

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education SACRE

16/03/11, Home of Shirin and Benham Tahzib, Sherbourne, Warwick

Present		Group	Representative
Shisham Singh Sahota	SS	Faith	Sikhism
Manjit Kaur	MK	Faith	Sikhism
Rocky Grove	RG	Faith	Baha'i
Anne Davies	AD	Faith	Non-Conformist
Ven. Manapo	VM	Faith	Buddhism
Pamela Davey	PD	Faith	Non-Conformist
Lizzie McWhirter	LMcW	Church of England	Coventry Diocese
Jill Stolberg	JS	Church of England	Birmingham Diocese
Helen McGowan	HM	Church of England	Coventry Diocese
Sue Dudley	SuD	Teachers	ASCL
Liz Banyard	LB	Teachers	VOICE
Marianne Westwood	MW	Co-opted Member	Pagan (PEBBLE)
Bob Hooper	BH	Other	WCC Officer
Karen Steele	KS	Other	WCC Officer
Ruth Waterman	RW	WCC	WCC Officer (Clerk)

Also Present

Gerry Kilkelly	GK	Higham Lane School
Romaine Charles	RC	Higham Lane School
Lois Bryan	LsB	Kenilworth School
Taranjit Kaur	TK	Leamington Gurdwara

Apologies

Santosh Kundi	SK	Faith	Hinduism
Ramesh Srivastava	RS	Faith	Hinduism
Gill Kingston	GK	Faith	Non-Conformist
Abeda Vorajee	AV	Faith	Islam
Yusuf Patel	YP	Faith	Islam
Bob Jackson	BJ	Co-opted Member	Warwick University
Cllr Clive Rickhards	CCR	WCC	Elected Member
Emma Moore	EM	Co-opted Member	
Harish Dhokia	HD	ICSS	

RG welcomed all on behalf of Warwick Bahai's. SACRE members witnessed some short devotional prayers and Shirin Tahzib explained a bit about the Baha'i faith and what they believe. MK formally thanked Shirin and Tahzib for inviting SACRE into their home and offered a small donation. Shirin suggested if SACRE would like to make a donation that this should be to a local charity of their choice.

1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1. MK welcomed Taranjit Kaur from Leamington Gurdwara. Taranjit would like to join SACRE as a representative of the Sikh faith however there are currently no vacancies. MK therefore suggested that SACRE co-opt Taranjit and review membership further down the line. This was agreed.
- 1.2. MK also welcomed Helen McGowan who has joined SACRE as a representative of the Church of England.
- 1.3. See above for all apologies

2. Notes of the meeting meeting held on 06/10/10 and matters arising (Minutes from previous meeting in brackets)

- 2.1. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

3. RE Adviser's Role and Proposed Spending Plan

- 3.1. MK explained that SACRE's budget for 2011/12 is £8700 and SACRE need to agree their priorities for the year so that this can be allocated.
- 3.2. KS explained that after 31st March 2011 she would no longer be working for the Educational Development Service (EDS) as the service will end as part of the LA cuts. SACRE will therefore be contracting KS on an independent basis as RE Adviser. The only difference to SACRE's budget is the addition of two twilight meetings for RE teachers which will have minimal costs attached.
- 3.3. KS will continue with NATRE meetings although these are run on a voluntary basis. There is currently nothing in the north of the county but teachers in this area are interested in setting up a NATRE group. If schools require individual support in RE they would have to buy in KS and this price would be negotiated depending on how much support is required. KS is still hoping to run courses for NQT and Leading RE.

4. National Update on RE including Academies

- 4.1. KS reported the current issues facing RE which are outlined in a paper by John Keast, who was previously the RE adviser for QCDA:
 - There will be no national adviser for RE due to the demise of QCDA
 - With schools becoming Academies RE is at risk
 - Commitment to reducing statutory curriculum requirements

- RE not included in the Humanities subjects that are part of the English Baccalaureate
 - Government have made it clear they are not well disposed to GCSE Short Course RE
 - Funding for RE PGCE has been cut and course at Warwick will not go ahead next year
- 4.2. An Early Day Motion has been tabled asking for the inclusion of RE in the English Baccalaureate. This needs 70+ signatures and there are currently 45. There is a letter that can be customised and sent to local MPs urging them to sign up. The deadline for this is the end of March.
- 4.3. **Action:** BH suggested that SACRE consider how they might relate to school governors as their role is growing in relation to policies and strategies.
- 4.4. BH gave some background to the situation with Academies:
- an Academy is an independent, state-funded school
 - secondary schools will receive £500k for becoming an Academy, in addition to usual funding
 - In Warwickshire, 12 secondary schools are actively going through the process to become an Academy; it is likely that this will total 18 in the next year which is about 50% of secondaries in the county)
 - Primaries are also being encouraged by central government to become Academies; none in Warwickshire have applied yet however groups of primaries are considering joining to form one Academy
 - A school that becomes an Academy will have to have RE on the curriculum and teach the religious traditions of Great Britain i.e. main religion is of Christian nature etc but they do not have to follow the locally Agreed Syllabus
 - if the majority of schools do become Academies, SACRE will need to consider what they will do to encourage them to continue to use the locally Agreed Syllabus
- 4.5. Academies must fulfil certain requirements to qualify for funding agreement by the YPLA and one of these requirements is to teach RE. VM asked whether this would be reviewed every year and if so, by whom. BH suggested that this would be Ofsted however they are also slimming down. KS added that the YPLA have said they would investigate any complaints to do with the curriculum.
- 4.6. **Action:** The group discussed how they might encourage Academies to continue to use the Agreed Syllabus. It was agreed that the SACRE Exec will write to those schools who are becoming Academies. It was also suggested that a representative from an Academy be invited to join SACRE as a co-opted member.
- 4.7. SD reported that The Association for School and College Leaders (ASCL) have published research into why headteachers who are ASCL members are opting to become an Academy and reasons are financial rather than ideological. SD will investigate

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the possibility of an Academy representative from ASCL joining SACRE and feedback at the summer term meeting.

5. Follow up to complaint and school visit report

5.1. MK reminded members of the background to the original complaint made against a secondary school who were not complying with the statutory requirements for RE. The school has worked hard to set up RE at KS 3 and KS 4 and KS recently had a very positive visit to the school who are now well on their way to fulfilling the statutory requirements. KS has since had contact from the school, who have asked for further support and contacts for places of worship etc.

5.2. **Action:** MK suggested to the SACRE Exec that a clear complaints procedure be put in place to help in situations such as this in future. A number of factors meant it was a difficult situation to deal with. A draft complaints procedure will be brought to the summer term meeting. BH commended MK and SACRE for the way in which the complaint was handled.

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6. Feedback from primary monitoring visits

6.1. This item was postponed until the next meeting.

7. Feedback from Secondary RE Questionnaires

7.1. KS and BH had put together a plan for monitoring RE and part of this was to send questionnaires out to secondary schools. Due to the recent development KS was unsure what the future would be for gathering data in this way.

7.2. The response was a bit disappointing with only 13 out of 42 schools sending in completed questionnaires, however the overall response was positive. GIVE SOME DETAIL HERE

7.3. **Action:** RW to look into whether anything can be done so links are not websensed in schools. Copy of the analysis to be sent to schools.

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7.4. MK felt the questionnaires had made a good start to the monitoring process and thanked KS and RW for their work on this.

8. Draft SACRE Annual Report 2009/10

8.1. The 2009/10 report has been written in line with the QCDA format. There are some areas where data is not available, or only anecdotal evidence from the RE adviser, however it is hoped that SACRE will have more hard data for next year's report. A more detailed analysis of exam results has been included in this report.

8.2. Analysis of exam results showed that there were a number of schools where whole cohorts of pupils doing either short or full course GCSE RE were not entered into the exam. SD suggested that a letter be sent to all schools with the annual report and the questionnaire analysis as this would have more impact than just a letter on its own. SACRE should explain they are genuinely interested in finding out what is happening particularly in those schools where no pupils have been entered into an exam. SD commented that the report is also encouraging as the majority of schools have entered almost all of their pupils into the exam.

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- 8.3. In Warwickshire, the number of full course GCSE entries has overtaken short course. At A Level, History and Geography results are significantly better than RE.
- 8.4. **Action:** VM commented that information about Buddhism on the BBC website is not accurate or up to date. VM to send some reputable websites to RW so these can be added to the report. It was also suggested that SACRE contact the BBC to voice concerns about the accuracy of the information provided.
- 8.5. Members agreed they were happy with the draft and that this should be published electronically only, in order to cut costs. It will be made available on the website.

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9. Updated SACRE Constitution

- 9.1. Following the last meeting, amendments have been made to the SACRE constitution. KS explained that changes had been made to some of the wording to reflect the 2010 non-statutory guidance and a reference to the annual report being sent to QCDA had been added, as this is the case until SACREs are notified otherwise. The document has been approved by the Legal Team.
- 9.2. Some members of the group felt that the constitution should mention Academies
- 9.3. Corrections to be made to point 14 and 12.

10. SACRE Competition and Celebration Event

- 10.1. LMcW reported on the SACRE competition which asked schools to send it details of an engaging project they had organised for RE in the community. The standard of entries was very high and plans for events that were yet to take place looked excellent. Prize winners will be attending the event on 25th March where there will also be performances by pupils including dance, drama, singing, presentations etc. SACRE members are invited to attend the event and details were sent out with the agenda.
- 10.2. KS added that some of the best work will be put up on the SACRE website to share good practice across the county. Prizes were awarded in each Key Stage and some extra categories were added for Whole School Approach, Inclusion Award and Originality and Innovation Award.

11. SACRE Newsletter

- 11.1. A draft of the spring term SACRE newsletter was circulated prior to the meeting. KS noted that the information about Academies will be removed, as they now know this is incorrect.
- 11.2. **Action:** It was suggested that it be made more obvious that it is about Religious Education, as a number of teachers at network meetings were not aware of the first newsletter that was sent out in November 2010. RW to make amendments and send out to all schools.

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12. Any Other Business

- 12.1. HM has been working on a toolkit that will hopefully encourage schools and churches to work together. HM said she would really

appreciate feedback from SACRE members, if possible by the end of the Easter holidays.

Next meeting:

Wed 15 June 2011, 6.30pm to 8.30pm at Saltisford Office Park