

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
WEDNESDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2012**

Present:-

Group 1 Gavin Gray and Ian Jones.

Group 2 Gail Atkin (in the Chair).

Group 3 David Homer, Nicki Goodwin.

Group 4 Councillor Christine Beaumont.

Also in attendance were : - Vanessa Gregory, Beth Walters (Wath Comprehensive School) and Zoahib Arif (Wath Comprehensive School),

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence had been received from: - Councillor Jane Havenhand, Glenys Harrison, Zaidah Ahmed, Anne Miller and Hannah Ronaldson.

It was noted that Anne Miller had resigned from SACRE, but had asked Reverend Alistair Sharpe to suggest an alternative Methodist Church representative to join the group. Hannah Ronaldson had also submitted her resignation to the SACRE.

15. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING, HELD ON 5TH OCTOBER, 2011.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the SACRE held on 5th October, 2011, were considered.

Agreed: - That the minutes of the previous meeting of the SACRE be approved as a correct record.

16. MATTERS ARISING.

It was noted that, in relation to item 12 of the previous meeting (SACRE – Update of Membership Details), all members had completed their membership details and this document would be circulated to the group for information.

17. SECONDARY SCHOOLS - WATH COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL.

The Chair welcomed Beth Walters, RE Teacher, Wath Comprehensive School, and Zoahib Arif, Trainee Teacher, Wath Comprehensive School. They had attended the meeting of the SACRE to provide an overview of how Religious Education was taught at the School.

RE was delivered in the SMCS faculty, which included Psychology, Sociology, PSHE and Child Care. There were six specialist RE teachers in the faculty, although the majority also taught another specialism.

- Each year group received one fifty-minute RE lesson per week;
 - At years 7 and 8 the locally agreed syllabus was taught. Year 9 students were taught skills for GCSE, with a small amount of GCSE-level content. GCSE preparation work included development of argument skills taking into account different

perspectives and beliefs, including a Christian point of view.

- Religious Studies was delivered at GCSE in either a short- or full-course;
- Sixth formers accessed A-level General Studies, which included some RE content; and,
- A-level Religious Studies was a popular option and included a focus on Islam, philosophy, religious experience, and beliefs about life, death and beyond;
- Attainment at each level was considered:
 - Full-course – 89% at A*-C;
 - Short-course – 18% at A* - C;
 - A-level – 100% A* - E.

Beth shared examples of the work that each year group undertook. Tasks included experiential learning, such as creating a Gurdwara in a classroom, participating in debates and creating a response to issues taking into account different points of view.

Discussion ensued between Beth and members of SACRE. Salient issues included:

- Move towards teaching locally agreed curriculum – this had been a useful experience and had complimented the previous syllabus that was taught. The resources and professional network that was available through SACRE had been really useful, and Wath Comprehensive had been involved in joint planning and discussions with other Secondary Schools and were continuing to work closely with Wingfield Business and Enterprise College.
- Attendees asked whether there were any ways in which the Rotherham SACRE could support the SMSC faculty at Wath Comprehensive School. Beth agreed to contact her colleagues at the School and report back to the group.

The Chair thanked Beth and Zoahib for their informative and interesting presentation, which had been delivered with passion and energy. It was pleasing for the SACRE to see the frameworks it had contributed to proving useful within Schools.

Agreed: - That Wath Comprehensive School be thanked for participating in a SACRE meeting and the information shared be noted.

18. CURRICULUM CONSULTANT REPORT.

i) GCSE and A-level results:

Vanessa Gregory tabled a document that showed the 2011 attainment data for all Rotherham institutions that provided qualifications in Religious Studies and Education at key stages 4 and 5.

It was expected that next year's results would see a shift of numbers towards the full GCSE course, following recent Government announcements around qualifications.

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It was noted that pupils at Newman School were accessing GCSE qualifications in RE, and that Dearne Valley College were also offering a Religious Education qualification at level 3.

The attainment profile that was shared would be circulated to the full group along with the minutes,

ii) Training:

Due to new members being part of the SACRE, it had been suggested that training be provided by Vanessa Gregory and Ian Jones in relation to the group and it's constitution.

Agreed: - Training would be provided in a short session before the next meeting, and would be advertised to the SACRE members with as much notice as possible to help them to arrange attendance. SACRE members would also be given an opportunity to request training on a different time and date if the scheduled training was not convenient.

ii.i) Training:

Vanessa Gregory reported to the group that following the Religious Education Conference on 17th January 2012, there was an opportunity for another conference to be arranged in Rotherham in October, 2012. It was proposed that this would be in conjunction with Sheffield Hallam University's RE trainee teachers. A suggested programme for the day was that delegates would visit three places of worship, and would experience how to run learning workshops and activities in these venues. Lat Blaylock would be invited to support/facilitate this event.

Nicki Goodwin advised the SACRE about the opportunity for another joint training event on 25th September, 2012, that would concentrate on providing a Christian input to Primary Schools. This event would be delivered by Lat Blaylock with the support of the RE Team for Primary School teachers.

Agreed: - That Vanessa Gregory and Nicki Goodwin would continue in their efforts to finalise the events as discussed, including confirmation of venue and housekeeping issues.

iii) St Gabriel's Trust:

Vanessa Gregory reported that forty primary schools had signed up to the Primary Units to support the agreed syllabus and that she had discussed with Lat Blaylock the possibilities of putting a similar support mechanism in place for Secondary Schools to ensure consistency across Rotherham. It was suggested that funding be applied for from NASACRE. This was likely to be a grant of £3,500 to fund a training day for teachers and pay for cover costs. The outcome of this work would be a bank of units that secondary schools could draw on. Vanessa would work with Lat Blaylock to produce a funding application.

Agreed: - SACRE supported Vanessa Gregory to apply for funding from NASACRE to resource joint working of secondary school colleagues.

19. SMSC WITHIN OFSTED.

Vanessa Gregory updated the SACRE on the position of SMSC within Ofsted inspections. Religions Education/Studies were judged under four categories: Attainment and Achievement, Leadership and Management, Quality, and Behaviour and Safety.

The focus of an inspection of SMSC was the emphasis on how far pupils' were reflective about beliefs and values, and how well the school promoted all pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing positive learning experiences.

Vanessa shared the criteria by which pupils could be seen to demonstrate these skills:

- Be reflective about beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, use their imagination and creativity, and develop curiosity in their learning;
- Develop and apply an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school;
- Take part in a range of activities requiring social skills;
- Develop an awareness of, and respect towards, diversity in relation to, for example, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation, and disability;
- Gain a well informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through the school and on to the next stage of their education and training;
- Overcome barriers to their learning;
- Respond positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities provided by the school, including, for example, developing an appreciation of theatre, music and literature;
- Develop the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate fully and positively in democratic modern Britain;
- Understand and appreciate the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element to their preparation for life.

Whilst being specific to the subject taught within the SMSC faculty/department, it was also agreed that these characteristics linked to and had implications to whole school life.

It was also noted that an assembly that the RE Team had delivered in a school had been inspected by Ofsted and was judged to be Outstanding.

20. THIRD CONFERENCE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - 17 JANUARY 2012.

Nicki Goodwin attended this conference on behalf of the Rotherham SACRE and reported to the meeting that it had been a good day. Lat Blaylock had chaired the event and had covered a huge amount of material relating to three religions. The conference's content provided a huge amount of ideas for varied delivery and teaching. The event was well-attended and more dates would be planned for the future.

21. APPOINTMENT OF WORKING PARTIES.

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Gail Atkin introduced this item to request volunteers to join a working party with Vanessa Gregory to plan and organise a SACRE Awards Ceremony in September, 2012, and a SACRE Summer Event in 2013. To enable members to participate in the working party, it was suggested that they could meet before or after the SACRE meetings.

Agreed: - (1) David Homer agreed to join the working party.

(2) It was agreed that an invitation would be sent to all members of the SACRE so that those not in attendance at the meeting could also be given the opportunity to express an interest in the working party.

22. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP.

Gail Atkin spoke about the statutory obligation to provide collective Christian worship in schools.

Schools could apply for a determination so that they were not obliged to follow a broadly Christian programme of worship. The Rotherham SACRE had granted a determination to St Ann's Junior and Infant School, Thornhill Junior and Infant School and Broom Valley Community School in 2008.

Suggestions were sought for ways that SACRE could support schools to raise the profile of, and deliver collective worship. Suggestions included:

- The RE Team had a bank of 12 assemblies for schools that could be made widely available;
- SACRE could provide a list to schools that detailed approved external organisations that could enable collect worship;
- Check NASACRE guidelines for the interpretation of collective worship;
- Development of a Rotherham SACRE working party to bring together best practice and guidelines in relation to collective worship, with a particular emphasis on collective worship in secondary schools.

Agreed: - David Homer would work with Gail Atkin, Vanessa Gregory and Gavin Gray as part of a working party to develop collective worship.

23. SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2011.

Gail Atkin informed the group that there was no longer a legal obligation for local SACRE to provide an annual report to the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency. However, within Rotherham it was felt that it was good practice to produce a report on behalf of the group for circulation to stakeholders. Vanessa Gregory would collate the contributions from members for the annual report and SACRE members were asked to contribute sections in relation to certain areas.

Agreed: - (1) Ian Jones would provide an insert in relation to the group's new Constitution, and Nicki Goodman would write a section in relation to training opportunities available through SACRE.

(2) The deadline for material to be submitted to Vanessa Gregory for inclusion in the annual report was the start of the summer term, 2012.

24. ROTHERHAM SACRE - CONSTITUTION.

The new Constitution document that had been written for the Rotherham SACRE was considered. Vanessa Gregory thanked David Homer for contributing to the document's research, and Ian Jones for formatting the document and providing the artwork within it.

SACRE noted the requirements within the document in relation to: -

- a) Group membership;
- b) Quorum;
- c) Organisation and conduct of meetings.

Discussion ensued about whether invitations should be provided to all members of the religious groups recognised by the SACRE, or if invitations for membership should be limited to the religious groups that were recognised as being relevant to Rotherham, as taken from Census information.

Agreed: - (1) It was unanimously accepted by vote of those present that the new Constitution be accepted.

(2) It was agreed that an appendix would be added to the Constitution which showed current membership of the group and would be reviewed each year at the Autumn term meeting.

(3) That invitations to representation be issued to all religious and non-religious groups recognised in the Rotherham SACRE Constitution.

25. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

Agreed: - (1) That the next meeting of the Rotherham SACRE be held on Monday 25th June, 2012, instead of the advertised date of 20th June, 2012, in the Rotherham Town Hall to start at 4.30 pm.

(2) That training be provided for Members of the SACRE on Monday 25th June, 2012, in the Rotherham Town Hall, from 3.45 pm – 4.15 pm.