

**1ROTHERHAM STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
(SACRE) - 13/10/15**

**ROTHERHAM STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
(SACRE)  
TUESDAY, 13TH OCTOBER, 2015**

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

**Group A – other Christian denominations and other faiths** – N. Goodwin (Pentecostal), I. Jones (Evangelical Christian), R Dyson (Catholic), D. Homer (Buddhist), C. Wells (Methodist), T. Williams (Baha'i).

**Group B – the Church of England** – H. Thomas (Diocese of Sheffield).

**Group C – Teachers' Professional Associations** – C. Webster.

**Group D – the Local Authority** – Councillor E. Rose.

**Co-opted members** – N. Robinson.

Also in attendance was – Hannah Etheridge.

Apologies for absence had been received from: - Councillors Watson and Alam, G. Raha and V. Gregory.

**45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

No Declarations of Interest were received.

**46. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16TH JUNE, 2015.**

The minutes from the previous meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2015, were considered.

Roy Dyson submitted his apologies to this meeting and asked that they be included in the minutes.

In relation to Minute number 35 (Membership of the Rotherham SACRE), it was agreed that Naomi Robinson, South Yorkshire Pais, should become a co-opted member of the RSACRE.

Agreed: - That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as an accurate record.

**47. LOCALLY AGREED SYLLABUS.**

Nicki Goodwin, Chair of the Rotherham SACRE, explained the factors that had led to a delay in commencing the work on the refreshed locally agreed Religious Education syllabus. It was hoped that detailed work would begin in the second week of November.

The Local Authority had agreed to fund 9 sessions between Vanessa

Gregory, Curriculum Consultant, and Lat Blaylock, National Consultant.

The Development Plan included the initial actions that were required: -

- Survey monkey and letter to all schools to canvass interest in working party for the Agreed Syllabus;
- Arrange three Agreed Syllabus Conference planning meetings in November, February and June;
- Arrange an Agreed Syllabus Conference in July;
- Arrange an Agreed Syllabus launch – September.

Ian Jones felt that there were actions that could be commenced now, rather than waiting until November. Nicki felt that the initial conversation with Lat would scope what it was within the existing Syllabus that needed to be updated, which would impact on the content of the questions asked.

Councillor Eve Rose was really glad that there had been observers at the previous meeting and wanted to bring as many different groups into this process as possible.

Caroline Webster had experienced the changing content of the GCSE exam board. There had been a radical move away from morale-based questions to more traditional biblical/religious teachings. The Locally Agreed Syllabus needed to support/reflect this.

Dave Homer felt that the process, and eventual syllabus would be, strengthened by the widening of the RSACRE and bringing in more representatives from Rotherham's groups and organisations.

The following attendees recorded their interest in joining the working party that would take this forward: -

- C. Webster;
- C. Wells;
- D. Homer;
- T. Williams;
- One Local Authority representative – Councillor;
- One Diocese of Sheffield representative.

Other suggestions included the observers to the previous RSACRE meeting and RE Co-ordinators from Rotherham's schools.

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

(2) That the locally agreed syllabus working party meet in November to commence the work.

**48. SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR THE RSACRE CHAIR, 2016/2017.**

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Nicki Goodwin explained that she was happy to be Chair of the RSACRE in the 2015/2016 school year providing that succession arrangements were in place for the role to be taken on by another person from 2016/2017 school year.

Discussion on this followed and the following points were raised: -

- What were the requirements of the role? Time commitment especially?;
- What were the requirements on the chair being aware of educational issues?;
- There were other members of the RSACRE who were willing to take on work delegated by the Chair.

The RSACRE Constitution document would be circulated to the group.

The RSACRE voted on the Chair and Vice Chair arrangements for the 2015/2016 school year.

Agreed: - (1) That Nicki Goodwin be Chair of the Rotherham SACRE for the 2015/2016 school year, with the support of Vanessa Gregory, Curriculum Consultant.

(2) That Caroline Webster and Charlie Wells be joint Vice Chair of the Rotherham SACRE for the 2015/2016 school year.

#### **49. ANNUAL REPORT, 2013/2014.**

The Annual Report of the RSACRE 2013/2014 was presented to the group. The document outlined what the group had achieved during the 2013/2014 school year.

The range of activities covered: -

- Chair's forward;
- Local Authority support for RSACRE;
- GCSE and A-level results (2012-2014);
- RSACRE meetings during 2013/2014;
- Collective Worship and Determinations;
- Community Cohesion updates;
- Speakers and presentations;
- REwards for the 2013/2014 school year;
- Training and Development opportunities;
- Publications by the RSACRE during 2013/2014 and significant reference documents.

Attendees were pleased that the document captured the range of activities that the RSACRE carried out on an annual basis.

It was noted that some information/links relating to the Rotherham's comparison to national GCSE and A-level performance was missing. It was agreed that, subject to this information being included, the document be approved.

Agreed: - (1) That the document be approved for circulation, subject to the missing information being added in.

(2) That the document be submitted to the NASACRE and emailed to all schools to raise the RSACRE's profile in the local area.

**50. STUDENT CONFERENCE, 2015.**

Nicki Goodwin explained about the Student Conference 2015 that was due to take place on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2015, at The Hub Christian Community. This was the joint teacher/student learning conference that had started in 2014 and had been really successful and positively received.

All phases of school had been invited to attend. Those who signed up would bring eight Year 5 or Year 8 students along.

There was a lot of interest in attending the event from amongst RSCARE attendees. Councillor Eve Rose, Naomi Robinson and Roy Dyson (for Churches Together in South Yorkshire) all expressed an interest in attending the event.

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

(2) That it be explored how many representatives of the RSACRE can attend the event.

(3) That the email that had been sent out to all schools outlining the event be forwarded to the RSACRE.

**51. DEVELOPMENT PLAN, 2015/2016.**

The draft RSACRE development plan for 2015/2016 was considered. It was proposed that this document be maintained and be submitted to each RSACRE meeting as a standing item. This document would track all of the group's activities.

The document was well received and the following additions were suggested: -

- Student Conference;
- South Yorkshire hub;
- REwards celebration – developing the evening, success criteria and making it a central plank of the RSACRE's work;
- Issues taken by the RSCARE if it became aware of non-

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compliance in relation to Collective Worship, Determinations and so on;

- Developing membership and ensuring that each of the four groups was well populated;
- Benchmarking against other SACREs.

Further discussion continued on supporting the RSACRE's work: -

- There was capacity with existing members of the group to support projects, visits, research;
- Councillor Rose thought that it would be worth pursuing whether there was funding available for community cohesion, as this linked to the RSACRE's remit and was a live issue for Rotherham at the moment;
- Ian Jones felt that inviting schools to come to present their work to the RSACRE was a really positive thing and it should continue.

Agreed: - That the RSACRE's Development Plan, 2015/2016, be accepted as a live document.

### **52. COMMUNICATIONS.**

Additional items were raised at the meeting: -

- There had been a number of recent enquiries from Rotherham schools asking for RSACRE recommendations for guest speakers on issues relating to religious education and human rights. Hannah was pleased to report that the RSACRE had been able to provide positive responses to these requests. In the past the RSACRE had produced a directory of recommended people and groups for this purpose. It was agreed that this document should be refreshed by the RSACRE in conjunction with Zaidah Ahmed. This would bring together a really valuable resource.
- Caroline Webster referred to the exam board's new GCSE expectations about traditional teachings. It was expected that students would know different Christian denominations' thoughts on very specific issues. For example, on the treatment of prisoners. Caroline Webster was asked to pull together a list of the areas where further/more detailed information was needed and the RSACRE would work on providing a response. This could also link to the directory of recommended people.
- Tricia Williams thought that the RSACRE, and perhaps as part of the Locally Agreed Syllabus survey monkey, should look into parental withdrawals from religious education/religious studies.

Agreed: - That the information shared be noted.

**53. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS.**

Agreed: - (1) That future RSACRE meetings take place on: -

- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2016 – 4.00 pm, Rotherham Town Hall;
- Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2016 – 4.00 pm, New York Stadium.

(2) That the Locally Agreed Syllabus Working Party start to meet to scope the work required.