified, and that an approach would be made to the teachers involved in the Youth SACRE with a view to an appointment being made at the next meeting of SACRE in September.

8. Future agenda items

It was noted that the Triennial Ofsted subject report into RE was expected to be published shortly, and that it would be appropriate to bring this to a future meeting of SACRE.

9. Venues for SACRE meetings

Members considered that the last full SACRE meeting held at the Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre had been a success, and suggestions were invited for future venues away from County Hall.

In addition to a return to the Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, members also suggested the Ashton Methodist Church and the Meeting House in Lancaster as possible venues, noting that the relevant approvals would have to be sought.

10. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the date of the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group was Thursday 8 November 2012, to take place at 10am at County Hall, Preston.

Roy Jones
Clerk to the SACRE

County Hall
Preston

