

Date of issue: Thursday, 2nd November 2017

MEETING	STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
DATE AND TIME:	WEDNESDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER, 2017 AT 4.30 PM
VENUE:	THE VENUE, THE CURVE - WILLIAM STREET, SLOUGH, BERKSHIRE, SL1 1XY
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	NADIA WILLIAMS 01753 875015

SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS

The following Papers have been added to the agenda for the above meeting:-

* Items 9 and 10 – The additional papers were not available for publication with the rest of the agenda.

PART 1

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
9.	Slough SACRE Draft Action Plan - April 2017 to March 2018 – Draft Annual Report 2016 - 2017	1 - 6
10.	Information Items to Note: iv) Farewell – Jo Fageant	7 - 8

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Draft Annual SACRE Report

2016-2017

What is a SACRE?

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education has several aspects to its role. It:

- Advises the local authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education
- Advises on methods of teaching and resources for religious education
- Decides whether or not to grant determinations to those schools which apply to have daily worship which is other than of a broadly Christian character
- Identifies the need for a revised religious education syllabus

To help with this endeavour the Slough SACRE works with NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs). It has also joined with five other neighbouring SACREs to form a hub in order to undertake more significant projects than it could manage alone.

This report sets out a brief summary of the work of the Slough SACRE over the academic year 2016-2017. The minutes of the meetings which give more detail can be found at [http://www.slough.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education-\(sacre\).aspx](http://www.slough.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education-(sacre).aspx)

The make-up and terms of reference can be found at the same address.

For more information about the role and business of the SACRE please contact:

The Clerk - Nadia Williams: nadia.williams@slough.gov.uk

Adviser - Jan Lever: jan@janlevergroup.com

The Slough SACRE

Julie Siddiqi and Lynda Bussley continued during the first part of the academic year of this report to serve as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. Members expressed appreciation of their work and commitment. In June, at the start of the municipal year, Julie was re-elected to the role of Chair and Hardip Singh Sohal was elected as the new Vice Chair. There continues to be a disappointing number of vacancies on the SACRE and work continues to fill them.

During the year Neil Fraser left Slough Borough Council and his involvement with the SACRE as its clerk. In the few years he had this role he had developed a good understanding of the work of the SACRE and his efficiency, thoroughness and commitment were highly valued.

Members expressed thanks for the wisdom and support offered to the SACRE by Robin Croft who left the education service in Slough Borough Council during the year. They welcomed Johnny Kyriacou who took over as the officer support for the SACRE.

At the end of the year, Jo Fageant also left the SACRE. She had been at different times member, Chair and the SACRE's professional adviser since its establishment

in 1998. Members thanked her for her years of service and presented her with flowers, a gift voucher and some delicious biscuits appropriately decorated to acknowledge the nature of her work.

Three meetings were held during the year: 2 November, 14 March and 15 June. Thanks go to the Eden School and St Mary's Church for hosting these meetings. The first was held in the temporary home of the Eden Girls School. Members were welcomed by Karim Mercia, the headteacher. The school is part of the Tauheedul Trust which comprises 18 schools. Eden opened in September 2015 and is expected to grow to accommodate 800 pupils in the coming years.

In April a subcommittee was re-established to plan the work of the SACRE for the financial year 2016-2017 with the initial plan including the following elements:

- 3 termly twilight meetings for leaders of RE in primary schools
- NASACRE membership
- 2 members of the SACRE to attend the NASACRE AGM
- SACRE newsletter to be published 3 times during the year
- One sixth of the cost of the coordinated working with five other SACREs in a subsidised hub initiative focused on two main projects: Crossing the Bridges and the upcoming review of the RE syllabus.
- Cataloguing the loan collection of resources held at St Mary's Primary School.
- Preparation of the Annual SACRE report



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This plan was costed and enabled regular review.

Resources

Since the closure of Slough Religious Studies Resource Centre many resources have been stored at St Mary's CE Primary School and are available for loan to other Slough schools. However, many are unaware of what the collection comprises. Work on photographing, cataloguing and publishing this information is continuing but has been delayed because the SACRE's direct contact at St Mary's has moved to another post and building work at the school has temporarily prevented access to the resources.

It remains possible to keep well informed about the work of the SACRE because details of meetings, documents and resources are available at: [http://www.slough.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education-\(sacre\).aspx](http://www.slough.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education-(sacre).aspx)

Members have been very grateful to Neil Fraser for his work on the website and for all his very efficient support during his time as Clerk to the SACRE.

Partnership working



The hub comprising this and five other neighbouring SACREs has continued to develop and sustain work on the Crossing the Bridges project. This is an initiative which seeks to support schools and host religious communities in developing the most educationally worthwhile visits to places of worship. A directory of places has been developed with scope for the inclusion of additional entries. There are booking and feedback forms as well as workbooks and exemplars of completed workbooks. These are all available on the SACRE website and also at <https://discoveryschemeofwork.com/crossing-the-bridges/>. At this address you can also read reports about the progress of the project as it developed. The hub of SACREs has been grateful to the Culham St Gabriel's and Westhill trusts for the funding they provided to support this project.

Chairs and professional advisers to the SACREs continue to meet to discuss work that is being undertaken at hub level. The next initiative, preliminary work for which has begun, is the required review of the RE syllabus. Questionnaires designed to canvas the ideas of teachers about the existing syllabus and possible future improvements were distributed to all Slough schools. In addition, during the year the hub provided training opportunities for members new to their SACRE.

The SACRE continues to be a member of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) to ensure members remain well informed about national debates relating to RE.

General interest

In addition to the above aspects of the SACRE's most significant work, members have been engaged in fruitful discussions about a range of topics. These have included one clarifying the entitlement of pupils and staff to take time off school to observe their religious festivals when they occur in term time. Members have also reflected on the significance of data provided for them about GCSE, AS and A level examination entries and results.

They recognise that more needs to be known about the background to this data before it is possible for them to understand the quality and provision of RE in individual schools. Members also benefit from the regular sharing of news from different faith communities in Slough about such things as celebrations and charitable endeavours which this year included *The Great Get Together*, an initiative aiming to develop good community relations in response to the murder of the MP Jo Cox. They value learning from one another about religious and cultural similarities and differences.

Collective Worship

It has not been necessary to renew any determinations during this year. A determination is permission for a school to provide daily collective worship which is not 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. Many schools in Slough are now academies. If they need to seek a determination they now need to apply to the Education Funding Agency. Schools still need to apply to the Slough SACRE and should in the first instance contact the Clerk.

DRAFT

**Membership of Slough Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
2016-2017**

Meetings: 2 November 2016, 14 March and 15 June 2017

Representing	Member	Meetings attended
Group A	Christian denominations and other religions	
Free churches	Sue Elbrow	3/3
Black Free Churches	Vacancy	
The Roman Catholic Church	Vacancy	
Baha'i	Vacancy	
Hinduism	Vacancy	
Islam	Julie Siddiqi	3/3
	Zubayr Abbas Bowkan	2/3
	Waqar Bhatti	1/3
	Vacancy	
Judaism	Vacancy	
Sikhism	Hardip Singh Sohal	3/3
	Ashpreet Singh Nainu	2/3
Group B	The Church of England	
	Rev Andrew Allen	3/3
	Christine Isles	3/3
	Andrea Sparrow	3/3
Group C	Associations representing teachers	
ASCL	Vacancy	
ATL	Vacancy	
NAHT	Vacancy	
NAS/UWT	Vacancy	
NUT	Lynda Bussley	3/3
VOICE	Linda Lewis	3/3
Group D	The Local Authority	
	Cllr Bedi	2/2
	Cllr Brooker	3/3
	Cllr Parmar	3/3
	Cllr Sarfraz	3/3
	Cllr Sohal	1/1
Clerk	Neil Fraser	1/1
Professional Adviser	Nadia Williams	2/2
	Jo Fageant	2/2
	Anne Andrews	1/1

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NEWSLETTER - FAREWELL

At last I've retired!

My association with Slough schools predates the establishment of Slough as a unitary authority. Prior to that I was the RE and collective worship advisory teacher for Berkshire of which Slough was a part. From an RE perspective it is a great place to work because the town offers a religious diversity from which we can all learn and which is lived out in and around the schools. Whilst it is, of course, possible to learn about religious beliefs and practices from books I have always been passionate about enabling encounters with people of faith. What people believe, say and do because of their religious faith are aspects of their everyday lives. Seeing how beliefs and practices that we learn about from books are woven into ordinary lives all around us is the most interesting form of RE. It is also a good way to learn about and come to understand each other.



It was for this reason that I was excited when we managed, along with five partner SACREs, to get a grant to support the Crossing the Bridges project. I knew it would be one of the last initiatives in which I would be involved before I retired. How appropriate that it should focus on encouraging and facilitating successful visits to places of worship. It was even more pleasing that my final contribution to RE work with schools was to take a small group of teachers on a day of visits to places of worship. It was a great day and we enjoyed warm welcomes and informative experiences at Maidenhead synagogue, Slough Baptist Church, Sheehy Way gurdwara and Stoke Poges Lane mosque. The project has gone from strength to strength and I'm pleased that Jan Lever, who has done so much to lead the project, is succeeding me as professional adviser to Slough schools and SACRE.

I want to take this opportunity encourage you to value and engage with your local SACRE. The members are all people who are committed to supporting high quality RE in schools. They come from a variety of schools, religious and political affiliations. It has been a great privilege to work with these people in an atmosphere of mutual respect and genuine friendship. If you would like to be involved (there are a number of vacancies for teacher representatives) get in touch through Nadia Williams, the clerk - nadia.williams@slough.gov.uk.

I've been involved in the development of all versions of the locally agreed syllabus for RE since 1995. I made it clear when the last one was published in 2012 that it would be my last. The time has come round again for the regular 5 year review. I hope in the current process you are taking the opportunity to share your views and keep up to date with how things are progressing. Don't miss out on future meetings that will introduce the revised syllabus. I know you will find meeting and working with Jan and her colleagues valuable support.

There is much about my time as RE adviser that I will miss. Most of all that is the wonderful variety of people with whom it has brought me into contact. I've learned so much about similar ideals and beliefs from people who come from very different backgrounds and cultures from my own. That has been, perhaps, the most personally enriching aspect of my time in the job. Recognising that, I will continue to be involved in inter-faith dialogue/initiatives so that learning and growing can go on.

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