

Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 3rd March, 2014 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'D' - The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston

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

Roman Catholic Church	Ms J Busby
The Free Churches Group	Mr C Wills
	Mrs A Tidswell
	Rev P Clarke
Buddhism	Kelsang Pagpa
Islam	Ms I Hussain
	Mr I Nakhuda
Hinduism	Ms V Chauhan
	Mrs H Shukla
Teachers Associations	Ms J Crabtree (NUT)
	Ms S Greenhow (NASUWT)
	Mr P Martin (ASCL) Chair
	Mr D Fann (NAHT)
	Mr L Ridings (ATL)
Church of England	Mrs J O'Rourke
	Mr J Wilson
	Miss I Fenton
Lancashire County Council	CC A Cheetham
	CC Ellard
	CC Y Motala
	Mr F Williams
Co-opted Members	Mrs K Cooper
Observers	Mrs J Sabour
	Ms J Jarvis
	Mr P Brennand
RE Consultant	Mrs H Harrison
Officers in Attendance	Mr J Hewitt
	Mr J Mynott
	Mrs K Dale

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Mr N Anwar, Mr P Baker, County Councillor P Buckley, Mr F Farrell, Mr S Jogi, Mr S Jones, Mr B McMullen, Mrs K Murry, and Mrs H Sage.

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Lancashire SACRE held on 25 November 2013, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

3. SACRE Membership

Members noted the recent appointment to the SACRE of the following members, by the Interim Executive Director for Children and Young People:

- Mr Steve Jones, representing the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford,
- Rev Philip Clarke, representing the Methodist Church,
- Mrs Harsha Shukla, representing the Hindu Faith, Hindu Society Lancaster and Morecambe
- Ms Vijayanti Chauhan, representing the Hindu Faith – Gujarat Hindu Society, Preston
- Mr John Wilson, representing the Church of England, Diocese of Bradford and Ripon & Leeds
- Rabbi Katanka, representing the Jewish Faith

All to serve on the SACRE until July 2017.

4. Monitoring RE in Lancashire

It was reported that the recent Ofsted report into RE (RE: Realising the potential) found that the changes in the accountability framework for provision and achievement had made it difficult for SACREs to monitor the quality of, and achievement in RE. Whilst it had been noted that Lancashire SACRE and its support for RE did not reflect some of the major structural concerns about the work of SACREs nationally which were outlined in the Ofsted report, the report served as a reminder that SACRE has a duty to monitor the quality of provision and achievement in RE in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Lancashire.

In order to enable the SACRE to carry out its monitoring and evaluation role in the best possibly way, members considered the suggestions set out in the report under the headings:

Achievement; Teaching and curriculum; Leadership; Attitudes to learning RE;

The following comments were made:

- Through the Lancashire Youth Voice there already existed an excellent channel for feedback on the quality of RE
- The gathering of information should not be intrusive and existing information should be used wherever possible
- Monitoring by SACRE was initially about raising questions rather than giving answers
- Head teachers could be a vital link via Head teacher associations, as could groupings of Lancashire teachers at network meetings or at training courses
- All information gathered should be collated and presented to SACRE in a coordinated way

- SACRE could monitor by gathering information from a small number of schools
- As the Pupil Attitude Questionnaire had been running for several years, this provided a baseline for monitoring, however, there was no national comparator available
- The means of gathering information from schools needed careful consideration – this would be discussed by the Quality and Standards Sub-group at its next meeting
- Once the information had been gathered the aim was to feed headlines into the SACRE Annual Report

Resolved: That the Quality and Standards Sub-group be asked to consider monitoring RE at its next meeting.

5. Support for RE

The Officer to the SACRE presented a report which set out a suggested outline programme of future support for RE, (following the stepping back of the RE Consultant at the end of March 2014), drawn up following a meeting with teacher members of SACRE on 26 November 2013. Future expert support, through a number of talented Lancashire teachers, was considered vital especially in anticipation of the revision of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus (LAS) in 2015. A further meeting with the teacher members of SACRE was planned to firm up the programme of future support.

It was noted that the LAS was a valuable Lancashire resource and was available for purchase by other Authorities. Any money raised in this way would be fed back in to support Lancashire schools. Members welcomed the news that the LAS had been purchased recently by Warrington Borough Council.

Currently the LAS was not marketed to other Authorities but It was envisaged that this may happen in the future. However, in order to protect this resource, there was a need to develop a system which provided individualised passwords for schools as to date, the syllabus was only password protected generically.

The comment was made that the challenge for the SACRE was in finding out which schools needed more support and that raising the SACRE's profile was one way of encouraging the engagement of schools. It was noted that SACRE members were welcome to attend teacher network meetings.

The RE Consultant had recently led on a piece of work with faith leaders in the form of a seminar which provided an insight into the SACRE and the workings of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus and this had helped to raise the profile.

Teacher members of the SACRE raised concerns about the Government's proposal to remove the current system of 'levels' used to report children's attainment and progress. With the introduction on the new curriculum in 2014 schools would be able to introduce their own approaches to assessment with Ofsted inspections being informed by whatever pupil tracking data schools chose to keep. This, it was felt, could lead to a lack of standardisation. Development work on assessment therefore was essential and it was hoped that the authority

together with secondary school teachers could draw up a common approach. Teacher member of SACRE, Joanne Harris, had agreed to lead on this area of work.

The comment was made that in order for teachers to feel secure, the support available to them needed to be defined.

6. Review of the SACRE Development Plan 2013 - 2015

Members noted that Priority 1: To fulfil SACRE's statutory role by providing effective leadership of RE and Collective Worship, Priority 2: To raise achievement in RE and Priority 4: To ensure that the provision of RE is informed by the views of stakeholders were all on track but that Priority 3: To improve the provision of Collective Worship, was not on track. Members would be asked to discuss this issue under the next item on the agenda.

7. Collective Worship

Members noted that the valuable resource and guidance on Collective Worship (CW) 'Mirrors and Doors' was accessible, via password, from the RE and Lancashire SACRE web site. Whilst Collective Worship was a statutory requirement, the guidance was non-statutory and Collective Worship was part of the Head teacher's responsibility. Collective Worship was statutory on a daily basis but not necessarily with the whole school coming together daily.

Members were asked to divide into small groups to consider the following:

- How to find out what was happening (including good practice) with Collective Worship in schools
- What the role of the SACRE was regarding Collective Worship

Members provided feedback on these questions as follows:

How to find out what was happening with Collective Worship in schools:

- Schools might view visits by SACRE members to find out about Collective Worship as 'inspections' and therefore schools would need to 'volunteer' to share their Collective Worship with SACRE.
- Investigation was acknowledged as difficult but could be carried out:
 - by asking teachers about it at network meetings and courses
 - through the Lancashire Schools Forum
 - through the Lancashire Association of Secondary School Head teachers' forum
 - through the Lancashire Governors network; SACRE members who were also school governors could ask about CW at their school
 - Emailing schools to raise the profile of Collective Worship and asking questions such as 'are you fulfilling your statutory requirements regarding Collective Worship'
- That schools could be invited to discuss CW on a one to one basis or in groups

What the role of the SACRE was regarding Collective Worship

- The SACRE could provide examples of good practice and share resources via the Schools' Portal
- SACRE members could visit schools to take part in Collective Worship, in accordance with the existing protocol drawn up for doing so
- SACRE could promote the difference between Assemblies and Collective Worship and also the value of the provision of a moment for spiritual reflection
- SACRE could raise school governors' awareness of the value of CW by its contribution to the ethos of the whole school

The Officer to the SACRE undertook to draw members' comments together and present a report on Collective Worship to the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group. It was also suggested that SACRE members interested in visiting schools to take part in Collective Worship be invited to attend a training session prior to making any visits. Training could take place in an afternoon following a meeting of the full SACRE in the morning with light refreshments being provided.

Resolved:

1. That a report drawing together members' comments on Collective Worship be presented for discussion at the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group.
2. A training session be arranged for those SACRE members interested in visiting schools to take part in and observe Collective Worship.

8. Report of the Quality and Standards Sub-group

Members noted the minutes of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group held on 20 January 2014.

9. National Update

The Lancashire RE Consultant demonstrated the Religious Education Council (REC) web site found at the following address: <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/>. The REC is a national umbrella organisation for many different groups connected to RE and its web site provides information on the state of RE nationally.

The RE consultant also reported that she had made a presentation to the All Party Parliamentary Group (whose focus was on the safeguarding of the provision of RE in schools) on what Lancashire SACRE did to contribute to cohesive communities.

10. Lancashire Youth Voice Update

It was reported by the Lancashire RE Consultant that three of the Youth Voice schools, Fearn's Sports College, Broughton High School and the Hollins

Technology College were leading on the Youth Conference entitled 'working together to make RE the best it can be'. Thirteen schools and three special schools would be attending the conference which would be held at the Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre.

At the conference students would be asked to identify questions that they would like answering by the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus for RE, to understand the fields of enquiry and to produce planning grids.

11. Observers' Contributions

Joy Sabour, Bahai Observer, commented that she was pleased to attend the SACRE again following her sabbatical in India.

12. Members' News

Harsha Shukla informed members that they were welcome to attend the event celebrating Holi and the Festival of Culture (arranged in partnership with Faith in Lancaster, Lancashire Constabulary, the University of Cumbria and Lancaster University), which was taking place on 8 March 2014 at the University of Cumbria in Lancaster. The event was free of charge but a raffle would be held in support of the mammary unit at Lancaster Teaching Hospital.

13. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Lancashire SACRE was noted as Monday 16 June 2014 to take place at 10am in Cabinet Room D, County Hall, Preston.

Resolved: Members agreed the following dates for the next schedule of meetings of the full SACRE:

Monday 29 September 2014
Monday 24 November 2014 (AGM)
Monday 16 March 2015
Monday 15 June 2015

Roy Jones
Clerk to the SACRE

County Hall
Preston