

Lancashire County Council

Lancashire SACRE - Quality and Standards Sub-group

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 20th October, 2014 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were given by Steve Jones, Reverend Phil Clarke, Nasrullah Anwar, Zakarya Anwar, Helen Sage, John Wilson, Joanne Harris, Jacquie Clarke, Carrie Mercier, Dr Malcom Craig and Francis Williams

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Noted

3. Annual Report of SACRE

The draft Annual report was presented to the meeting. It was reported that the report followed the same format as in recent years, being intended as a reasonably brief overview of the work of the SCARE. It was recognised that some sections were still to be completed, where further information was awaited.

Attention was drawn to the section "Standards and Quality of Provision", where it was reported that issues with the reporting of KS4 results nationally mean that this was not yet available. Non-statutory data collected by the County Council on a voluntary basis from schools indicated that there had been improvements in attainment at KS1, KS2 and KS3.

In relation to future assessments, it was reported that Joanne Harris would be leading discussions on the future arrangements in Lancashire for the assessment of progress and attainment in RE following the government's decision to remove the current assessment levels in the national curriculum.

In the section on the Youth Voice, it was advised that quotes from young people involved would be added. It was also confirmed that an acknowledgement of the SACRE's contribution to the APPG report on community cohesion would be included.

Resolved: That the draft SACRE Annual Report be approved for consideration by the full SACRE

4. Review of the 2014/15 development plan

The QSS considered the current Development Plan as agreed by the full SACRE.

It was reported that progress was on track on all priorities. However, it was felt there was a need to give further, more detailed, consideration to the actions and activities under Priority 5 – "To develop the contribution of RE to Community Cohesion" in the light of the "Trojan Horse" issues, which had increased the attention on community cohesion issues, the need for a "broad and balanced" curriculum and the promotion of British values. It was clear that significant attention was being directed at RE in relation to this, although it was clear that this wasn't simply an RE or a Faith issue. It was recognised, therefore, that this would be an area requiring further thought in the development plan, especially in the area of supporting teachers to enable them to become confident in discussing and addressing difficult issues.

It was reported that the Chair of SACRE would be attending a national conference on the "Trojan Horse" issue in November, and would report back.

Resolved: That the Development Plan update be noted, and that further consideration be given to actions under Priority 5

5. Visits to schools

Following the training session held following the last full SACRE meeting, a process chart had been created showing the procedure to be followed for visits to schools by SACRE members acting on behalf of the SACRE. It was confirmed that it had been agreed that only those SACRE members who had attended the training would be able to undertake such visits. A draft letter for SACRE members to send to schools in advance of visits was also circulated

It was agreed that a further training session, lasting approximately 1 hour, could be offered following the next QSS meeting on 9th February 2015.

6. Areas to raise at the next meeting of the RE Hub

The QSS were invited to suggest topics for discussion at the next meeting of the RE Hub. It was felt that a discussion on dealing with difficult issues around community cohesion and increasing the confidence of teachers to do this would be useful. It was also suggested that the RE Hub could, in acting as a voice for several local authorities, act as a more powerful voice in speaking to politicians and others about the value of RE. Training for teachers was also a key area for discussion at the next Hub meeting.

7. National Update including Ofsted consultation

A number of issues were identified:

The new Ofsted inspection framework is currently out for consultation. It was noted that the consultation proposes a focus on the curriculum itself, and also on the issue of what is meant by "British Values". The consultation also proposes a much lighter touch inspection for "good" or "outstanding" schools. The new inspection framework will also consider "pupil development" indicating a possible move back towards an emphasis on the all-round development of young people.

It was agreed that the consultation would be shared with SACRE to consider a response.

The QSS also noted that bursaries had been reinstated for trainee RE teachers, although the value of the bursaries was still low. It was also reported that the REC had attended all of the main party conferences, and it was felt this had been a success.

The QSS were also presented with a list of the large range of organisations currently provided support for RE and RE teachers. It was emphasised that this represented a significant resource, and that it was important for the Lancashire SACRE to be cognisant of what was available before developing its own offer, in order not to duplicate effort and resource.

8. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of the SACRE QSS will take place on 9th February 2015, at 10:30am in Cabinet Room B (the Diamond Jubilee room), County Hall, Preston