

**1ROTHERHAM STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(SACRE) - 10/02/15**

**ROTHERHAM STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(SACRE)
TUESDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY, 2015**

Present:- N. Goodwin (in the Chair).

Group A – other Christian denominations and other faiths – N. Goodwin (Project Manager for Community Education Connection – a Christian Education Charity and the Hub Christian Community (Pentecostal)), I. Jones (Evangelical Christian), D. Homer (Buddhism), T. Williams (Baha'i), R. Dyson (Catholicism), G. Raha (Hinduism).

Group B – the Church of England – No member was in attendance but communications had been sent to the Diocese of Sheffield to invite representation.

Group C – Teachers' Professional Associations: - No member in attendance.

Group D – Rotherham Local Authority: - Councillor T. Sharman.

Also in attendance were: - Z. Ahmed, H. Etheridge

Apologies for absence were received from: - T. Griffin (Humanism), L. Shaw (Salvation Army), S. Alam OBE (Islamic), V. Gregory (RE Curriculum Consultant), G. Harrison, C. Webster (Teaching Profession), C. Wells (Methodist), G. Gray (Pentecostal).

22. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 7TH OCTOBER, 2014, AND MATTERS ARISING.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the RSACRE were considered.

The Baha'i representative's name should be corrected.

Matters arising updates were provided in relation to: -

Minute number 13 (Collective Worship and Determinations update): -

- The Collective Worship policy could not be circulated at this point as all hardcopies had been given out to Schools and the finalised electronic version was too large to be emailed. Consideration was being given to making the document available on-line. If this was possible, a link would be circulated to RSACRE members;
- The Clerk reported that one School had commended the booklets and asked for extra copies for their Governing Body's consideration. The School was thanked for their positive feedback but additional copies were not available and they were asked to photocopy their own copy already in School.

Minute number 15 – GCSE and A-level performance (including a glossary of terms): -

Actions to rollover: -

Agreed: - (1) Contact Maltby Academy and Thrybergh School and Sports College about their outcomes.

(2) Look at ways of increasing the communication and liaison between the Rotherham SACRE and Rotherham's higher education providers and Rotherham's academy schools.

Minute number 16 – Feedback on pupil conference: -

In relation to next steps, it was noted that funding was available for the 2014/2015 school year conference.

Minute number 17 – Feedback on REwards evening: -

Action to rollover, although it was understood that work was already underway to complete this 'T. Williams suggested that each member of SACRE be given a share of the list of Rotherham's Schools to contact to promote REwards / Rotherham SACRE.

Agreed: - That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as an accurate record and the matters arising updates be noted.

23. COMMUNITY COHESION UPDATE.

Nicki Goodwin, Chair of the RSACRE, welcomed Zaidah Ahmed, School and Community Cohesion Officer, Carol Seymour, Teacher, Academy and a group of young people in Years 9 and 10 at Wingfield Academy School to the meeting. They had been invited to provide information updates and presentations about the whole range of community cohesion work that had taken place and was to continue.

Zaidah's presentation covered her work as the co-ordinator of Schools Community Cohesion.

• **EU Family Induction day: -**

- 100 families had attended the most recent event;
- Next event planned for 26th February, 2015;
- Transport provided for all parents and children to get to the event;
- Strong links to schools;
- Language support provided on the day via translators;
- Workshops covered education, road safety, fire safety, fly tipping and health.

• **Model United Nations: -**

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- More to follow on this later!
- SMSC incorporating British Values training for schools: -
 - Ofsted expectation;
 - Zaidah was in the process of producing guidance for schools on British Values.
- Equality Act training;
- Rotherham International Global Award;
- Accord Inclusive Awards 2015: -
 - Brinsworth Comprehensive School.
- One School One Community: -
 - Young person ambassadors – visible in school by their hoodies.
- School linking programmes;
- Deprived neighbourhoods – education lead;
- **Reporting and recording of racist incidents in schools: -**
 - Had increased recently;
 - Could be due to increased reporting?;
 - Trends were in primary schools and related to name calling;
 - Likely to be linked to the current reports, announcements and media coverage of the Jay and Casey Reports.
- EAL training in Early Years;
- Roma Pathways to employment;
- Supporting SACRE;
- Prevent (Wrap 3) initiated in January, 2015.

Discussions followed the presentation, and the following issues were raised: -

- Gopa Raha wished to congratulate Zaidah on the successes in her work. Gopa knew how difficult work around community cohesion could be and how easy it was to fail in the objectives set. The events presented were a great step forward.
- Councillor Sharman asked Zaidah whether she felt appropriately resourced to successfully achieve her targets. - Zaidah explained that she was working with a small amount of funding and needed to constantly work with partners to identify further funding streams. She only had confirmed funding for one more Model United Nations event, and one further Family Induction Day with Roma Matrix funding. Zaidah expected short-term funding to be an issue going forward.
- Ian Jones asked about whether the Jay and Casey Reports uncovering serious Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham had impacted on community cohesion work, and how could SACRE

help? – Zaidah confirmed that she had picked-up on increased tensions and ill-feeling within communities. Schools were reporting more name calling. Upsettingly, this was from five years old, suggesting that young children were learning these words at home or via media. This was unsettling.

Nicki suggested that the issue of community cohesion be considered and taken forward at the next Pupil/Teacher Conference. Zaidah agreed to take the question away on what support the RSACRE could provide to assist in the current context and report back.

Carol Seymour spoke about the Model United Nations (MUN) work. The RSACRE were aware of the previous successes of the programme. She explained how the programme had developed and grown at Wingfield Academy, when the Year 10 students who had taken part really wanted to put on a similar event for Year 7 students.

Carol was joined by Finn Smith (Year 10) and Sian Gleadhall, Markela Islami, Megan Allen and Imogen Jeffs (Year 9).

The MUN work covered: -

- Debating skills – developing and refining arguments;
- Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) – working in a VLE with different schools;
 - The VLE was demonstrated. The chatroom style forum were used to keep in touch, share work and ideas and discuss;
 - Everyone worked in their evenings and weekends;
 - The discussions were still online to read, even though the work had ended;
 - Position Papers written by delegates were still available.
- Looking at the Syria crisis – events had moved on from the early conflict to later on. It was felt that some of the events and photographs were too explicit and shocking for Year 7 work;
- A Parent and community event had taken place;
- Students worked in groups of people that they did not know from the very earliest stages of the MUN. This really challenged their comfort zones;
- The MUN used the same debating protocols that the UN used.

The group of Wingfield young people spoke really positively about their experiences of the MUN: -

- Everyone started nervous and thinking that everyone else was better than them;
- Nobody wanted to speak to begin with;
- However, after some practice, delegates started to feel more confident and actually wanted to speak;

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- Everyone developed new skills;
- Everyone made new friends and the different countries made allies and enemies;
- The MUN was an experience that you could not get anywhere else;
- Some people had been on the course for three years;
- Being assigned a country gave delegates the opportunity to learn all about the country, including where it was, its ideologies and what it thought about things. “This gave you the opportunity to learn things that you would never have expected”;
- “The MUN allowed you to build up more personal skills than academic skills”: -
 - Confidence;
 - Public speaking;
 - Planning and teaching;
 - Statistics, research, country demographics;
 - Writing reports and position papers;
 - Helping other people.

Zaidah and Carol spoke about previous graduates of the scheme who had gone on to amazing things in part to do with their experiences on MUN; these included work experience and higher education placements.

The RSACRE members were really impressed by Wingfield Academy's representatives' presentation. All agreed how important it would be to celebrate the successes and publicise the programme and spread the word to others not on the course. The good work demonstrated here was worthy of an REward to recognise the good and outstanding practice evidenced.

Dave Homer suggested that the next refresh of the model RE syllabus should involve an emphasis on speaking and listening skills, as demonstrated through the MUN. Dave commended the young people for being great ambassadors for Wingfield Academy

The young people who had graduated from MUN were able to sell the programme really well. A recorded clip of them presenting the programme and talking about their experiences would be useful to communicate with stakeholders, including headteachers to promote the MUN.

Agreed: - (1) That the information presented be noted.

(2) That consideration be given by all stakeholders on how the RSACRE can respond to the current context in Rotherham resulting from the Jay and Casey reports into Child Sexual Exploitation.

(3) That consideration be given by all stakeholders on how the RSACRE can publicise the MUN.

(4) That REwards nominations go forward in respect of the ambassadors from Wingfield Academy and the graduates of the programme.

(5) That consideration be given to all of the issues raised by the MUN, and the demonstrable benefits the programme brings, when work commences on the refreshed model syllabus.

24. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

Nicki Goodwin, Chair of the RSACRE, updated those present at the meeting on another good news story.

A CPD RE event had been held at the Hub Christian Community earlier in the Spring Term. The day of the conference had coincided with heavy snow, however, of the 66 delegated booked in to attend, 57 made it in.

Key points: -

- Attendees worked across Key Stages One, Two and Three;
- The course content had touched on British Values;
- The meeting was the first South Yorkshire Hub and feedback had suggested that attendees wanted more events;
- Attendees reported feeling better equipped and encouraged after attending;
- It had been a profitable event.

Agreed: - That the information shared be noted.

25. STUDENT CONFERENCE.

Nicki Goodwin, Chair of the RSACRE, outlined work that had been undertaken on the Student Conference.

Following the small first conference, it had been confirmed that a second conference was desired. The eventual aspiration for the conference was that it would cover the whole South Yorkshire region, although it may be too soon to start with this. Funding was available to run a second conference in the Autumn Term, 2015.

Agreed: - That the information shared be noted.

26. REWARDS CEREMONY.

RSACRE's REwards programme was discussed in order to confirm arrangements for the 2014/2015 ceremony.

- The profile needed to be raised;
- REwards were announced at the CPD RE conference;

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- Annually REwards tied into the Children's Festival;
- Following on from the Casey Report, which highlighted how Rotherham had often emphasised good news stories whilst downplaying bad news, attendees were aware that an effort needed to be made to ensure that all nominations were genuine and represented real examples of good practice. It would improve REwards nominations to include real examples and quotes emphasising the benefits of the RE activity. Tricia suggested that press packs be put together and volunteered to do this;
- One nomination had been agreed at a previous meeting, and further nominations had been sought in relation to the good and outstanding practice demonstrated within the Community Cohesion update. Wingfield Academy, Brinsworth Comprehensive and Saint Pius X Catholic High School had been nominated for their exciting role in the Model United Nations. Two young people had been nominated who were graduates of the scheme and had used their experiences of the MUN to go onto great things;
- Dave Homer also nominated the school/s that had entered the most entrants for RE/RS qualifications, as it demonstrated their commitment to the subject for all. This would be known when the verified data was available;
- It would be a good idea for a sub-group of the RSACRE to meet with the REward recipients before the awards ceremony;
- The REwards ceremony would follow the same format as previous years.

Agreed: - (1) That the information shared, and discussion points raised, be noted.

(2) That REwards be approved in respect of Wingfield Academy, Brinsworth Comprehensive and Saint Pius X Catholic High School, the two young people who were graduates of the scheme and had used their experiences of the MUN to go onto great things, and the school/s with the most entrants for RE/RS courses (identified following receipt of verified data) be approved to receive REwards.

27. DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

Nicki Goodwin, Chair of the RSACRE, spoke about the intention to bring together a development plan in Rotherham to be an annual reminder of events and commitments. This was seen as good practice and would facilitate forward planning.

Items that would be included: -

- Annual report;
- Pupil / Teacher conference;
- Calendar;

- Syllabus.

There was support for the development plan. Could SACRE members please bring to the next meeting any ideas they wish to be included/considered for the action plan?

Resolved: - That the information shared be noted.

28. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

T. Williams informed the RSACRE that the holy dates for the Baha'i calendar in 2015/2016 had been determined. This was a complicated process that related to the solar calendar, the vernal equinox, the lunar calendar and changes in the Gregorian calendar. Tricia circulated the holy dates to those in attendance along with a brief update on what the dates involved, including whether work and study were suspended. She asked that these dates be included in the religious dates calendar that accompanied the Collective Worship document sent to Schools.

Attendees recommended the SHAP calendar as the best and most reliable version and suggested that this be used in the next Collective Worship document.

It had been requested at a previous meeting that the Collective Worship document be circulated to the RSACRE members. Unfortunately there were no hardcopies remaining, they had all been sent to schools and had been well received. The document was too big to email. Consideration was being given to making the document available online so that a link could be emailed out.

Resolved: - (1) That the Baha'i religious dates in 2015/2016 be noted.

(2) That consideration be given to using the SHAP calendar in future Collective Worship documents.

(3) That consideration be given to making the Collective Worship document available online so that a link to the document can be emailed out to RSACRE members.

29. COUNCILLOR TERRY SHARMAN.

Councillor Sharman informed the RSACRE that this would be the last meeting he attended as he was shortly due to retire. He had been an Elected Member for 44 years and a SACRE member for a long time. He had been a representative of the Council but also brought his own faith experiences with the Salvation Army to the table. Councillor Sharman felt that education and religious education had a lot going for it in Rotherham and that it would be possible to make things even better. He had enjoyed his time on the RSACRE.

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D. Homer, Buddhist representative, described how he had worked with Councillor Sharman on the SACRE since the 1980s. He had always provided conscientious support and promoted RE. He had never exclusively promoted his own religious beliefs or politics.

All wished Councillor Sharman well for the future.

30. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS: -

The summer term meeting of the RSACRE, to be followed by the REwards ceremony, would be held on Tuesday 16th June, 2015, in the New York Stadium from 4.00 p.m. onwards.

That future meetings take place on: -

- Tuesday 13th October, 2015;
- Tuesday 9th February, 2016.

31. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING/S: -

- Model syllabus – an explanation of the process of how the curriculum was produced last time;
- Nominations and appointment to the role of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Rotherham SACRE for the 2015-2016 school year.