

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Wednesday, 2nd November, 2016.

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Julie Siddiqi, Sue Elbrow, Ashpreet Singh Nainu, and Hardip Singh Sohal

Committee 2 – Church of England

Christine Isles, Andrea Sparrow

Committee 3 – Representatives of Teacher Associations

Lynda Bussley, Linda Lewis

Committee 4 – Representatives of the LEA

Councillors Brooker, Parmar and Sarfraz

Other:-

Jo Fageant – Professional Advisor & Johnny Kyriacou– Head of Education

Apologies for Absence:- Waqar Bhatti

PART 1

14. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 8th June 2016

Resolved - That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 8th June 2016, be approved as a correct record.

15. Matters Arising

None.

16. Welcome by the Karim Mercia, Head of Eden

Karim Mercia, Head teacher of Eden Girls School, welcomed SACRE to the school, and offered some information about the school.

Members were informed that Eden was part of Tauheedul Trust, which currently maintained 18 high performing schools nationwide. Eden Girls School opened in September 2015. Currently, there were 275 student son roll, and this was expected to rise to 800 in the coming years. Eden's current site was temporary, and the school would be moving to a new site on the Bath Road as of August 2017.

Eden subscribed to Tauheedul's stated mission statement of educational excellence, character development, and service to communities.

17. SACRE Membership Update

The clerk advised that Robin Crofts had left the organisation. SACRE therefore welcomed Johnny Kyriacou, the new Head of Education for Slough Borough Council, to the meeting, and advised that they looked forward to working with him moving forward.

18. SACRE Member News (An update from Members regarding activities undertaken since the last SACRE meeting)

Councillor Bedi highlighted an issue that had arisen within her constituents, relating to time off from school for pupils to observe Diwali. Councillor Bedi pointed out that whilst it was common for Muslim pupils to take the day off school to observe Eid, Hindu students were often not aware that they were able to take a day off for Diwali. Pupils at Foxborough School appeared to be particularly affected.

It was confirmed to Councillor Bedi that each school would have its own policy regarding absences for religious observance. It was agreed that Johnny Kyriacou would raise the matter with Foxborough School at a forthcoming meeting of Head Teachers.

Councillor Bedi went on to highlight a forthcoming multi-cultural day, currently being planned by Slough's Community Cohesion Group. It was hoped that SACRE, together with Slough's schools, could be involved in the day, and it was agreed that further details of the day be brought to the next SACRE meeting.

Christine Isles confirmed that a previously held Harvest Day event, attended by all primary schools within Langley, was to hopefully become an annual event, and details of the day could be brought to a future meeting of SACRE.

19. RE Resourcing Catalogue Update

It was confirmed that the first selection of religious items had been collected and photographed. Further work was required to complete the exercise, and it was agreed that Lynda Bussley and Waqar Bhatti continue to arrange this between themselves.

20. Joint SACRE Meetings Update

Jo Fageant, Professional Advisor to Slough SACRE, updated members on the outcome of a recent Joint SACRE Hub meeting held in September 2016.

In summary, the actions agreed at the Hub meeting held in May, and confirmed to SACRE at its meeting in June, were continuing to progress as expected. Hub Meetings were now being successfully synchronised with local SACRE meetings to ensure a continuous flow of activity.

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It was suggested that faith schools be approached with a view to adding them to the list of potential places of worship. Jo Fageant agreed to relay this at the next Hub meeting.

21. Update on Costed Action Plan for 2016-2017

Jo Fageant, Professional Advisor, updated Members on actions yet to be completed.

It was confirmed that the current school term's newsletter was still being drafted, and would be sent once complete.

The proposal to meet and discuss GCSE specifications had not been met with a positive response, so the topic would instead be addressed via an informational email to teachers.

The course on radicalisation was still to be arranged.

22. Crossing The Bridges Project

Jo Fageant, Professional Advisor, outlined the aims and current status of the Crossing the Bridges Project for the benefit of new SACRE members.

It was highlighted that the principle aim of the Project was to compile and maintain an up-to-date list of all places of worship available to schools for pupils to visit. The list was to include the relevant points of contact, an advisory on what kind of visit was available and to what age group, and the appropriate supporting materials e.g. booking forms, handbooks, and feedback forms.

Members suggested that the list be expanded to include potential sites for multi-faith visits (for both children and adults), with a view to increasing understanding and community between disparate faith groups. It was suggested that such days could take place within schools, though it was understood that this would be dependant on timetabling and syllabus/curriculum requirements. It was agreed that the matter be given additional thought for potential discussion at the next Hub meeting.

23. SACRE Annual Report

Jo Fageant, Professional Advisor, introduced the draft SACRE annual report for 2015-16. Following feedback to the previous year's report, the draft was designed in the same format, with the aim of being brief and succinct.

Suggestions for further items to be included were sought.

Members suggested including the GCSE and A Level results for Slough RE examinations. It was confirmed that exam results could be included, though were not yet validated.

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It was confirmed that SACRE member's attendance during the previous year also required validating, and it was agreed that this be completed by the clerk.

Resolved - That the an updated annual report be brought to the next meeting for approval.

24. Member's Attendance Record

The Members Attendance Record was noted.

25. Date of Next Meeting - TBC

It was agreed that the clerk would confirm the date of the next meeting to members via email. It was requested that the meeting be held in the early part of March 2017, avoiding Ash Wednesday.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.45 pm and closed at 6.20 pm)