

Lancashire County Council

Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 26th September 2011 at 10.00am in Cabinet Room 'D' - County Hall, Preston

1. Present

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

The Free Churches Group

Mrs Y Taylor
Mrs A Tidswell
Mr C Wills

Islam

Mr N Anwar

Hinduism

Mrs H Shukla

Buddhism

Kelsang Pagpa

Teachers Associations

Ms J Crabtree (NUT)
Mr D Fann (NAHT)
Mrs S J Greenhow (NAS/UWT)
Mr P Martin (ASCL)
(Chair)
Mrs A Robinson (ATL)

Church of England

Mrs J O'Rourke
Mrs H Sage

Lancashire County Council

County Councillor K Ellard
County Councillor P Malpas
County Councillor Y Motala
County Councillor A Thornton
Mr F Williams

Co-opted Members

Mrs J Sawyer (Teachers in the Primary Sector)

Observers

Mr A Brennand (Paganism)
Dr M Craig (Bahá'í Faith)

Religious Education Consultant

Mrs H Harrison

Officers in Attendance

Mr J Hewitt
Mr J Mynott
Ms K Dale

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Rabbi D Braunold, Ms J Busby, Mrs K Cooper, Miss L Fenton, Ms L Heaton, Mr B McMullen, Mr S Jogi, Mrs K Parekh, Mr C Pountain and Mrs J Singh.

3. Minutes and matters arising

It was noted that the minute regarding Future Support for the SACRE should refer to Jonathan Hewitt as Head of Quality and Continuous Improvement and Officer to the SACRE, Directorate for Children and Young People.

With regard to the minute RE National Update, it was noted that the Chairman had written again to the Secretary of State for Schools asking for a response to his letter of 27 January 2011 regarding the proposals for the English Baccalaureate (E Bacc) and that a response had been received dated the 12 July 2011. The response stated the intentions behind the E Bacc as being to ensure that history and geography (and languages) remained an option at Key Stage 4 with RE retaining compulsory status.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Lancashire SACRE held on 7 June 2011, subject to the amendment being made, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

4. Constitution of the SACRE

Members noted the appointment on 7 September 2011 of Mr Francis Williams to serve on the SACRE as a representative of the Authority following the resignation of CC K Iddon.

5. Getting to Know You

Jonathan Hewitt, Head of Quality and Continuous Improvement and Officer to the SACRE, Directorate for Children and Young People, gave a brief talk about himself and his role in relation to the SACRE.

Jonathan had started out as a primary school teacher in London and had been made lead for RE in his second year of teaching. He was asked to draw up the Agreed Syllabus for his authority and attended a Department for Education and Science accredited course on RE.

In Lancashire, Jonathan had been a member of the SACRE as a representative of the Church of England during the 1990s and as a Head teacher at that time had helped to write materials for the Agreed Syllabus. He joined the County Council in 1995 becoming Head of the School Improvement Group in 2006.

In April 2011, he was appointed as Officer to the SACRE and believed that this would help SACRE in its monitoring role, as the School Improvement Team would support the analysis and presentation of data in a meaningful and helpful manner.

Jonathan would continue to work with Helen Harrison, independent RE Consultant, and support the SACRE in the best way possible.

RESOLVED: That Jonathan Hewitt be thanked for his presentation.

6. Report of the Quality and Standards Sub-group

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group which had taken place on 13 September 2011.

The QSS had worked on the SACRE Development Plan 2011 – 13 and updated it with reference to members' comments made at the last SACRE meeting on 7 June 2011.

The group had also worked on the draft SACRE Annual Report 2010 - 2011.

The QSS put the following schedule of meeting dates before the SACRE for approval:

Tuesday 8 November 2011	10am
Tuesday 17 January 2012	10am
Thursday 17 May 2012	10am

RESOLVED: That:

- i) The report of the Quality and Standards Sub-group be noted.
- ii) The schedule of QSS meeting dates for 2011 – 2012 be approved.

7. Lancashire SACRE Annual Report 2010 - 2011

The production of an Annual Report was a legal requirement for SACREs.

The Lancashire SACRE still required schools to send in End of Key Stage data for inclusion and a report was compiled by Paul Dyson-Knight, together with external examination data. It was reported that schools found these statistics extremely useful as comparison tools.

The Quality and Standards Sub-group had considered the draft Annual Report in detail at its meeting of 13 September 2011.

The Annual Report would be produced as an on-line document only. It was suggested that a single sheet summary could also be produced, incorporating the five priorities of the Development Plan, that could be used to try to engage with a wider audience, as a briefing note for Head teachers and Chairs of Governors, and as a quick reference guide for assessing the progress of SACRE against the Development Plan.

RESOLVED: That a single page summary document be produced to accompany the full Annual report, based on the five priorities of the Development Plan.

8. Lancashire SACRE Development Plan 2011 - 2013

Members considered the draft Development Plan 2011 – 2013 which now included the comments made by members at the last meeting of the SACRE on 7 June 2011. The Quality and Standards Sub-group had also worked on the Development Plan in detail at its meeting of 13 September 2011 and highlighted areas which needed strengthening.

9. Collective Worship

It was reported that a survey for BBC local radio found that 64% of the 500 parents questioned said their child did not attend daily acts of Collective Worship (CW).

A survey of 1,743 adults also resulted in 60% of respondents stating that CW legislation should not be enforced. Whilst these figures did not relate to Lancashire schools, it was noted that the SACRE was fully committed to promoting CW and providing guidance to schools. Members noted that support included:

- An on-line resource for schools on CW – the CD Mirrors and Doors. This had recently been considered by SACRE member Jo Busby and deemed to be in need of updating. RE Today Services had completed an update which included: a general audit of the guidance; an act of worship pro-forma; a planning, recording and evaluation pro forma, policy exemplar; 32 ideas for CW and a three year programme of themes to aid planning for secondary schools. It was envisaged that the CD would be sent out to schools after Autumn Half Term 2011.

AREIAC (Association of RE inspectors, advisers and consultants) was actively seeking examples of good practice and Lancashire continued to add examples on-line

- Marketed training and support on CW
- Support for schools seeking a determination relating to CW
- Monitoring Complaints concerning CW

10. Youth SACRE/Youth Voice

Helen Harrison, RE consultant, updated members on the Youth SACRE and Youth Conference which together made 'Youth Voice'. The Youth Voice sub-group comprising SACRE members Jo Busby and Helen Sage had driven Youth Voice forward.

The Youth SACRE was now in its fifth year having started in the east of the county then moving centrally. This year eleven schools had expressed an interest in taking part and were situated all over the county. A meeting of these eleven schools was to take place to discuss what could be achieved and how best to facilitate young people taking the lead. The offer of a Youth Conference 2012 was open to the Youth SACRE and the Authority's strong commitment the work of the Youth Voice for 2011 – 2012 was noted.

11. Review of SACRE Meeting Formats

The Quality and Standards Sub-group at its meeting of 13 September 2011 had agreed that the SACRE should be asked to review the current format of SACRE meetings which was last reviewed in 2008. Members were therefore asked to split into groups and provided feedback as follows:

- The 10am start time for meetings was appropriate
- Recognition of time constraints for each agenda item
- Breaking into diverse groups for discussion of items was valuable
- There could be more electronic links to points of information in the agenda
- The item for contributions by Observers was useful but there should also be an item where all other members could make contributions that were unrelated to the agenda
- Members should inform the clerk before agenda dispatch if they have a news item
- An RE activity on the agenda was a good idea at some meetings whilst at others there could, for example, be a member explaining a part of their faith
- The agenda should contain an item giving a national RE update as well as encouraging links more locally
- Members of the Youth SACRE should be invited to attend at least two full SACRE meetings a year
- There should be a move away from the use of acronyms
- The start of the meeting should be shown as from 9.45am to allow for refreshments so as to allow the meeting to start promptly at 10am.
- Members' name plates could be presented less formally and members encouraged to sit in different places so that they all got to know one another
- Meetings could be held in schools or faith venues and the following were suggested:

Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre
The Synagogue in St Anne's
The Vajravarahi Buddhist Centre in Preston

Members were asked to send any further suggestions for venues to the Clerk.

12. National RE Update.

Helen Harrison, RE Consultant, updated members on the national RE situation.

It was noted that:

- The Religious Education Council as an umbrella body was drawing up a strategic plan to address key issues.
- The national campaign continued and the Archbishop of Canterbury had discussed RE at a meeting with Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education.
- Members of SACREs were being urged to promote RE as a relevant and essential aspect of education.

13. Observers' Contributions

Andrew Brennand, representing Paganism, informed members that he would be speaking at the University of Central Lancashire on 27 October 2011 on Paganism and Education to the Pagan Federation North West.

Dr Malcolm Craig, representing the Bahá'í faith informed the SACRE that he ran a monthly radio programme called 'Preston Faith News' and suggested that members let him know if they wished any items of news broadcasting.

14. Correspondence

Members noted the new e petition to the government, which had been received from the Chair of AREIAC, regarding RE and the E Bacc which could be found at the following link: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/129>

Email correspondence, dated 20 September 2011, had been received from the British Humanist Association requesting that SACREs consider the inclusion of a full or co-opted humanist member.

Members noted that the Chairman proposed to send a response explaining that Observer status had been approved for a Humanist on the Lancashire SACRE in September 2006 and that the position had not recently been taken up but that a Humanist was still welcome to attend as an Observer.

15. Any Other Business

Harsha Shukla, Hindu representative, informed members that the Lancaster and Morecambe Hindu Society was planning celebrations for Diwali on 22 October 2011, in Lancaster Town Hall. Members were welcome to join the celebrations and should let Harsha know if they wished to do so.

Colin Wills, representing the Free Churches group, informed members that Terry Murnane had now left the Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre to join the priesthood and that Richard Hoyle had taken over the post temporarily. The permanent position would be advertised on the Lancashire County Council job vacancies list first internally and then externally.

16. Date and Venue of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Lancashire SACRE was noted as Monday 28 November 2011, to take place at 10am in County Hall, Preston.

County Hall, Preston,
September 2011