

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

HELD ON TUESDAY, 26TH APRIL 2016 AT 4.30 PM

VENUE: SANDHILL CENTRE

Present: -

Local Councillors

Councillor Stewart – Chair

Councillor Leadbitter

Councillor Marshall

Councillor Williams

Teachers' Associations

Ms. A Hodgson

In Attendance

Cathryn Forbes, Specialist Officer

Paul Wood, Governance Services Officer

As the meeting was inquorate, the following discussions could not be viewed as having been approved and therefore, could not be acted upon until approved at a future quorate meeting.

SAC50 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillor P. Smith, Annette Parr and Mrs W Lundgren.

SAC51 Nominations to join the SACRE Membership

Paul Wood advised that Mr Khan had tendered his resignation and a Mr Singh had declared his interest in joining the Membership. Mr Wood to forward the contact details onto Cathryn Forbes.

SAC52 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 2nd February 2016

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2016 were a true record subject to the amendment that Mrs A. Hodgson had been in attendance.

SAC52 Matters Arising

Councillor Stewart noted that a meeting with a representative from the Salvation Army still needed to be arranged.

SAC53 SACRE Report

Cathryn Forbes referred to the Draft SACRE Report included in Members agenda packs for their consideration and enquired if there were any comments on the document.

In response to Councillor Williams enquiry as to why Durham was so successful with their SACRE membership, Mrs Forbes advised that it had taken a great deal of time for Durham to get into its current position and this had been down to a number of factors such as the low number of schools becoming academies and the range of people of different faiths but they also struggled with appointing Members from the Diocesan like other areas.

In relation to paragraph 7.2 of the report, the Councillor Stewart suggested that the provision of bursaries to support the development of RE in schools could be a way of promoting SACRE. Mrs Forbes advised that she could look at the possibility of implementing a project around interfaith week.

Members AGREED:

- The content of the report and for Cathryn Forbes to upload the document.

SAC54 Advisor Update

Cathryn Forbes circulated a draft letter which was to be sent to all Headteachers and Chair of Governors detailing information about Sunderland SACRE. Mrs Forbes advised that an amended finalised letter would be compiled from that which was included in the agenda papers and that an additional paragraph would also be included in relation to the Academies.

The amended paragraph would read as follows:

Academies may, but are not required to, follow the locally agreed RE syllabus. Alternatively, they can devise their own syllabus, but it must be in line with the legislation that underpins the locally Agreed syllabus. In April 2016 a document titled "Religious Education in your Academy: Improving Religious Education in academies and free schools" was sent to all academies and free schools for the attention of the Headteacher. We would strongly advise that you read this document as it clearly outlines your statutory duties and the work of SACRE.

With regards to the document sent to all Academies and Free Schools mentioned above, Mrs Forbes highlighted certain sections of relevance with a focus on examples of good practice for SACRE's, which included

- Working inclusively with local academies and school trusts in drawing up their syllabuses
- Warmly encouraging academies and free schools to use their local agreed syllabus
- Giving SACRE representation or consultative status to school confederations, multi- academy trusts etc.
- Providing RE teachers with training on a shared basis between academies and Local Authority schools.

In response to Councillor Williams enquiry if any links had been made with Grindon Hall Christian School, Mrs Forbes advised that they had not been made at present as they had attended the launch and the very first network meeting only, with usually the same four schools attending, the main difficulty was that the majority of schools in the area had a contract with Durham, therefore attended their Network.

Mrs Forbes informed of the NASACRE Conference and AGM 2016 due to take place on May 17th, 2016 in the Central Hall Westminster, London and if any Members wished to attend to inform Annette Parr. The Chairman requested that details of the invite be circulated via email to all Members of SACRE.

In relation to the SACRE Briefing 11 and the RE Quality Mark, Councillor Stewart suggested that £100 be given as a contribution to the first five schools to obtain the Quality Mark as a way of generating interest/participation.

Mrs Forbes informed Members of the intent to organise a Primary School day in September and that Annette Parr would be checking with the schools and a focus on Christianity/Islam with presentations, talks and activities to take place.

Members AGREED:

- to note the content of the letter to be circulated to Headteachers and Chair of Governors
- to note details of the NASACRE Conference and for any Members interested to contact Annette Parr

SAC55 Self Evaluation

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

SAC56 Any Other Business

There were no other items of business raised.

SAC57 Date and Time of Future Meeting

The date and time of the next meeting was to be confirmed once the Council diary for the next financial year had been agreed.

(Signed) Councillor P Stewart,
Chairman