

Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

**Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held on Monday, 4th July, 2022 at 10.00 am
via Zoom**

Attendees

Teachers Associations

The Chair, Mr Peter Martin (ASCL)
Julie Gordon (ATL)

Lancashire County Council

County Councillor Terry Aldridge
County Councillor Anne Cheetham
County Councillor Stewart Jones
County Councillor Yousuf Motala
Francis Williams

Church of England

Mr John Wilson
Mrs Joan O'Rourke

Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education

Mrs Lisa Fenton

Hinduism

Mrs Harsha Shukla

Islam

Mufti Khalid Ibrahim

Judaism

Robert Ash

Methodist

Professor Alan Gillies

Roman Catholic Church

Mr Ben McMullen

University of Cumbria

Rebekah Ackroyd

Co-optee Non-Voting

LASGB

Mrs Kathleen Cooper

Community Representatives

Burnley Building Bridges

Sajda Majeed MBE

Observers

Humanists

Keith Pennington

Officers

Mrs Alison Lloyd – School Advisor, Lancashire County Council

Dave Gorman – Senior Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council
Garth Harbison – Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair, Peter Martin, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Helen Sage and Kelsang Pagba.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 April 2022

The minutes of the last meeting held on 25 April 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3. RE Council of England and Wales Draft Handbook

The Chair welcomed Ben Wood, Head of RE at Haslingden High School, to the meeting.

The publication of the handbook came on the back of the Commission on RE which was the paper produced in 2018. The draft handbook had been worked on by a lot of RE professionals. Members were informed that Ben Wood was a member of the expert advisory group for the handbook.

When the Commission on RE published its national plan for RE in 2018 it identified three areas of importance:

- Proper funding for teacher training.
- Proper timetable time for indepth study of RE.
- A national entitlement of what should be taught up to the age of 16.

The draft handbook was published at the beginning of May 2022 and had been in development for around 18 months. It contained some of the history, the background and the rationale for the ideas contained on the Commission on RE.

The key section of the document was the Revised National Statement of Entitlement. The rest of the handbook provided details on guidance.

One of the key ideas behind what the Commission on RE was proposing was the concept of Worldview which described how a person encountered, interpreted, understood and engaged with the world.

The Revised National Statement of Entitlement (NSE) looked at three areas:

- Subject content.
- Subject engagement.
- Subject position – everybody had a Worldview.

The NSE presented a realm of religion and worldviews to explore. It explained that with any exploration you had to choose the right tools for the job and a suitable route to engage with the subject. It also talked about the personal perspective that everybody brought to the subject.

The work that the Religious Education Council (REC) had been doing was funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation and the project was running from 2021 – 2024.

Phase 1 of the project was the development of the draft handbook in May 2022. Phases 2 and 3 were to do with framework development. Three teams were working with schools to develop sample frameworks that applied the handbook and the NSE.

Lancashire SACRE was informed that the revised handbook would be published in the spring or summer of 2024.

Comments and questions were as follows:

- Members were happy that the whole of the UK was engaged in the process. It made sense to have a joint view.
- The question of whether children would be asked for their views was raised. The team that Ben worked with had two key underlying principles. There was more study of people from the local community and information from this was being used. Engagement with young people was vital and the subject must have relevance to them.
- There was a query about whether there was any conflict between the worldviews approach and Lancashire SACRE's emphasis on shared human experience. There was no conflict foreseen. Everyone had their own perspectives and backgrounds.
- The Ofsted Inspection Framework required schools to implement a curriculum that was well sequenced and clearly structured so that knowledge was built on cumulatively towards clear end points. There was a query about whether a curriculum that incorporated a worldview approach would meet this tight requirement. RE had the ability to be done in different ways to reflect local contexts and different ways of approaching the subject.
- The Expert Advisory Group was looking at other ways of assessing RE. There had to be a closer link with the content of the subject of RE and the way it was being studied.
- Legislation was a complex area. If there was full academisation by the end of the decade SACREs would not have a definite role regarding setting the syllabus. There had to be work done around what the role of SACREs might be in the future.

Ben Wood was thanked for attending the meeting and for his informative presentation.

4. SACRE Self-Evaluation Toolkit

Alison Lloyd shared the new NASACRE self- evaluation Tool which would help Lancashire SACRE evaluate their effectiveness and inform their plans for improvement.

Regarding the SACRE Self-Assessment Tool, it was decided at the last QSS meeting to look at one section at a time at various times throughout the year.

In terms of the current Lancashire SACRE Development Plan, Alison had highlighted the things which had been done and where the plan was currently up to. SACRE members were encouraged by the amount of green areas in the Development Plan which showed the good progress being made so far.

The Lancashire SACRE Development Plan was a two-year plan. However, after the Lancashire SACRE's evaluation in September and following analysis of the school's survey, the plan might need to be tweaked a little because it did change quite rapidly. SACRE members accepted the development plan for further work in September.

Comments and questions raised were as follows:

- Regarding 'Key Area 1g – Relations with the Academies' in the SACRE Self-Assessment Tool, it was felt that this was an important area for development.
- There was opportunity to seek an academy co-optee representative to sit on the Lancashire SACRE.
- In terms of Objective 1.3 in the Lancashire SACRE Development Plan, there was a query about the consultation work on exemplifications for KS1 and KS3 which reflected any non-religious traditions. It was felt that this work would be overtaken by the exemplar curriculum units being produced within phase 2 of the draft REC handbook. Statistics on this would be considered after the census in October 2022. Practising teachers were used as RE consultants in Lancashire. As consultants they worked with other schools.

5. Officer Report to SACRE and RE Newsletter

The report pointed out that all schools had been asked to complete the annual self-evaluation survey. The final date for submission was 30 September. Findings could be shared with the SACRE at the QSS meeting on 2 November 2022.

On 25 May and 8 June, training was provided for primary and secondary schools on effective assessment in RE. New resources were shared to help schools in finalising their end of key stage assessment judgments. These were uploaded to the RE website. 70+ primary schools attended the training, together with 20 secondary schools.

The RE website had been completely revamped and the new website would be launched in September 2022. This would be an agenda item for the September meeting of the Lancashire SACRE.

On Monday 3 October 2022 there would be a workshop on 'Using the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus in Special Schools'.

There would be free Network Meetings in the autumn term. The focus would be on ways to monitor and moderate standards of religious literacy. There would be an opportunity to consider RE updates, share good practice and discuss challenges and dilemmas with consultants and colleagues from other schools.

The summer term RE Newsletter had been circulated to members.

6. Feedback from NASACRE Conference

The NASACRE Conference was held in May 2022. The conference was held virtually and Peter Martin and Kathleen Cooper attended. It was a full day conference and around 150 delegates attended.

There were 3 major presentations during the conference. The first one was about the Draft Handbook from the RE Council.

The second presentation was presented by HMI, Dr Richard Kueh, on the presentation of scholarly RE, making sure RE was thorough, discreet and serious. The quality of RE was found in a detailed scholarly approach.

At lunchtime the Westhill NASACRE awards were announced. These were awards for projects in developing RE.

In the afternoon Dr David Hampshire, Assistant Director at the Inter Faith Network for the UK, gave a presentation on the analysis of sample SACRE Annual Reports. Resources were very variable from local authority to local authority. Lancashire County Council had always been very supportive of its SACRE in terms of resources.

The conference concluded with a business meeting and then online workshops were set up for the following weeks after the conference.

7. Observers' Contributions

Keith Pennington felt that the Draft Handbook showed a trend towards greater inclusiveness of people of all different beliefs. He was reluctant that the census would be the only source of data.

Robert Ash stated it was important that SACRE reached beyond the normal limits of what might be considered religions to embrace other philosophies and world views. Having a religion might not prioritise beliefs but might prioritise ways of life and conduct as well as society and community.

8. Members' News

County Councillor Terry Aldridge was welcomed as a new member of the SACRE representing Lancashire County Council and replacing County Councillor Nweeda Khan.

Sajda Majeed informed the Lancashire SACRE that Building Bridges Burnley had just celebrated its 20th anniversary. They had also resumed their first faith trail since the pandemic.

9. Correspondence

Details of the 'So You've Joined Your Local SACRE' online course had been circulated to members.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Lancashire SACRE would be held at 10:00am on Monday 26 September 2022.

Paul Bond
Clerk to the SACRE

County Hall
Preston