

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education SACRE

06/10/10 – Kenilworth School and Sports College

Present		Group	Representative
Santosh Kundi	SK	Faith	Hinduism
Ramesh Srivastava	RS	Faith	Hinduism
Manjit Kaur	MK	Faith	Sikhism
Rocky Grove	RG	Faith	Baha'i
Elaine Edmunds	EE	Faith	Jewish
Anne Davies	AD	Faith	Non-Conformist
Anthony Phillips	AP	Faith	Non-Conformist
Ven. Manapo	VM	Faith	Buddhism
Pamela Davey	PD	Faith	Non-Conformist
Gill Kingston	GK	Faith	Non-Conformist
Lizzie McWhirter	LMcW	Church of England	Coventry Diocese
Naomi Nixon	NN	Church of England	Coventry Diocese
Jill Stolberg	JS	Church of England	Birmingham Diocese
Sue Dudley	SuD	Teachers	ASCL
Emma Moore	EM	Co-opted Member	
Liz Banyard	LB	Teachers	VOICE
Marianne Westwood	MW	Co-opted Member	Pagan (PEBBLE)
Cllr Clive Rickhards	CCR	WCC	Elected Member
Bob Hooper	BH	Other	WCC Officer
Karen Steele	KS	Other	WCC Officer
Ruth Waterman	RW	WCC	WCC Officer (Clerk)
 Also Present			
Lois Bryan	LsB	Kenilworth School	
 Apologies			
Shisham Singh Sahota	SS	Faith	Sikhism
Helen McGowan	HM	Church of England	Coventry Diocese
Emma Griffiths	EG	Church Of England	Coventry Diocese
Jackie Salter	JS	Teachers	NUT
Yusuf Patel	YP	Faith	Islam
Bob Jackson	BJ	Co-opted Member	Warwick University
Cllr Jackson	CJJ	WCC	Elected Member
Cllr Robbins	CCR	WCC	Elected Member
Gerry Kilkelly		Higham Lane School	
Jatinder Birdi		Warwick District Faith Forum	

1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1. See above for details.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting.

(Minutes from previous meeting in brackets)

Professional Development for RE Adviser

2.1. (5.3) MK asked if KS and SD had been able to look at possible courses appropriate for KS as the RE Adviser. KS reported that she and SD would be meeting between now and the next meeting so will report back to the group then.

KS / SD

Reports from NASACRE AGM and DfE Seminar on Research Materials

2.2. GK attended the NASACRE AGM and a DfE seminar on research into materials used to teach world religions in schools earlier in the year and had provided reports on both meetings. KS confirmed that these reports were circulated to members of the group with the agenda for the last meeting (in June); GK hopes to have an update on this soon.

2.3. KS added that there is also some really useful guidance now on the NATRE website to support schools in choosing good quality resources for RE www.natre.org.uk/rq/index.php (the link is now also on the SACRE website)

3. Feedback from Learning Outside the Classroom Event

3.1. KS felt it would be useful to feedback to the group on a training day that she held for RE teachers in July. Only 12 teachers attended which was slightly disappointing although understandable in the current economic climate. There was still a good mix of primary and secondary teachers which provided a good learning opportunity for all.

3.2. KS shared some photos from the day, the aim of which was to encourage teachers to look at imaginative ways of developing learning and cross-curricular links by taking pupils outside the classroom. KS organised a faith trail which took teachers to various places of worship including the new Leamington Gurdwara.

3.3. The key message coming from teachers was their concern relating to the behaviour of pupils when visiting places outside the classroom and this was one of the main reasons for not doing this more. Emma Griffiths, who leads school visits at Coventry Cathedral helped to dispel some of these concerns and KS hoped that teachers went away feeling more confident to deal with this. Overall it was a great day and feed back was positive. KS thanked all those from faith communities who were involved.

4. Cycle of Meetings

4.1. KS and RW have produced a plan to try and ensure SACRE meetings are focused and an effective use of time. The general plan sets out the types of venues and focus for each meeting for a typical year, as well as a more detailed plan for 2010/11. This is useful to ensure SACRE encourages relationships with key

partners and stakeholders.

- 4.2. MK added that it is important for SACRE to be informed about the structural changes within the Local Authority and how this impacts on stakeholders. It is also essential for SACRE to keep up to date with changes that have come through the county and to investigate what other useful partnerships they could make.

5. SACRE Constitution

- 5.1. KS suggested that SACRE review its constitution in light of the recent changes. An amended version was circulated prior to the meeting and KS asked for comments:

- The group discussed the request from the British Humanist Association (BHA) that SACREs should consider widening the membership of Group A to include BHA members, rather than them being co-opted. It was felt that Warwickshire SACRE does not differentiate in this way and treats all members' views equally, regardless of whether they are co-opted or not. Advice on the NASACRE website says BHA members should be co-opted until the legal stance changes. GK is meeting with Julie Grove from NASACRE on Friday so will check whether advice from NASACRE remains the same.
- MW added that Pagans are now within their rights to join SACRE as a member of Group A as they are now recognised as an official religion in Britain (see attached article for information).
- MK thought it would be useful to nominate two co-chairs and two vice chairs. LMcW proposed that MK and SS stay on as co-chairs and GK and KS act as vice chairs. PD seconded the nominations.
- MK asked whether SACRE thought the two co-chairs should be of a different religion as some issues can be very wide. CCR felt this was unnecessary as all members views will be taken into consideration in any discussions.
- The main changes to the constitution are under section 4 which has been amended to take into account the updated Circular 1/94. Members felt that Collective Worship was not given sufficient coverage. It should mention that one of SACRE's duties is to respond to determinations for Collective Worship.
- MK suggested including a sentence under 'Voting Procedures' to say that 'SACRE will consider the views of co-opted members'.
- It was agreed that it would be useful to look at other SACRE constitutions: LMcW can forward Coventry and Solihull constitutions and JS can share Birmingham's.
- The constitution will need to go through the legal department once changes have been made.

GK

KS to amend constitution

LMcW / JS

6. Monitoring RE and SACRE Annual Report

- 6.1. As a result of discussions at the previous meeting, KS and BH have put together a proposal for monitoring RE in schools. It has become increasingly difficult for SACRE to do this although some indication can be sought from Ofsted reports which include judgements on social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and the promotion of community cohesion. SIAS reports and data from GCSE and A Level results also give some indication. KS and

RW are hoping to meet with an LA colleague to look at how best to analyse exam results.	KS / RW
6.2. KS has designed a questionnaire to be sent to all secondary schools asking them for more information about their RE provision. It was felt that it would be less onerous for secondary schools to complete than primaries.	
6.3. It was discussed whether the questionnaire should be anonymous as this may mean responses are more honest however it was felt that this should be a way of building trust between SACRE and schools so openness should be encouraged. It will also be a way of identifying good practice. It was agreed that a section would be added at the end for the headteacher and subject leader to sign; getting the headteacher to sign may help to raise the profile of SACRE and RE. 'Pupils' to be changed to 'students' throughout the questionnaire.	RW
6.4. To monitor the provision of RE in primary settings, KS suggested setting up a working party to look at organising a cycle of visits to a small number of schools. These would be conducted by SACRE members who would then report back to the whole group on a regular basis. These visits would not be 'inspectorial' but carried out in a supportive way. PD, MW, SK and LB volunteered to join the working party that will look at primary monitoring visits. RW to arrange first meeting date for November.	RW
6.5. <u>Annual Report</u> - KS and RW are working on the Annual Report for 2009/10 although there is no longer a deadline from QCDA for this to be published (was previously December). There is a new suggested framework that SACREs can follow if they wish so this is being looked at and will be used as far as possible.	
6.6. <u>SIAS Reports Analysis</u> - KS has produced analysis of SIAS reports (circulated) which gives an overview of provision in Church of England schools. One of the key issues that came through is the need to monitor the impact of Collective Worship. It was suggested that it would be useful to see an accumulative total of how many schools achieved good, outstanding etc. in each year. KS to add.	KS
<i>(The meeting broke for a tour of the school)</i>	
7. How SACRE engages with schools and the LA	
7.1. <u>SACRE Information Leaflet</u> - KS has found that often schools are not aware of SACRE or what they do and therefore has put together an information leaflet to be sent to schools. KS asked members for comments.	
7.2. Members agreed this was a good idea and were happy for this to go to schools. Discussions were had about the costs of printing. The LA currently has a block on all 'glossies' so it will need to be printed the cheapest way possible. It can also be made available on the website for people to print off themselves.	RW
7.3. <u>SACRE Newsletter</u> - KS has also put together a newsletter as this would be an ideal way for SACRE to communicate with schools. SACRE were happy for this to also go out to schools with the addition of a paragraph to help promote Interfaith Week (21st -	RW

27th Nov 2010).

8. Transforming Religious Education

- 8.1. Following the recent Ofsted report on RE, Alan Brine HMI has written a useful summary of the main findings and emerging issues which was published in REtoday. KS thought it may be useful for SACRE to consider where they are in relation to the bullet points listed under *'What needs to be done to transform RE?'*
- 8.2. MK felt this was a good checklist for SACRE to use as part of a monitoring activity and suggested that this be an item on the next agenda.

**Future
Agenda Item**

9. News Items

9.1. SACRE Development Plan:

- SACRE Exec will discuss in more detail the idea of SACRE meeting with parents at school open evenings and report back to the next meeting.
- RW to invite PGCE students to attend the next meeting in March – general invitation to go to Warwick, Northampton and Wolverhampton Universities. GTP students should also be invited. (*Note: as the next meeting is to be held at someone's home, PGCE students will be invited to the summer term meeting at Saltisford*).
- KS is speaking to colleagues in EDS to try and ensure NQTs are informed about SACRE and the work that they do
- KS would like to produce some exemplar material to support Early Years in implementing the Agreed Syllabus; this will be part of the 2011/12 development plan and budget. KS to inform Early Years Advisory Team of these plans.
- LB reported that Lillington and Camp Hill Early Years Centres have excellent inspiration learning spaces that would be worth visiting.
- Collective Worship should be a priority area for SACRE; schools will be expecting something on this as this was mentioned in the newsletter.
- *Learning Outside the Classroom:* SACRE to consider further strategies to support places of worship in this area. LMcW reported Lynne Field is developing work on this including a number of schools in Warwickshire.
- Shearon Williams, Equality and Diversity Coordinator, should be given a standing invitation to attend SACRE meetings.

SACRE Exec

RW

KS

SACRE Exec

**Future
Agenda Item**

RW

9.2. SACRE Competition:

- Flyers for the competition have now been sent to all schools in Warwickshire.
- Leamington and Warwick Gurdwara is provisionally booked for the Celebration event on Friday 25th March 2011
- The Bishop of Coventry will be the key note speaker
- Prizes will be book tokens for students and money for teachers to resource RE in schools
- Members to publicise competition wherever possible – information can be found on www.warwickshire.gov.uk/sacre
- GK, AD, RG, CCR and LMcW volunteered to join the judging panel – date for meeting to be agreed.

RW

9.3. Ofsted Criteria for Subject Inspections:

- Ofsted criteria for subject inspections have been published and will be made available on the SACRE website. Also useful for SACRE members to look at these.

RW

9.4. Work with Oxfordshire:

- KS is doing some work for Oxfordshire SACRE and hopes this will help to develop links and best practice.

9.5. Assessment Working Party:

- KS has set up a working party to put together some student speak levels which are currently in draft.
- KS also collecting 'Assessment Stories' – how data collected, how assessment has gone – and these will be made available to teachers via the SACRE website. Meeting in January so these will not be available until next year.

10. Any Other Business

10.1. Complaint - MK updated members on the complaint that had previously been received regarding the provision of RE in a secondary school. The headteacher has provided documentation to show progress and provision for RE including curriculum maps for each year group. KS will be going into the school to do a follow up visit and will report back to the Exec. The school have been well supported by SACRE. MK has suggested to the school that they host the SACRE meeting in autumn 2011.

10.2. Youth Council - RS felt it would be beneficial to invite speakers from the Youth Council to SACRE to hear the views of young people. Exec members to discuss at their next meeting.

SACRE Exec

10.3. Lecture at Warwick University - LMcW reminded members there is a lecture at Warwick University on 12th October on the Warwick Research Report.

10.4. Survey for Secondary Schools - request from student conducting research at a university in Wales to send survey out to secondary schools. RW to forward survey to secondary colleagues.

RW

10.5. Tabled Documents – the following articles from REtoday (Autumn 2010) were tabled:

- 'Religious respect: I thought I knew about this!', Manjit Kaur Patara
- 'Cross of Nails: a spur to RE', Sarah Allen (The Willows CE Primary)
- 'Take a journey through Christmas', Jennifer Jenkins (St Paul's CE Primary)

Next meeting:

Wed 16 March 2011 at the home of Shirin and Behnam Tahzib, Highcroft, Sherbourne Hill, Stratford Rd, Sherbourne, CV35 8AG.

**Refreshments and talk on the Baha'i faith 6.00 – 6.45pm
Main SACRE meeting 6.45 – 8.30pm**

Druidry recognised as religion in Britain for first time

Druidry has been recognised as an official religion in Britain for the first time, thousands of years after its adherents first worshipped in the country.

By [Martin Beckford](#), Religious Affairs Correspondent
Published: 6:00PM BST 01 Oct 2010



Photo: Getty

The Druid Network has been given charitable status by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the quango that decides what counts as a genuine faith as well as regulating fundraising bodies.

It guarantees the modern group, set up in 2003, valuable tax breaks but also grants the ancient religion equal status to more mainstream denominations. This could mean that Druids, the priestly caste in Celtic societies across Europe, are categorised separately in official surveys of religious believers.

Supporters say the Charity Commission's move could also pave the way for other minority faiths to gain charitable status.

Phil Ryder, Chair of Trustees for The Druid Network, said it had taken four years for the group to be recognised by the regulator. "It was a long and at times frustrating process, exacerbated by the fact that the Charity Commissioners had no understanding of our beliefs and practices, and examined us on every aspect of them. Their final decision document runs to 21 pages, showing the extent to which we were questioned in order to finally get the recognition we have long argued for," he said.

Emma Restall Orr, founder of The Druid Network, added: “The Charity Commission now has a much greater understanding of Pagan, animist, and polytheist religions, so other groups from these minority religions – provided they meet the financial and public benefit criteria for registration as charities - should find registering a much shorter process than the pioneering one we have been through.”

In its assessment of the Druid Network’s application, the Charity Commission accepts that Druids worship nature, in particular the sun and the earth but also believe in the spirits of places such as mountains and rivers as well as “divine guides” such as Brigid and Bran.

The document lists the “commonality of practice” in Druidry, including its eight major festivals each year; rituals at different phases of the moon; rites of passage and gatherings of bards on sacred hills, known as “gorsedd”.

All charities must now demonstrate their benefit to the public, and Druidry was said to qualify since its followers are keen to conserve Britain’s heritage as well as preserve the natural environment.

The document even addresses the claims made by the Romans about Druids committing human sacrifice, but finds “no evidence of any significant detriment or harm” arising from modern beliefs.

It notes that although there are only 350 members of the Druid Network, a BBC report in 2003 claimed as many as 10,000 people followed the ancient faith across the country.

Membership of the Network costs £10 a year but ritual ceremonies such as that marking the summer solstice at Stonehenge are open to all.

To view this article online follow the link below:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/religion/8036952/Druidry-recognised-as-religion-in-Britain-for-first-time.html>