

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Wednesday, 15th October, 2008.

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Soofi Mohammad Afzal – Islam
Sue Elbrow – Free Churches
Jo Osborne – Judaism

Committee 2 – Church of England

Christine Isles

Committee 3 – Representatives of Teacher Associations

Lil Abdo – Professional Association of Teachers (Chair)
Kevin Marsh – National Union of Teachers

Committee 4 – Representatives of the LEA

Councillor Diana Coad
Councillor Mewa Mann

Also Present: - Bill Alexander (Assistant Director, Raising Achievement),
Claire Gray (Clerk)

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor S K Dhaliwal, Maclsaac, O'Connor and Roy Davey

PART I

1. Election of Chair.

Resolved – That Lil Abdo be appointed Chair of the Slough SACRE for the 2008/09 academic year.

(Lil Abdo in Chair)

2. Election of Vice-Chair.

That Jo Osborne be appointed Vice-Chair of the Slough SACRE for the 2008/09 academic year.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 11th June, 2008.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2008 were approved as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising.

A Member regretted that the last meeting, scheduled to be held at Parlaunt Park School, was cancelled and suggested it as a venue for the next meeting. The head teacher of Parlaunt Park agreed that it was disappointing that the meeting was cancelled but suggested that it would be more appropriate to use it as a venue sometime in 2010.

Jo Osbourne informed the meeting that the Resource Centre was now located in a slightly smaller room at Iqra Slough Islamic Primary School but it retained all major stock. It was suggested that the Centre may be able to be visited at the next meeting.

5. Report of the Assistant Director (Raising Achievement) on the Arrangements Across Berkshire for SACRE Support.

Bill Alexander (Assistant Director, Raising Achievement) introduced the report which contained information on other Berkshire SACRE. At the previous meeting there had been a general assumption that other Berkshire SACRE received dedicated support. However the report clearly showed that this was not the case. None of the Berkshire Authorities had a dedicated RE advisor, although some used SACRE funding to buy-in consultative support. The Council noted that, following discussions with Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Council, they were interested in providing linked support with Slough. Slough currently had subject support within the LA team and information was passed directly to the head teachers but the LA did not have further involvement in what was distributed.

Bill Alexander informed members that further discussions about dedicated support would take place with Bracknell Forest and Windsor and Maidenhead. Members noted that at present Slough had a comparatively small budget for SACRE with £1.2K of this used as rent for the resource centre. The cost of a shared resource would be approximately £25K. Additional resources would need to be established for this. Members were informed that it may be possible to utilise expertise within the current team and Bill Alexander would look into this. The role of the shared support would generally be to provide information and monitoring the current situation. At present there was a general shortage of specialist expertise in RE but it was suggested that other authorities may be able to assist in this.

Resolved- That the Assistant Director continue to engage in discussions with Windsor and Maidenhead and Bracknell Forest with the view to engaging shared SACRE support and that an update on this be brought to the next meeting.

6. Godolphin Junior School - Application for a Determination.

It was noted that following the previous meeting the application for a determination for Godolphin Junior School had been deferred. This had

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education - 15.10.08

allowed the Assistant Director, Raising Achievement to visit the school in the summer term. The school had a well organised programme with an effective staff development programme. The programmes for school and class collective worship and the themes and resources were all well planned. The most recent OfSTED report described personal development and wellbeing as 'outstanding'.

Members took the detailed termly plan for class worship and assemblies and the report from Bill Alexander into careful consideration. It was noted that this was prepared well in advance of the autumn term and included many opportunities for collective worship. Jo Osbourne also informed members that the school utilised the resource centre well.

Resolved – That the determination be approved.

7. Any Other Business

An article that had appeared in the Slough Express concerning a website inciting religious tension was brought to the attention of the members. It was agreed that the Slough SACRE should send a letter condemning the website to the Slough Express.

Lil Abdo informed members that she had received information on training and recruitment, in particular that of Group 'A' delegates. It had been noted that there were a number of vacancies in Group 'A' and that SACREs were mostly self selecting which could exclude certain sections of faith groups. It was noted that training days would be running in the South East – which included two 1 day conferences, the first in January and then March but the dates were not yet available.

8. Date of Next Meeting.

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Wednesday, 11th February, 2009. It was agreed that the head of Iqra Slough Islamic Primary school should be approached with a view to the next meeting being held there. Upon agreement of the head teacher, Iqra School would be confirmed as the meeting venue.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.30 pm and closed at 5.35 pm)