

AT A MEETING of the
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
held in the Mitchell Room, Elizabeth II Court, Winchester on 12 November 2013

PRESENT

Chairman

p Councillor Roz Chadd (Hampshire County Council)

Vice-Chairman

p Councillor Charles Choudhary (Hampshire County Council)

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| p Councillor Mrs Fiona Mather | - | Hampshire County Council |
| p Councillor David Simpson | - | Hampshire County Council |
| a Mr Mohammed Ansar | - | Muslim |
| p Mrs Jackie Chong | - | Roman Catholic |
| p Rev Seishin Darren Clark | - | Buddhist |
| p Sheikh Fazle Abbas Dato | - | Muslim |
| p Mrs Pat Fry | - | United Reformed Church |
| a Mrs Lisa Gilmour | - | Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints |
| p Mr Colin How | - | Methodist |
| p Mr Chris Hughes | - | Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches |
| p Mrs Elizabeth Jenkerson | - | Baha'i |
| a Ms Jackie McGregor | - | Salvation Army |
| p Miss Margaret Matthews | - | Society of Friends |
| p Mrs Jo May | - | Baptist Union |
| p Mr Richard Moss | - | Buddhist |
| Mr Harjap Singh | - | Sikh |
| a Major Suryaparsad Upadhya | - | Hindu |
| p Mr. Michael Zeffertt | - | Jewish |
| p Mr Tony Blackshaw | - | Church of England |
| p Mrs Joyce Johnson | - | Church of England |
| p Ms Caroline Welch | - | Church of England |
| p Rev Howard Wright | - | Church of England |
| p Mrs Maureen Barnes | - | Teachers' Association |
| p Mrs Jane Pridmore | - | Teachers' Association |
| p Mrs Patrizia Timms Blanch | - | Teachers' association |
| p Mrs Gill Heron | - | Academy – co-opted |
| p Miss Chris Robinson | - | Humanist – Co-opted |
| p Ms Patricia Hannam | - | Support Officer |
| p Mrs Judith Lowndes | - | Support Officer |

Also present were Mrs Rhiannon Love and Mr Alasdair Richardson, Steven Taylor, and Mrs Pam Brown.

Prior to the start of the meeting Mr Colin How gave a presentation on Methodism, explaining the history of the movement, its philosophies and his personal beliefs, and answered questions from Members.

Councillor Chadd welcomed everyone to the meeting, She gave particular mention to the Reverend Seishin Darren Clark, the new Buddhist representative, Mrs Rhiannon Love and Mr Alasdair Richardson, prospective co-opted members for Higher Education, Steven Taylor, the Bishop of the Winchester Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints as a substitute for Lisa Gilmour, and Mrs Pam Brown, the prospective co-opted member for Special Education

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mrs Lisa Gilmour, Major Upadhya and Mohammed Ansar.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations of interest were made.

20. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2013 were approved and signed by the Chairman subject to the correction on page 5, item 9 that the first sentence should have read - "*Pat Hannam was pleased to note that 'A' level RE was currently surviving in most Hampshire 6th Form Colleges*".

Patricia Hannam informed Members that there was one college not providing 'A' Level RS and that she had no remit to intervene. Members of SACRE were in agreement that it was important that students had the opportunity to take the

subject and asked that she should write on behalf of SACRE to any schools and colleges that were not offering RS stressing the value of the subject.

21. MATTERS ARISING

Item 12 on page 6 – Michael Zeffert updated Members on the student enrichment day he had taken part in for Portsmouth SACRE, indicating that he had had a rather negative experience.

Item 15 on page 7 – The RE Quality Mark – this would be discussed in item 11.

22. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman began by informing Members that Jane Warren had left Winchester University and would therefore no longer be representing Higher Education on SACRE, and that Ceri Taylor had stepped down as the special school's co-opted representative.

Tony Blackshaw was also leaving SACRE and was thanked for all his work on SACRE over the last eight years and his enthusiastic commitment to RE in schools. He said that he had been pleased to be part of a county that valued RE and took the subject seriously. He informed the Council that his interim replacement would be Mr Richard Wharton, currently the Head teacher at Wellstead Primary School in Hedge End.

The Chairman was pleased to announce that Elizabeth Jenkerson had been appointed to NASACRE.

Members' attention was drawn to the Interfaith Lecture being held in Winchester on 20 November and to the Interfaith Calendar.

Members were informed of the South West SACRE Conference on 20 March 2014 at Dillington House, Ilminster in Somerset, which was entitled 'Building Effective RE in a new Educational Landscape'. She indicated that she would be attending and Chris Hughes also requested a place.

The Chairman told Members that she would be attending the NASACRE AGM in 2014 on 22 May in London and indicated that there was another place available.

23. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

24. MEMBERSHIP

The Council received a report from Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector for RE, on prospective changes to the membership of SACRE. (Item 7 in the Minute Book)

Subsequent to the publication of the report, SACRE had been informed that Miss Ceri Taylor would not be able to represent Special Schools as a co-opted member as she was no longer the RE co-ordinator at Maple Ridge Special School. SACRE were asked to approve the co-option of Mrs Pam Brown, their newly appointed RE co-ordinator as the new representative.

The Council were asked to approve two other co-options representing Higher Education and an appointment from the Buddhists.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE approved the co-option of Rhiannon Love and Alistair Richardson to represent Winchester University Primary and Secondary RE courses respectively, and Mrs Pam Brown to represent Special Schools.
- That SACRE approved the appointment of the Reverend Seishin Darren Clark as the Buddhist representative to SACRE.

25. MONITORING SUB-GROUP

The Council received a report from the Monitoring Sub-group on their discussions regarding monitoring visits, SACRE training and the supply of qualified specialist secondary teachers (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

Members were provided with the unverified GCSE data (appendices 1 and 2), which the Sub-group would analyse at its meeting in January 2014 and bring a full report on to SACRE's February meeting.

Patricia Hannam pointed out that concerns about a large decline in the numbers of students taking Full Course GCSE RS had not materialised yet, although there had been a decrease. There had, however, been a steady increase in the number of A* - C grades over the last three years, culminating in the highest ever in 2013. It was indicated that the figures related to all schools in Hampshire, including academies. She noted that, although achievement for both boys and girls was improving, there was still no significant reduction in the gap between the genders. The Sub-group would be undertaking a comparison of results from students in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) against those not in receipt of FSM. Members asked for data on the differences for each grade for boys and girls and also the numbers of students taking RS compared with the total cohort. The Council wanted it noted that they had high praise for the results that were being achieved and for the efforts of the teachers to achieve them.

Patricia Hannam was also pleased to note that the expected demise of Short Course RE had not happened and the decline in numbers in Hampshire had slowed. Many schools had continued to offer the Short Course despite its not being included in schools' accountability measures. It was explained that results were not as good as the full course as it was usually taught in only one lesson a week. She informed Members that she intended to look at national data on the decline of the Short Course.

The Council were informed that few Ofsted reports now mentioned RE or any subject specifically and recent monitoring visits had been positive. New Council members, including some from other counties, had received training on RE and the Agreed Syllabus.

Serious concerns were expressed over the supply of qualified specialist RE teachers. Chichester University had experienced difficulties in attracting the right calibre of candidates and it was thought that the high fees for RE PGCE students were discouraging applications. Winchester University reported the good news that they had 12 places for RE in 2014/15, compared with the 5 for 2013/14. It was explained that a move had been made for more teachers to be trained in schools through Schools Direct, but numbers were low. There was a general feeling of concern expressed by educational professionals on SACRE over the quality of this training. A trainee could have up to a 90% teaching timetable and the training only leads to qualified teacher status, not a graduate or post-graduate qualification. Other subject areas were also anxious about this trend.

The way of computing the numbers of RE teachers by the DfE was also highlighted; any teacher that takes an RE class, whatever their main subject and even if they only teach one lesson, is counted as a specialist RE teacher. This has led to claims that there is no shortage of RE teachers. Members asked for data to be gathered on the number of non-specialist RE teachers being used to teach RE in schools

There was a consensus among Members that politicians needed to be made aware of SACRE's concerns over the state of teacher training for RE specialists. There was a wide-ranging discussion about whether Hampshire MPs should be invited to attend SACRE or be asked to facilitate a meeting of a delegation from SACRE with ministers. It was remarked that as MPs do not make policy decisions, but ministers do, the latter option might be better. The Chairman indicated that she would contact the previous SACRE Chairman, Councillor McNair Scott, to request a copy of the reply she had received from Michael Gove to her letter of June 2013 about Hampshire SACRE's concerns. The Council also discussed the purpose of such a meeting and the message that SACRE would want to get across. The consensus was that the main focus would be on initial teacher training and the provision of continuing professional development. The Bishop of Winchester has expressed an interest in RE and it was suggested that a meeting with him and the Inspector Advisor for RE be arranged to express SACRE's concerns about the training of RE teachers. Further discussion of whether to invite Hampshire MPs to a SACRE meeting was deferred until a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report.
- That the Chairman of SACRE should write to the representatives from the Isle of Wight and Reading who attended the training to request feedback and enquire whether they would like further information on Hampshire's Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference.
- That further discussions about inviting Hampshire MPs to attend SACRE be deferred to a future meeting.

26. SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

The Council received the Annual SACRE Report from Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector for RE (Item 9 in the Minute Book).

Members received an updated page 5 of the Annual Report and an amendment to page 8 was indicated – the first sentence should have read 'At KS 1 the quality of teaching observed *in the schools visited.*'

Members were asked for questions and comments on the report. It was explained that the report form was originally a self-monitoring form from NASACRE, which Hampshire continued to use, although it had no legality and which many SACREs had now dropped. Questioned about the lack of evidence about collective worship in schools (page 23, 4b) it was explained that the money provided for monitoring visits only covered the RE taught. The Council praised the authors of the report on its comprehensiveness. It was noted that the next SACRE networking meeting was intending to look at each other's reports.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE approved the report and its dissemination to the appropriate authorities and be made available to the public.

27. YOUTH VOICE

Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector for RE, indicated that the next meeting Youth Voice was due to take place on 4 December and this would be reported on at SACRE's February meeting. It was anticipated that the Young Ambassadors from Perins School would attend the December meeting.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report.

28. NATIONAL RE MATTERS

The Council received a report from Patricia Hannam, the County Inspector for RE on matters of national concern relating to Religious Education and their impact on RE in Hampshire (Item 11 in the Minute Book).

- (i) Patricia Hannam indicated that many of the negative findings in the Ofsted Report on RE did not apply to Hampshire. She drew Members' attention in particular to the recommendations for local authorities in appendix 2. She noted that monitoring visits during 2012/13 had highlighted that where the head and senior management of a school supported and valued RE, then it was likely to be good throughout the school. It was suggested that schools and Hampshire MPs should be written to alerting them to the recommendations of the RE Report and reminding them that there had been no change to their statutory duties as regards RE.

There was discussion about faith groups being more involved with school visits and CPD courses to ensure subject confidence and accurate knowledge. It was noted that many schools do visit faith venues and that the Diocese offers free CPD to its schools.

- (ii) Patricia Hannam explained that the first part of the RE Council Review of Religious Education, which was a national curriculum framework for RE comprising a non-statutory programme of study, was not relevant to Hampshire because of Hampshire's Agreed Syllabus. From the second part, which was an analysis of current issues with recommendations, she highlighted in particular Recommendation 4 (page 38 of the Review). This recommended the establishment of regional hubs which would work as a 'beacon of excellence and as a focal point for engagement' for RE, and would be similar to the joint SACRE meeting that Hampshire had set up. Members agreed that Hampshire SACRE should continue to develop this networking with other SACREs and the next joint meeting should discuss the possibility of its formation into a regional hub.
- (iii) Members were informed that the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for RE were very keen to advocate the importance of RE in the curriculum and had expressed concerns about the availability of qualified specialist RE teachers. The MP for East Hampshire, Damien Hinds, was a member of this APPG and it was anticipated that Mike Thornton, the MP for Eastleigh, would also join the group. It was suggested that Damien Hinds be invited to the next SACRE training session.

It was noted that the Young Ambassadors Scheme, which included students from Perins School, had been successful and was continuing. It was anticipated that the next Hampshire Youth Voice meeting in December would include the Ambassadors from Perins and the meeting would discuss ways in which Youth Voice could link in with the Young Ambassadors Scheme.

- (iv) Patricia Hannam updated Members on enquiries she had made about the RE Quality Mark. During discussion, it was generally felt that half a day's training for the accreditation to become an assessor was insufficient, that schools could use the costs associated with acquiring the Quality Mark, which was about £500, in a better way, and that, assessors from out of the county would not necessarily understand the rationale behind the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus. It was suggested that the possibility of a Living Difference Quality Mark be explored and a progress report be provided at the February meeting.

RESOLVED:

- That SACRE noted the report.
- That the Chairman of SACRE should write to head teachers of primary and secondary schools in Hampshire alerting them to the Ofsted Report for RE and to their statutory duty to teach RE well through all key stages; and that Schools should be written to congratulating them on good results and encouraging them to maintain their standards.
- That SACRE endorsed Hampshire continuing to give leadership to the Joint SACRE meetings and recommended that an agenda item of the Joint SACRE should be in relation to the formalisation of this group as one of the first regional hubs for RE, as recommended in the RE Review.
- That SACRE would discuss the possibility of a Living Difference Quality Mark further at the February meeting.

29. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Patricia Hannam was please to inform the Council that she had been invited to give evidence to the APPG meeting on the Agreed Syllabus and Social Cohesion.

30. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 25 February 2013 at 1.30 pm in the Mitchell Room, Elizabeth II Court, Winchester.

Prior to the meeting Lisa Gilmour would give a short presentation on the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints.