

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Wednesday, 13th October, 2010.

Present:-

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Ms S Elbrow

Committee 2 – Church of England

Rev A Allen, Rev A Bignell, Ms C Fageant (Chair) and Ms C Isles

Committee 3 – Representatives of Teacher Associations

Councillors Bains, Maclsaac, MS Mann, Rasib and Basharat

Committee 4 – Representatives of the LEA

Ms M Stacey and Ms L Bussley

Apologies for Absence:- Mr L Khan, Mr Saraswat and Ms J Osborne

PART 1

9. Election of Chair

Resolved – That Jo Fageant be appointed Chair for the 2010/11 academic year.

10. Election of Vice-Chair

Resolved – That Alan Bignell be appointed Vice-Chair for the 2010/11 academic year.

Members wished to place on record their thanks to Jo Osbourne for her work as Vice-Chair over the past several years.

11. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 9th June 2010 were approved as a correct record.

12. Matters Arising

It was noted that copies of the handbook for new SACRE members had been acquired and a copy would be provided to any new members. It was agreed that a copy of the booklet would be provided to the new Vice-Chair. It was also suggested that the CD-Rom on effective SACREs be shown at the next meeting.

Godolphin Members were advised that a letter had been received from the School Governors in support of the application for a determination.

13. Membership Update and Suggested Amendments to the SACRE Constitution

It was agreed that due to the poor attendance of several Muslim and Sikh members a letter would be sent to them advising them that they could be removed as Members at the next meeting. The current Hindu representative would be resigning from SACRE as his current commitments at temple prevented him from attending meetings. He had already nominated a replacement who would be contacted shortly. SACRE was advised that enquiries had been made to Teaching organisations regarding nominations for representatives for those with vacancies.

Furthermore the Chair proposed a fixed term of membership for Committees 1, 2 and 3 of three years which could be renewed. Members felt that this was a good idea and would provide an opportunity to think about their Membership and their role on SACRE. Members would of course have the opportunity for re-appointment if they so wished.

Resolved –

- (a) That those members representing the Sikh and Muslim faiths who have not attended the last three meetings be sent an advisory notice before the next meeting.
- (b) That the following wording be added to the Constitution:
Members of the SACRE shall serve from the date of their appointment for a term of three years or until their successors are appointed by the Authority. They shall be eligible for reappointment after each term for a further term by consultation, if necessary with the group which they represent. This shall also apply to any co-opted members who may be appointed.

14. SACRE Art Exhibition at St. Mary's Church

The Chair highlighted the RE and Art Exhibition arranged by SACRE which took place in September in St. Mary's Church. Children from local schools had been invited to submit a piece of artwork on a number of spiritual themes. The response to the project had been excellent and several schools had contributed entries. Due to a large number of services recently taking place in the church it was estimated that the exhibition was probably seen by up to 3000 people in total a number expressed delight at the children's work. The exhibition needed to be taken down shortly and it was agreed that the work would be returned to the schools. A large number of the children who contributed received certificates for their work. A number of schools confirmed that they would welcome a future opportunity to take part in a similar project.

15. Update on the Slough Religious Studies Centre

Members were advised that the RE Centre had carried out a consultation with schools on the use of the RE centre. The response rate was only two schools

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education - 13.10.10

from all schools in Slough. Neither of the responses was positive in their use of the RE centre. Following this the decision was taken by the trustees of the RE Resource Centre to close it down. As the RE Centre was a registered Charity its constitution stipulated that any materials from the centre should be passed on to charities with like aims. Therefore this had been publicised to other RE resource centres and Croydon had expressed a strong interest in taking over some of the resources. However it needed to be decided by the trustees whether some of the resources could be retained in Slough. It was noted that the funding from the SACRE budget to Iqra School for the rent of the Centre would have been provided until the end of the financial year; however the close down of the Centre may move more quickly than anticipated. Some members raised concerns about how sacred texts would be stored by another centre or schools. It was noted that if there was anything not wanted by Croydon it was possible that these could be given to school or other interested parties. SACRE expressed disappointment that the Centre was closing but understood why this decision had been taken and noted that it was not a unique situation with more schools using internet resources and purchasing their own.

16. Report on the Joint SACRE Conference held on 15th June

The Chair circulated a report to the SACRE on the theme discussed at the Joint SACRE Conference, which was RE trails. The conference looked at what the whole initiative was about and the ways in which schools could be encouraged to take up the challenge of forming RE trails. SACRE representatives from each of the different areas formulated ideas for RE trails in their own areas. A Member advised that Montem School was trying to develop an RE trail in Chalvey based on the changing face of RE over the past 150 years. Although the aim was for this to be developed over the spring term the SACRE agreed that it would be useful for this to be shared at a future meeting. A member advised that their school had taken pupils to different places of worship around Slough. The Chair asked Members to consider whether any places of worship would be willing to offer visits or provide speakers to help raise the profile of what was available within Slough.

The SACRE felt that this would be a good initiative to link in with the Celebrating RE month in March. It was reported that children from Slough had self-funded aid to Pakistan following the floods and it was suggested that perhaps something could be promoted in future in the Celebrating RE month. A member suggested that an RE day could be hosted at St. Mary's Church as this took place last year with Slough Grammar School. The member agreed to find out if anything was planned for next year. A Member further suggested that Members should speak to the schools at which they were governors.

Resolved – That the report on RE trails as discussed at the Joint SACRE Conference be noted and that options for an event for the Celebrating RE week be looked into

17. Issues Raised at the Joint SACRE Conference

The Chair advised that at the Joint Conference attention was drawn to the value of its continuation. Feedback had always been positive from all the SACREs involved. However it was established a number of years ago by all the Berkshire SACREs and the benefits needed to be weighed against the costs for accommodation and speakers. It was originally agreed to base the charges on five delegates from each SACRE, although Slough often only had two or three attending. It was further noted that information was not always fed back from the conference to all the SACREs.

Further to this it was suggested that the Joint Conference could be used next year as an opportunity to assist with the review of the locally agreed syllabus. West Berkshire previously took the lead in the review and had agreed to do so again and supply RE expertise. West Berkshire would need to know whether other authorities were agreed to this. The SACRE discussed the possibility of moving forward with the agreed syllabus as the theme for the next Joint SACRE Conference. It was felt that much of the syllabus would not need to be significantly altered and that with the current financial climate this was the best approach to take. It was noted that the conference was likely to take place in May. It was noted that SACRE was aware of the complexities of the syllabus as it needed to approve it but it was also important that schools were able to fully appreciate the essence of it.

A member advised that they had produced a scheme of work from the syllabus for Key Stage 1 and 2 which had been in place for three years and agreed to share it with SACRE. It was also noted that it would be useful to invite RE co-ordinators to the conference as they had been involved in the past. The Chair advised that there would be a whole page in next terms newsletter dedicated to the review of the locally agreed syllabus and this may link in with the celebration of RE month. Members noted with concern that many teachers did not feel confident about teaching RE. The chair advised that Wokingham SACRE had agreed to open up training to other SACREs about being an effective SACRE member. Members agreed that it would be useful to look through the effective SACRE CD at the beginning of the next meeting.

Resolved - That West Berkshire be advised that Slough SACRE agreed to the joint review of the locally agreed syllabus with West Berkshire as the lead authority and that this should be developed as the theme for the next Joint SACRE Conference.

18. The Annual SACRE Report

A draft copy of the annual SACRE report was circulated at the meeting. Members were advised that there was further detail to be added to the report and some of this had yet to be released. SACRE agreed that once the data was available the draft should be circulated to all SACRE Members for comment or approval before being submitted to the QCA. A Member suggested that a line be added to the report to explain that the Agreed

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education - 13.10.10

Syllabus was due to be update in the coming year. It was noted that all SACRE members would need to agree to the report with or without comment.

Resolved – That the appropriate updates be made to the draft report and a copy then be circulated to Members for comment or approval.

19. Applications for a Determination: Baylis Court

SACRE considered a request for a renewal of a determination on collective worship for Baylis Court School. The Senior Advisor, Standards and Achievement had visited the school and provided a report to SACRE which provided detail on the current practice at the school which recommended that the determination be extended.

Resolved – That the application for the renewal of the determination on collective worship for Baylis Court School be approved.

20. Any Other Business

None

21. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted as 9th February 2011 and the location was agreed as St. Anthony's RC Primary School.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.30 pm and closed at 5.45 pm)