

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

24 March 2022

PRESENT: Michael Gammage (Chairman), Karen Butler (Vice-Chairman), Chris Sayers, Darcy Chesterfield-Terry, Margaret Dudley, Ila Gangotra, Barbara Meaney, Clare Roberts, Thomas Kingsley-Jones, Sarah Bradley, Dai Prendiville, Councillor Julian Sharpe and Councillor Shamsul Shelim

Officers in attendance: Clive Haines, Anne Andrews and Mark Beeley

ACTION

1 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting.

2 Reflection

The Chairman gave SACRE a reflection from a Bahá'í perspective.

3 Apologies For Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stimson, Maggie Callaghan, Ravinder Singh, Anthony Lewis and Hilary Harris.

4 Membership Update

The Chairman informed the meeting that Sarah Bradley would be stepping down from her role on SACRE as she would be taking a career break, the June meeting would be her last meeting. Sarah Bradley was the KS4 representative, the Chairman asked if anyone knew of anyone interested to get in touch.

Karen Butler said that Richard Rhodes had also recently stepped down, she said that he also needed to be replaced.

The Chairman suggested that it would be useful for an updated membership list to be circulated after the meeting, so that it was clear where there were vacancies.

ACTION – Mark Beeley to circulate membership list to SACRE Members after the meeting.

Anne Andrews said that she had an RE Network meeting the following week, she would ask for any interest at this meeting.

Margaret Dudley reminded the Chairman that she would be retiring in August and her position would also need replacing in the summer.

5 Minutes Of Meetings on 13/09/21 and 09/12/21

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meetings held on 13th September 2021 and 9th December 2021 were approved as true and accurate records.

Karen Butler commented on an action for Anne Andrews from the September

meeting, where she would speak to NATRE about whether the number of people watching the films could be tracked.

Anne Andrews said that since February, there had been 4,217 hits on the page, there were around 300 views per month with KS1 and 2 getting the majority of the traffic.

The Chairman added that he had an action from the December meeting to write a letter of congratulations to Churchmead School on the REQM Gold Award, this had been completed.

Thomas Kingsley-Jones thanked SACRE for the letter. He was looking forward to welcoming SACRE to an in person meeting at Churchmead in June.

6 Forward Plan and Budget

The Chairman said that a forward plan had been created which was designed to fund ongoing and future priorities and targets for SACRE. Unfortunately, the budget for the plan had not been approved by RBWM.

Clive Haines, Associate Director for Education, explained that the forward plan and an accompanying paper went forward to a Cabinet Member Briefing, which was based on the current budget situation of RBWM. It was decided that due to current SACRE spending not reaching its maximum, there was no need to increase the budget particularly in the current situation.

7 Feedback from Inspections: Ofsted and SIAMS

Anne Andrews said that there had only been one SIAMS inspection in RBWM since inspections started again. This had been less than two weeks ago, so the results were still confidential. A draft would be with the school shortly but SACRE would have to wait to see the result.

Clive Haines said that of the Ofsted inspections that had taken place, all current judgements had been maintained.

Anne Andrews asked if there was any reference to RE or collective worship in the Ofsted reports. She also asked if anyone from RBWM attended the feedback sessions.

Clive Haines confirmed that there was no reference, the reports were a lot shorter now and were not detailed. Clive Haines and link advisors attended the feedback sessions and anything said around RE would be noted and fed back to SACRE.

The Chairman asked if there was an expectation that Ofsted reports would contain more of a deep dive on RE.

Clive Haines said that it was all about ensuring there was a broad and balanced curriculum.

Anne Andrews said that Ofsted would investigate to see if RE was being taught as part of the broad and balanced curriculum, if it was not then it could be a reason to give a school a 'requires improvement' result.

8 Feedback and suggestions from Teachers

Barbara Meaney said that the term so far had been incredibly difficult, with

sickness levels amongst both pupils and staff being very high. The performance management mid term reviews had recently taken place and a number of staff were not on track to hit targets due to the situation.

Thomas Kingsley-Jones said that a SIAMS inspection had recently taken place which had been a key focus. Considering what SACRE could do, Thomas Kingsley-Jones said that things could be done to monitor RE and the teaching of RE in a more hands on way, which would help support teachers.

The Chairman said that this was one of the parts of the self-assessment tool kit, this could be explored at the next meeting in June.

Anne Andrews said there would be a session at the upcoming NASACRE AGM on how the tool kit worked.

Clare Roberts said that she agreed with the experience of Barbara Meaney. Some schools in Ascot had to close classes and teach remotely due to the situation. It was important not to overload staff as they were having to deal with so much already. Clare Roberts said that self-reflection and assessment would be welcome, once things had calmed down in the future.

Sarah Bradley suggested that information gathering in the form of grants and promoting them in schools would be useful.

Anne Andrews said that a lot of schemes were referenced in the SACRE newsletter.

The Chairman said that SACRE could help with funding to allow teachers to access courses, for example by looking to cover travel costs.

Dai Prendiville said that he recently joined Desborough College as Head of RE, he was in the process of setting up the RE department.

Clive Haines said that he totally understood the situation that teachers were under at schools and the pressures that they currently faced.

Anne Andrews agreed and said that they were aware of the pressure that schools were under. Covid absences seemed to be more prevalent amongst primary school aged children, which was why Churchmead might be less affected.

9 SACRE RE Network - 31 March

Anne Andrews explained that the next RE Network meeting would take place next week, on Thursday 31st March. Despite the issues and pressures that teachers faced, there were currently 24 teachers signed up for the event. Anne Andrews had attempted to organise some in person meetings for work moderation but these had not yet taken place due to a lack of initial interest. Next week, the network would look at what made good RE. Anne Andrews suggested that it would be good to have a SACRE Member attend to help and see what happened at the session. The meeting would take place from 4pm – 5.30pm on Zoom.

10 SACRE Pan-Berkshire Hub Collaboration: Updates

Karen Butler said that the minutes from the last meeting were attached to the agenda. New films were in the pipeline for Catholic, Orthodox Jewish and Sunni Muslim faiths, with a number of people on the Hub approaching people

of different faiths to see if they would be interested. The Hub wanted the films to be useful to schools and it was good to know that they were being watched and used. It would be good if a teacher could write a short article on how the films had been useful in the classroom, this could then be published in the RE newsletter. The review of the syllabus was discussed, it was clear that this was now not the time for a syllabus review. It was agreed that there some changes that were needed but these were not radical changes. The responses to the survey had been limited, there had been 56 in total from the whole of Berkshire. Karen Butler said that training for the future was also discussed, what sort of training was needed to move RE forward and any specific areas which should be focused on. There was discussion on how training should be best delivered to ensure that the most value was gained.

Thomas Kingsley-Jones agreed that training could be packaged into after school meetings to ensure that time was utilised well.

Barbara Meaney said that a good way of delivering training was to allow teachers to review a resource, for example a film, and then they could bring their thoughts and ideas to the training session to share.

Clare Roberts added that anything that broadened subject knowledge would be gratefully received.

Dai Prendiville said that he had attended Strictly RE and hearing from those who were from a particular faith was particularly useful to try and aide understanding.

Anne Andrews said that the Hub could look to deliver training in some form, some could be done across Berkshire and some could be done with SACRE. At RE Network meetings, each one had been held in a different place of worship which allowed teachers to improve their knowledge of various faiths. SACRE could revisit the forward plan and make it more school focused, to allow SACRE to become the facilitator.

Sarah Bradley said that an opportunity to be with specialists had value and definitely had a place. Some teachers had expertise in particular religious traditions and they could share resources with other teachers. A question and answer session with a local faith representative would allow teachers to gain subject knowledge as well as asking some of the deeper questions, this could encourage links and allow for visits to religious venues and talks at schools. It would be useful if events could be recorded for those that could not come, the summer term was the best time to engage with teachers as they had a bit more capacity for other things. On the survey, Sarah Bradley felt that it could be streamlined, with a shorter survey available which would be more accessible.

Karen Butler thanked teachers for their comments and feedback. There were some good suggestions which could be taken back to the Hub. The question and answer suggestion was the motive behind the films, it had been difficult to gain funding to allow pupils to travel to religious venues.

11 Hub: New films - Catholic, Orthodox Jewish and Sunni Muslim

This was discussed as part of item 10.

12 Hub: Syllabus review - feedback from 7 March meeting and next steps

This was discussed as part of item 10.

13 Hub: Funding

Karen Butler said that the Hub discussed what was left in the budget, there was around £5,000 left. The usual £900 would be taken for the next year, with Anne Andrews sending out the invoices to local authorities so that the money could be guaranteed.

Anne Andrews said that she had asked for the invoices to be raised. The idea of asking for the money in advance was that the Hub would not need to ask for additional money in the year of the syllabus review and the cost could be spread over a number of years.

14 NASACRE AGM - representation

Anne Andrews explained that the NASACRE AGM would be taking place in person on Monday 23rd May 2022 in Birmingham, 10.30am to 3.30pm. The cost was £95 for a delegate which was slightly cheaper than it had been previously. In the past, SACRE had paid for both Anne Andrews and Barbara Meaney to attend. Anne Andrews said that she was now on the Executive Committee and suggested that SACRE sent herself and one other person. There was an interesting agenda planned, one item was an analysis of the new annual reports. The workshops that were usually part of the AGM would take place later in the term on Zoom, this was to minimise movement on the day. There would also be an option to join parts of the in-person conference virtually, this was available for £40 per person.

The Chairman said it was a good use of the SACRE budget to fund any teachers that wanted to go to the AGM.

Anne Andrews clarified that she needed to be booked and sponsored by SACRE.

The Chairman suggested that Anne Andrews and Barbara Meaney would be the representatives from SACRE, if anyone else was also interested they could let the Chairman know after the meeting.

Barbara Meaney suggested that Mark Beeley, as clerk for SACRE, was able to book delegates on the NASACRE AGM.

ACTION – Mark Beeley to check the process for booking delegates onto the NASACRE AGM.

15 NASACRE Self-Assessment Toolkit

It was decided that it was worth waiting until after the NASACRE AGM to discuss the self-assessment toolkit, this could be brought up at the next meeting in June.

16 June Meeting: In Person at Churchmead

The Chairman confirmed that the next meeting of SACRE would take place in person at Churchmead School.

17 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

18 Dates Of Future Meetings

The next meeting of SACRE would take place on Thursday 30th June 2022 at 6pm. The meeting would be held at Churchmead School, Priory Way, Datchet, Slough, SL3 9JQ.

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, ended at 7.15 pm