

Minutes



STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Tuesday 14th November 2023 at 6.45pm

held at St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School, London Road, Sutton, Surrey SM3 9DL

Present: Miss V M Stone (C) (Chair) Ms Karen Hewitt (B)
(Groups in Mrs Penny Smith-Orr (Consultant) Mr S Ellingham (C)
brackets) Mrs Rosey Johnson (A) Mr Paul Solomon (A)
Mr Vince Burke (A) Mr Lewis Owens (B)

In attendance: Mrs Penny Garry (Clerk)

Apologies: Mr Chris Lynch (A) Mr Sal Uddin (A)
Ms Megan Morgan (B) Councillor Christopher Woolmer (D)
Councillor Patrick Ogbonna (D) Mrs Uzma Mobin (C)

Absent: Mrs Uzma Hussein (A) Miss Rebecca Bishop (C)
Mrs Christine Smyth (B) Mr Abhinav Kant (A)

	ITEM	ACTION BY
1.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies had been received from Mrs U Mobin, Councillor C Woolmer, Mr Sal Uddin, Mr C Lynch, Ms M Morgan and (during the meeting) Councillor P Ogbonna and were consented. Ms Stone advised that Ms Cockram had stepped down from SACRE and thanked her, in her absence, for her many years of service as a member of SACRE.	
3.	MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13TH JUNE 2023 The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.	
4.	ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR Miss Stone said she was willing to stand as Chair for a further year and there were no other nominations. The current Vice-Chair was not at the meeting and no-one else came forward so this will be re-visited at the next meeting.	

5.	<p>MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE IN THE AGENDA</p> <p>Outstanding Actions:</p> <p>Item 7 – WIRE Award Logo – Mrs Smith-Orr has produced something that is a word document. Mrs Johnson agreed to look at this to see what format it is in and look at the WIRE logo online.</p> <p>Item 8 - Westhill Award – Mrs Smith Orr had thought that the agreement was to apply for money for resources. She has not yet been able to visit Victor Seymour to look at what resources they have but this will be arranged. The usual supplier for religious education resources is TTS but they are very expensive.</p> <p>Action: Mr Ellingham will speak with Reverend Beth Lewis (vicar of St. John’s in Belmont) about the resources she has to see if we could make a note and purchase a similar set.</p> <p>Item 8 – Raising Awareness of RE Co-ordinator Meetings. Mr Ellingham said that he will try again but it is really difficult to get the RE Co-ordinators to respond to emails.</p> <p>Item 13 – NASACRE AGM – report on Finance. Ms Compton (Cognus) agreed to send budget information to the Chair and she had received this.</p>	<p>RJ</p> <p>SE</p>
6.	<p>APPOINTMENT OF SACRE MEMBERS</p> <p>There were no new appointments to the membership of SACRE. Members agreed that it would be good to have another primary teacher for Group C and another representative for Group A, although it was confirmed that the current membership reflects the Sutton census data in terms of the percentages of religions in the borough.</p> <p>Miss Stone will write to the Southwark Diocese about the lack of attendance of Mrs Smyth and advise that she will be removed from the membership of SACRE.</p>	
7.	<p>REPORT ON SACRE MEMBERS TRAINING</p> <p>Miss Stone and Mrs Smith-Orr had attended a regional webinar “In Conversation with NASACRE”.</p> <p>Mrs Smith-Orr recommended that members attend “How May SACRE’s Effectively Monitor Schools” on 5th December and Mr Ellingham and Mrs Johnson said that they would like to attend.</p> <p>All SACRE members were reminded that Sutton SACRE buys into an annual webinar programme with NASACRE and they should all try to undertake at least one training course across the year.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk will send details out again of how to access and register for the online courses.</p>	<p>PG</p>

<p>8.</p>	<p>MONITORING RE AND CW IN SUTTON</p> <p>WIRE Award Mrs Smith-Orr said that she had received some expressions of interest from some schools in completing the award. The Clerk had sent something to the local authority for inclusion in the Education Bulletin but it would seem it had not been published.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk will re-send the wording to be included in the next bulletin.</p> <p>Collective Worship NASACRE has run some training on collective worship. Mr Ellingham commented that hardly any schools he visits, other than faith schools, carry out a daily act of collective worship, particularly secondary schools. They have a year group assembly twice a week and a tutor group conversation in the mornings.</p> <p>Mrs Smith-Orr said that it is very frustrating to know that faith schools make the time to have an hour of RE every week and also collective worship and the community schools do not. Mr Burke advised that Catholic schools have to deliver 10% of their curriculum time on RE and Mr Solomon said that Jewish schools also have religious education.</p> <p>Mrs Johnson asked about the expectation for community schools and heard that it is 5% of curriculum time. Mr Burke added that the census data shows that Britain is much less religious now. Mrs Smith-Orr said that in Sutton there are lots of different faiths and Mrs Johnson said it is about children learning about religion and not that they have to have a faith themselves.</p> <p>Mrs Smith-Orr suggested that those attending the NASACRE course on 5th December could ask the question about how collective worship can be monitored.</p> <p>Action: Miss Stone will write to Headteachers to remind them of the expectation and direct them to the Collective Worship Guidance document.</p> <p>Mr Owens commented that of the three local universities one was receiving 2 hours of instruction on how to teach religious education (rather than the 6 hours prescribed) and the content was irrelevant. Staff do not feel well prepared and particularly Early Careers Teachers. Mrs Smith-Orr said that, as for other subjects, she tries to encourage teachers to learn about religion to be able to teach it.</p> <p>There are not many teachers qualified in RE but they can look at the syllabus as they would for any other subject.</p>	<p>PG</p> <p>VS</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>RE CO-ORDINATORS MEETINGS AND SCHOOL VISITS</p> <p>A meeting took place by Zoom recently and 10 Primary RE Co-ordinators attended. There were some new RE Co-ordinators and so a planned session for them was re-arranged. They discussed particular things that they found difficult and Mrs Smith-Orr updated them with some information</p>	

	<p>about things that Ofsted are looking at. They also talked about Inter Faith Week and also some festivals.</p> <p>The next meeting is planned for February.</p> <p>The RE Council are bringing out a National Standard for agreed syllabus and, although it will not be statutory it will be best practice.</p> <p>School Visits Mr Solomon reported that the synagogue regularly has visits by primary school children and there are a team of people who give talks. It has become a little unmanageable so schools will be asked to limit the visit to one class at a time. There are also some older students from a training seminary in Hampshire who visit.</p>	
10.	<p>UPDATE ON SUTTON FAITH & BELIEF FORUM</p> <p>Mr Solomon informed members that there had not been a meeting for a long time. The Council had been leading it but it dropped away. There will be an interfaith networking event hosted by Community Action Sutton this week and Mr Solomon will attend.</p> <p>The Quakers have also organised a 30 minute meeting in Sutton on Peace.</p>	
11.	<p>UPDATE ON FAITH AMBASSADORS</p> <p>As the previous SACRE member who was leading this had left, there was no update on this programme.</p>	
12.	<p>UPDATE ON GRILL A FAITH</p> <p>Mr Ellingham did not have any pictures but another event is being planned for 7th December and there will be a lot of representatives from different faiths.</p>	
13.	<p>SACRE 2022-2023 AND 2023-2024 DEVELOPMENT PLAN</p> <p>2022-2023 PLAN Members noted the completed plan and updates within it.</p> <p>2023-2024 PLAN Mrs Smith-Orr went through the development plan – some items have been carried forward. Many of the items had already been discussed in the meeting.</p> <p>Item 9 – Begin to Consider new RE syllabus for 2025 Mrs Smith-Orr advised that her advice is to look at the RE Council's guidance in the Spring. There will need to be a discussion with Cognus around some additional funding for the syllabus. Mrs Smith-Orr will be unable to write a new syllabus for SACRE next year. Mr Burke asked if one could be bought in and Mrs Smith-Orr said it is possible but the quality is not always good and the price is very high (RE Today is around £15,000). However, there are 152 SACREs in the county and several use RE Today or other companies. Some are not always suitable for the borough's</p>	

	<p>demographic so there would be a need to look at one which is geared towards a similar percentage of the same religions as there are in Sutton. A SACRE member could look at other Council's websites, where they are often published on the SACRE pages.</p> <p>Mr Ellingham wondered how many RE Co-ordinators are actually following the syllabus (it is statutory to have one). Mrs Johnson suggested asking RE Co-ordinators if there is anything they feel needs updating or is missing.</p> <p>Mrs Smith-Orr also cautioned that there is nothing about other world views in the units (although there is Humanism) and the teaching is moving towards looking at a particular aspect and what each faith or world view believes.</p> <p>Action: A working group will be convened in the Spring to look at the new syllabus.</p>	VS
14.	<p>SACRE ANNUAL REPORT.</p> <p>Mrs Smith-Orr has not yet had a chance to start working on this but will pull it together. She advised that she had also been surprised to find that very few SACREs are producing annual reports.</p> <p>Action: Mrs Smith-Orr will send the draft of the report to Ms Stone for her to write the introduction and then to Mrs Johnson to check the document. When finalised it will be sent to all SACRE members.</p>	PS-O/ VS/RJ
15.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>Budget Ms Stone had received some budget information but it was very difficult to interpret. There was a amount noted of £100 refundable damage deposit paid to Sutton High in respect of the hall hire.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk will write to Sutton High about refunding the deposit amount.</p> <p>It appears that a monthly amount of £700 is transferred to the cost centre each month but it is quite difficult to see how much of the total budget is left.</p>	PG
16.	<p>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 27th February 2024 at 6.45pm NOTE NEW DATE • Tuesday 25th June 2024 at 6.45pm* <p>Venue: Spring term – St. Cecilia’s Primary School, North Cheam.</p> <p>* Summer Venues to be confirmed in the Spring term.</p>	

Closing Time of Meeting: 8.45pm

Chair’s Signature Date.....