

At a meeting of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE held at the SANDHILL CENTRE on MONDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2012 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Church of England

Rev. G.M. Beck

Christian and Other Denominations

Mrs. E. Whitfield
Ms. C. Nicol

Teacher Associations

Ms. T. Laybourne
Miss. A. McChesney

Local Councillors

Councillor Francis
Councillor Stewart
Councillor Williams

In Attendance:-

Isobel Short	-	Inspector for RE at Durham County Council
Margaret Ferrie	-	School Chief Inspector
Emma Hindmarsh	-	Governance Services Officer

Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 November, 2011

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November, 2011 be approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Mrs. M. Ferrie would provide an update regarding bursaries under item 5.

Emma Hindmarsh advised that she had received notification from Mrs Slater, Jewish representative that she was resigning as a member of the SACRE. Isobel Short advised that she would contact the Durham SACRE Jewish representative who had expressed an interest in attending the Sunderland SACRE.

Locally Agreed Syllabus

Mrs Ferrie advised that Sunderland SACRE had agreed to purchase the Durham Locally Agreed Syllabus and revise it accordingly for Sunderland. She introduced Isobel Short, Inspector for RE at Durham County Council who was assisting Sunderland with the LAS.

Ms. Short advised that every Local Authority was required by law to review its Agreed Syllabus for RE through its Standing Advisory Council for RE every 5 years. As the last syllabus had been agreed in 2006, a review was necessary.

SACRE has a responsibility to ensure that an Agreed Syllabus conference has taken place. The role of an Agreed Syllabus Conference was to produce and recommend an agreed syllabus which meets fully the requirements of legislation and is educationally sound. Only an Agreed Syllabus Conference may recommend an agreed syllabus and its recommendations must be unanimously agreed by the four committees constituting the conference. The local authority may give effect to the recommendation of the Agreed Syllabus Conference if it is unanimous in recommending the new syllabus and provided the syllabus complies with legal requirements. Once adopted it can be launched to all maintained schools (without a religious character) in the authority as the legal document from which to teach RE.

This being the first conference meeting, the second meeting will take place on Monday 26 March, and the third on Wednesday 30 May. The Agreed Syllabus would then be adopted formally (ratified) by the authority at its Council meeting.

Ms Short advised that Academies do have a legal requirement to follow a locally agreed syllabus – if it is part of their funding agreement (unless they are of religious character and then must follow diocesan programme).

Mrs Ferrie advised that there was a budget of £11,500.

Discussion ensued regarding the current syllabus and new Ofsted framework.

Emma Hindmarsh agreed to send a copy of the consultation questionnaire to all relevant schools.

Bursaries

Mrs Ferrie advised that to date 19 responses for bursaries had been received. There was the resource to award 10. Councillors Francis and Smith had agreed to sit on the panel to consider each application.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next conference was scheduled for 5.30 p.m. on Monday, 26 March 2012.

Any Other Business

None.

(Signed) T. Laybourne,
Chairman.