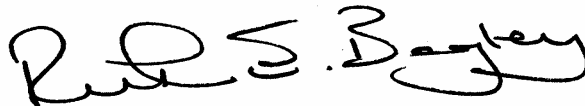


Date of issue: 7th October, 2008

MEETING	STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
DATE AND TIME:	WEDNESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 2008 AT 4.30 PM
VENUE:	COMMITTEE ROOM 2, TOWN HALL, BATH ROAD, SLOUGH
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	CLAIRE GRAY (01753) 875120

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



RUTH BAGLEY
Chief Executive

NOTE TO MEMBERS

This meeting is an approved duty for the payment of travel expenses.

AGENDA

PART I

AGENDA
ITEM

REPORT TITLE

PAGE

WARD

Apologies for absence.

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
1.	Election of Chair.		
2.	Election of Vice-Chair.		
3.	Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 11th June, 2008.	1 - 6	
4.	Matters Arising.		
5.	Report of the Assistant Director (Raising Achievement) on the Arrangements Across Berkshire for SACRE Support.	7 - 8	
6.	Godolphin Junior School - Application for a Determination.	9 - 14	
7.	Date of Next Meeting.		
	Wednesday, 11 th February, 2009 – Venue to be decided.		

Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Special facilities may be made available for disabled or non-English speaking persons. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

Minicom Number for the hard of hearing – (01753) 875030

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Wednesday, 11th June, 2008 at the RE Resource Centre, Lea Junior School, Grasmere Avenue, Slough.

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Soofi Mohammad Afzal – Islam
Sue Elbrow – Free Churches (part of meeting)
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 David Maclsaac
Councillor Mewa Mann
Councillor Sukhjit Dhaliwal

Also Present: - Bill Alexander (Assistant Director, Raising Achievement), Kevin Barrett (Clerk) and the Reverend Mervyn Eden (Chair of the RE Resource Centre Committee).

Apologies for Absence:- Rev Alan Bignell, Roy Davey, Sue Elbrow (for lateness)
Councillor Patricia O'Connor and Kevin Walker.

PART I

8. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting of the SACRE held on 17th October, 2007 were approved as a correct record.

Christine Isles expressed her disappointment at the cancellation of the February, 2008 meeting which was due to have taken place at her school, Parlaunt Park Primary, particularly given that she had prepared displays of the children's work to be shown to SACRE Members. It was noted that the meeting had been cancelled due in part to another event involving elected Councillors taking place that evening as well as to the non-availability of Mr Alexander.

9. Matters Arising

Slough RE Resource Centre

The Chair welcomed to the meeting the Reverend Mervyn Eden who had been asked to attend to update SACRE on the future location of the Resource Centre, given the imminent closure of the Lea Schools and their replacement with an Islamic Faith School within the premises. The Islamic School would occupy the Lea School buildings for a further year until summer 2009 while their new premises were constructed. Reverend Eden had attended the recent tree planting ceremony to mark the start of construction of the new school and he expressed his delight at having been present at the start of the project. He commented on the importance of the Resource Centre and was pleased to report that the Centre was to be located within the new Islamic School. Bill Alexander added that a great deal of hard work and negotiation had taken place on behalf of the Centre to secure its future and there had been the options of locating it within Beechwood school or within the new Islamic School. However, the current site was favoured in that it was nearer the town centre and was more accessible. He believed that the current proposals were an excellent outcome both for the Resource Centre and for the town as a whole.

Jo Osborne added that she was pleased with the outcome and was building good relationships with the individuals involved.

The meeting went on to discuss a number of related issues including ways of encouraging greater use of the Resource Centre by schools and others.

Resolved - That the current position be noted and welcomed.

10. Role/Vision for Slough SACRE

Bill Alexander presented a report picking up on a number of the issues raised at the last meeting concerning the role of the SACRE, the lack of any dedicated professional support to it and the LEA's vision for RE in the town. He outlined the main tasks of a SACRE and commented that its broad role was to support the effective provision of RE collective worship in the town including:-

- Giving advice on methods of teaching the Agreed Syllabus for RE including the choice of teaching materials.
- Advising the LEA on the provision of training for teachers.
- Monitoring inspection reports on RE, collective worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC).
- Considering complaints about the provision and delivery of RE and collective worship referred to it by the LEA.

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education - 11.06.08

He commented that the local authority provided support to schools regarding teaching, standards and achievement irrespective of the nature of the subject. It continued to emphasise the key qualities of learning and teaching and this was reflected in the quality of teaching and learning judgments made by OfSTED and local authority officers. What the Council was unable to do was to provide direct support in developing the RE knowledge of teachers. However, it did disseminate information to schools regarding conferences, teaching materials and local RE meetings. He emphasised that in monitoring the delivery of RE, the SACRE did not have an inspection role but should be provided with the necessary information in order to assess whether schools required additional support and/or advice.

With regard to inspections, he reminded the SACRE that the nature of school inspections had changed and subjects were no inspected as part of the current process. However, SMSC remained a focus and the SACRE had an important role in monitoring the comments arising from OfSTED reports. He would ensure that any comments made in respect of SMSC were reported on a regular basis to the SACRE so that any issues could be addressed.

He also referred to the increase in the number of children taking RE in Slough schools and was happy to provide data about this on an annual basis.

With respect to specialist support, there was no RE specialist employed by the LEA. Whilst government funding was provided for subject advisors in Maths, English, Science and IT, there was no such similar provision for RE. Because the LEA did not actively recruit subject specialists beyond the current core subjects, he suggested a number of options that could be considered to provide additional support to RE. Three possible options were submitted, namely:-

- All six Berkshire Unitary Authority SACREs could recruit an RE Advisor, sharing the cost between them. This would amount to approximately £8,500 per annum.
- The Slough SACRE and the LEA could recruit a part time RE Advisor (0.2 FTE) who could be combined with a local school RE teacher at a similar cost.
- The third option was to employ a consultant on an ad hoc basis. This could amount to between £450 and £500 per day up to a maximum of £8,500 equivalent.

He cautioned however that any such proposal was unbudgeted at the present time and, if it was to be progressed, approval would be needed from the Council's Cabinet for a growth item in the budget for 2009/10 with a view to such a post coming into effect from September, 2009.

Members expressed a preference for the first option. However, there was some concern that one advisor covering all six Unitary Authorities would be spread too thinly and an East Berkshire solution would be preferred.

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education - 11.06.08

However, this would substantially increase the cost per authority. If this was not feasible, the second option could be pursued but the third option, that of employing a consultant, was not favoured.

The SACRE noted that details as to how such a post would be managed and monitored would be looked at in detail in due course but one authority would need to act as the host and manage the individual. There would also need to be close monitoring of their work if they were working for a number of separate authorities.

Following further discussion it was agreed that Mr Alexander pursue the first option with his counterparts in the other two East Berkshire authorities as a first step and report back to the SACRE at its next meeting on progress.

Resolved -

- (a) That the SACRE receive regular reports setting out the comments of OfSTED inspectors in respect of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in Slough schools.
- (b) That an annual statistical update be provided for the SACRE of the numbers of children taking RE in Slough schools.
- (c) That Mr Alexander report back to the next meeting on progress in pursuing the possible recruitment of an RE Advisor across the three East Berkshire authorities.

11. Application for a Determination - Godolphin Junior School

Godolphin Junior School had applied for a renewal of its determination under Section 12 of the Education Reform Act 1988 and a copy of their application form was submitted. It was noted that in the past where such applications were received, an RE Advisor would visit the school to monitor their collective worship so as to ensure that it was being undertaken satisfactorily. Mr Alexander advised that either he or a colleague would visit the school and, at the request of the SACRE, undertook to provide written details for the next meeting so that SACRE Members could be satisfied that the school was complying.

Resolved - That an LEA officer visit the school and report back to the next meeting of the SACRE on the collective worship taking place.

12. Proposed Dates of Future Meetings

The following proposed dates for future meetings of the SACRE were agreed:-

Wednesday, 15th October, 2008 at the Town Hall.
Wednesday, 11th February, 2009 at a school.

13. **Any Other Business**

NASACRE Conference 2008

Lil Abdo reported back on her attendance recently at the National Association of SACREs Annual Conference.

Changes to the RE Curriculum

Lil Abdo circulated details of the changes being made to the RE curriculum by QCA which had the effect of including RE as part of Humanities rather than as a distinct subject and she had concerns that these changes were being introduced without a great of discussion or awareness by SACREs or others.

Mr Alexander commented that he did not believe that there would be any loss of the content or knowledge delivered to pupils but rather that what was proposed was a different way of delivery RE. Members commented that there could be problems for teachers who were expected to deliver RE if they were not specialists and were delivering it for example as part of a joint Humanities curriculum including History and Geography. There was concern that the emphasis on RE would be diluted by such an approach.

In addition, Members had some concerns as to how the Agreed Syllabus would be delivered in such a context and this was an area that would need to be flagged up when the Syllabus came up for review. Members asked whether it would be possible for information to be provided as to how schools in Slough were delivering RE and Mr Alexander suggested that information could be collated in this regard and on how much time was being spent on RE by the various schools. This would enable the SACRE to comment from a position of knowledge.

Resolved - That a report be submitted to the SACRE in due course on the way in which RE is being delivered in Slough's schools and on the amount of time that schools are spending on the subject.

RE Matters Conference

Christine Isles referred to a Conference taking place on 15th September, 2008 in Reading entitled "RE Matters" and asked that anyone wanting further information contact her.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.30 pm. and closed at 5.50 pm.)

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**Local Authority SACRE Arrangements
Summary of Provision across Berkshire Unitaries**

The information below provides summary of the support to SACRE. Information request sent to Assistant Director contacts who either replied direct or passed information onto LA officer who had responsibility for SACRE.

Unitary	Officer Level	Funding	Support	Comment
Bracknell Forest	3 rd Tier – 14 to 19 Senior adviser	£3,500	Consultant supports adviser at SACRE meetings and writes annual report.	Funding to be reduced as £3,500 used for printing and distribution of agreed syllabus. SACRE currently considering using some of their budget to ask the same consultant to look at standards in RE since there is no RE specialist within the LA team.
Reading	Clerk from committee services 3 times a year plus agenda setting	£4,000	8 days a year consultant to advise RE and collective worship	Advisory support from diocesan adviser
Royal Borough Windsor & Maidenhead	2 nd tier – Assistant Director	£6,000 (see support)	£3,000 used to purchase consultant support – approx 6 days per year	Willing to do joint up work with Slough
Slough	2 nd tier – Assistant Director	£2,000	No specific RE adviser.	Member of LA adviser team provides subject support not RE specialist.

Unitary	Officer Level	Funding	Support	Comment
West Berkshire	School Improvement Advisers currently coordinates the SACRE – 3 rd Tier	£5,000	Buy in an external consultant for 10 days per year.	
Wokingham	3 rd tier – Senior Curriculum Development Adviser	£5,560	No advisory support for RE, but have the experience of Jo Fageant from the Oxford Diocese when we need consultant support (and we are lucky enough to have her as a C of E member of the SACRE).	LA officer for SACRE responsibility - Senior Curriculum Development Adviser for Minority Ethnic Achievement

Bill Alexander
Assistant Director, Raising Achievement

**GODOLPHIN JUNIOR
DETERMINATION APPLICATION**

Following the last SACRE meeting I visited Godolphin Junior and met with Emma Tate, the teacher who has responsibility for RE and collective worship.

My findings are as follows:

1. Well organised programme;
2. Effective planning and delivery;
3. A number of themes covered including religious festivals;
4. Effective staff CPD programme;
5. School and class programmes for collective worship.

OfSTED Comments

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils respond very well to clear rules about how to conduct themselves, so that lessons are not disrupted and playtimes are enjoyed by all. As one Year 6 girl said, 'I think everyone enjoys being in school when I see the way they work and behave.' Attendance rates are around the national average and unauthorised absence is low. Pupils respond exceptionally well to the very clear guidance on leading healthy lifestyles provided for them, and understand clearly the need to keep fit. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Particular strengths are the social skills shown by pupils and their spiritual development provided through opportunities to reflect on their learning. Pupils also develop a keen sense of responsibility for others and their surroundings. For example, they help keep the premises tidy without any bidding from adults. They take their responsibilities seriously, such as being playtime 'buddies', school councillors or 'eco-warriors'. By the end of Year 6 pupils can generally be trusted to do the right thing. They become outgoing and understand the need to work as a team. In conjunction with their good progress in developing their basic skills, these qualities help prepare them well for the next phase of their education and a future as life-long learners.

Recommendation:

That SACRE agree to the Determination Application.

Attachment:

Class worship and assemblies programme for Autumn 2008.

Bill Alexander
July 2008

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Class Worship and Assemblies Autumn Term 2008

APPENDIX

Week	Theme	Discussion points	Activity Ideas	Assembly
Term 1 1 3/9/08	New Beginnings	Discussion of a new term and our aspirations for the term ahead. New Term resolutions. How will we feel when we have achieved our goals? Collect ideas and vocabulary.	Speaking and Listening activities discussing what we would like to happen. Write a postcard to themselves to open next term containing their aspirations. Quiet moments of reflection visualizing what they would like to happen.	Led by Barbara
2 8/9/08	We are our school	Discussion of our school ethos. What does our school look like? Who is part of our school?	Reading and understanding ideas in school ethos. Create attractive area for it to be displayed. Brainstorm all the people who are part of the school from pupils to parents to cleaner etc. Give thanks for what we have and reflect on this.	Led by Carol
3 15/9/08	Democracy	Discuss and explain concept of democracy. What decisions do we make in school?	Sorting activity with democratic and undemocratic statements. Discussion of important people in history – Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, Pankhursts and their stories. Nearer the time please choose one person for each year group who is most appropriate for age and topics studied. Aim is to have a few pieces of work from a pupil in each year group on display outside office. (EMA team to coordinate)	House Captain Elections. Pupils and Staff split into 4 teams @ 1pm. Pupils listen to nominees then vote. Results led by Jasmeet in Hall at 3 pm.

Week	Theme	Discussion points	Activity Ideas	Assembly
4 22/9/08	Pride in ourselves	What makes you special? What have you done that you are proud of? How does our religion or culture make us proud?	Collect and display vocabulary of things they are proud of. Role play and speaking and listening activities to give all pupils opportunity to say what they are proud of and share their experience.	Citizens Assembly and Celebrations of achievement. Led by Barbara
5 29/9/08	Our school environment	What affects our school environment? What can we do to improve it? Whose responsibility is it?	Exploration of some of the problems the world is facing and the everyday things we can do to improve them. Where does our world come from? Give thanks for the world.	Led by Clare
6 6/10/08	Eid	What happens at Eid?	Muslim pupils to tell the story of Eid and share what happens. Make Eid cards. Reflection on why Eid is important to Muslims.	Eid Assembly Led by Year 4
7 13/10/08	Stories	What stories do we have from our faiths?	Tell a story from the faith groups represented in your class. What do we learn from these stories? What can we learn from them?	Book Week Led by Natalie
8 20/10/08	Pride in where we come from	Identification that where we come from is important.	Celebrate our diversity and have speaking and listening groups discussing where we come from and sharing. Can children bring in food (note any allergies). Write a prayer to their god celebrating the cultures of the world	Black History Month Led by EMA Team Citizens Assembly

Week	Theme	Discussion points	Activity Ideas	Assembly
Term 2 1 3/11/08	Divali	What happens at Divali? What is being celebrated, by whom and why?	Children to give their experiences of Divali. Sikh and Hindu children to share what happens. Moment of reflection using a candle.	Divali Assembly Led by Year 6.
2 10/11/08	Remembrance	Why do we have remembrance day?	Moments of reflection on those who have died in war. Has war affected any of our families? Look at links on Espresso	Remembrance Day Led by Year 5
3 17/11/08	Anti-Bullying	What is bullying? How does our faith guide us in how to treat others?	Links on Espresso Role play who to tell about bullying. Discuss and reflect on our school values that do not include bullying.	Led by Anti-Bullying Week – Kick Fit Academy / PSCHE Leader and School Council
4 24/11/08	Achievement	Special people who achieve in our society.	Discuss who are our heroes and why. Discuss individuals who have contributed to our society. Can each class make a small display? Develop understanding of those who contribute to the good of society as opposed to famous.	Citizens Assembly Celebration of achievement led by Carol
5 1/12/08	Taking Care	Taking care of ourselves and others.	What are our responsibilities to take care of others? What rules do we need to keep to keep safe? What should we do in an emergency? Reflection on carers and our role in caring for others.	Road Safety Led by Year 3

Week	Theme	Discussion points	Activity Ideas	Assembly
6 8/12/08	The story of Christmas	Why is Christmas important to Christians?	What traditions are there for Christmas and why do these take place? Christian pupils can share what they do at Christmas time.	Christmas Assembly Led by Mary
7 15/12/08	Achievement over the term	Reflecting and evaluating on our successes of the term.	Share achievement in a small group. Write a note complimenting a friend on their success. The language of success – role play phrases. Learning how to praise in other languages.	Citizens and Super Assembly Led by Barbara