

Present:-

Lincolnshire Council of Churches (Group A)

Mr B Ahmed MBE (Islamic Association of Lincoln)
Mrs C Dring (Baptist Church)
Mr A Hornsby (Methodist Church)
Mr N McFarlane (Salvation Army)
Mr F Sperring (Society of Friends)
Reverend E McDonald (United Reform Church)

The Church of England (Group B)

Mr D Clements
Mrs A Parry-Jones

The Teachers Panel (Group C):

Mrs J Austin (National Association of Head Teachers)
Miss C E Turner (Primary Schools)

Lincolnshire County Council (Group D)

Councillors Mrs C M H Farquharson and Mrs C A Talbot

Officers

Ms W Harrison - Religious Education Adviser
Mr M Plater – Lecturer – Bishop Grosseteste University College, Lincoln
Mr P Thompson – Deputy Director of Education - Diocese of Lincoln
Mrs S West – Democratic Services Officer, Lincolnshire County Council

Prayers were led by Mrs C Dring.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor Mrs C A Talbot be elected as Chairman of Lincolnshire SACRE for 2010/11.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Mr N McFarlane be elected as Vice-Chairman of Lincolnshire SACRE for 2010/11.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P A Robinson (Lincolnshire County Council), Mrs S Sreenivasan (Hindu Community), Professor B Winston (Lincolnshire Jewish Community), Mrs C A Williamson (Secondary schools) and Ms C Wright (Church of England).

4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

The Chairman acknowledged the attendance of Mr A Hornsby, representing the Methodist Church, and requested that clarification be sought to ascertain whether his appointment to SACRE had been formally approved by the County Council. It was therefore reported that until confirmation had been obtained Mr Hornsby would be attending this meeting as an observer.

It was reported by the Chairman that Ms C Wright had still not returned to work following her accident, and would arrange for a card of get well wishes to be sent on behalf of SACRE.

The Committee were informed that Debbie Barnes, Assistant Director of Children's Services, would no longer be attending meetings of SACRE due to additional duties within her post. Debbie would still however be overseeing the work of SACRE, although issues around budget matters would need to be clarified by her.

Further to the congratulatory letter sent to Ambergate Sports College, it was highlighted that a letter of thanks had been received from Mr P Bell the headteacher, stating he would be very pleased for SACRE to use his school's methods as examples of good practice.

Members were informed that the Chairman was in receipt of a letter from Ground Level Network of churches (previously known as the New Life Christian Fellowship), nominating Mrs L Gaylard as the representative. The appointment would require the formal approval of the County Council at its meeting on 17 December 2010.

The Chairman made mention of a letter received from Mrs Paulette Bissell, retired Diocesan Schools Religious Education Adviser, wishing SACRE well for the future.

It was reported that the Lincolnshire Echo had written an article on Paganism as a result of the discussion carried out at the previous meeting held on 13 July 2010, minute no. 61 refers.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JULY 2010

RESOLVED

That subject to amending the penultimate paragraph of minute no. 67 to clearly define Councillor Peter Robinson as the Executive Councillor, the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2010, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. MATTERS ARISING:-

SACRE Annual Report (Minute No. 62, 13 July 2010)

A copy of the PDF version of the annual report had been published on the SACRE website.

SACRE Website (Minute No. 63, 13 July 2010)

The Religious Education Adviser was still pursuing the matter of listing the annual report on the NASACRE website.

Update from NASACRE/QCDA Conference Held on 24 March 2010 (Minute No. 64, 13 July 2010)

It was reported that the contract for the Religious Education Adviser had been renewed for a further year.

A briefing paper outlining the work of Lincolnshire SACRE would be issued to head teachers and heads of departments.

Summary of Monitoring Visits to Lincolnshire Schools Following OFSTED Inspections, with reference to Religious Education and Acts of Collective Worship (Minute No. 67, 13 July 2010)

It was reported that Paul Thompson had secured Sarah Smalley to attend as a key speaker for the 'Celebrating RE' event on 31 March 2011 at the Bishop Grosseteste University College, Lincoln. The event would provide an opportunity for schools to share, by way of an exhibition, the good work carried out in respect of religious education. It was hoped that SACRE Members would be able to attend this event, the sessions of which were to be held between 1.30pm and 3.30pm and 4.30pm and 6.30pm on 31 March 2011. Details would be sent to Members in due course.

Humanist Representative on SACRE (Minute No. 69, 13 July 2010)

Members were informed that the Religious Education Adviser would be inviting a representative from the British Humanist Association to attend the next meeting on 8 March 2011 regarding the issue of a humanist representative on SACRE.

It was reported that as the guidance detailed on NASACRE's website had not been updated regarding such representation, NASACRE would be contacted to ascertain the current position.

7. SUMMARY OF OFSTED INSPECTIONS OF LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS WITH REFERENCE TO PUPILS' SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SCHOOL'S PROVISION FOR COMMUNITY COHESION

A report was submitted by the Religious Education Adviser which summarised the positive features and areas for development in various schools inspected by OFSTED.

Members were informed that unfortunately it was no longer possible to give 4 grades for spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development as inspectors were not now required to provide these. Grades were therefore shown for the school's overall effectiveness and overall SMSC and for community cohesion.

In view of the above, it was agreed that where schools had achieved a grade of 1 for SMSC, letters of commendation should be sent.

It was noted that the majority of schools had been awarded a grade 3 for community cohesion, and it was considered that these schools had been penalised for their rural locality. It was acknowledged that rural schools were at a disadvantage for accessing other faiths and religions and that this should be taken into account by OFSTED.

RESOLVED

1. That the report and comments made be noted.
2. That further consideration be given to the issue regarding community cohesion and the criteria used to grade this area, and that a further report be submitted to the SACRE meeting on 21 June 2011.
3. That letters of commendation be sent to the following schools for achieving grade 1 for SMSC:-

Denton CE (VC) Primary School
Fosse Way Primary School
The Boston Nursery School
The Ash Villa South Rauceby

8. SUMMARY OF SECTION 48 INSPECTIONS IN LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS

The Diocesan Director of Education presented a report regarding the positive features and areas for development in various Church schools where a Section 48 Inspection had been carried out.

During discussion, an update regarding St Hugh's Church of England High School, Grantham, was requested in view of the summary judgement detailed in the report. It was highlighted that the Diocese was currently working with the school on areas for improvement, and that the new headteacher was addressing a list of priorities, with a particular focus on standards.

RESOLVED

- That the report and comments made be noted.

9. SUMMARY OF MONITORING VISITS TO LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS FOLLOWING OFSTED INSPECTIONS, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND ACTS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

A report by the Religious Education Adviser was considered which detailed the positive features and areas for development in four schools which had been monitored since the last meeting held on 13 July 2010.

Members were informed that the number of visits were low due to the short period between the previous meeting and the date for this term's submission of papers.

Further to the discussion at the last meeting, it was reported that the Principal School Improvement Adviser had agreed that schools could be re-visited at the discretion of the Religious Education Adviser.

Following a comment raised regarding religious education teachers not being replaced once they had left a school, it was reported that there was no evidence in Lincolnshire to support this.

Concern was expressed regarding religious education being taught in schools by non-specialist religious education teachers, from which it was suggested that data detailing GCSE results should be obtained to ascertain whether this had any reflection on the situation. The issue as to whether less students studying the subject was also raised.

It was suggested that a monitoring exercise might be undertaken in schools where non-specialist teachers had taught religious education to see if a decline in exam results had occurred. This was however deemed unpractical and additional monitoring visits would be carried out as an alternative solution.

RESOLVED

That the report and comments made be noted.

10. UPDATE FROM THE LINCOLNSHIRE INTER-FAITH FORUM MEETING

Further to minute no. 71 of the meeting held on 13 July 2010, it was reported that Ms J Austin had not been able to attend meetings of the Lincolnshire Inter-Faith Forum and was therefore unable to report on such matters. It was hoped however that she would be available to attend the next meeting.

Mr B Ahmed informed members of the forthcoming Inter-Faith walk on Saturday 21 November 2010, at 2pm, commencing at Lincoln Cathedral and proceeding to several places of worship.

RESOLVED

That an update on the Lincolnshire Inter-Faith Forum meetings be given at the next meeting on 8 March 2011.

11. UPDATE ON ACADEMIES

Note - Councillor Mrs C A Talbot declared a personal interest as a Trustee of the Priory Federation of Academies.

Consideration was given to a report by the Assistant Director of Children's Services which provided an update on academies in Lincolnshire.

It was reported that as of 1 October 2010, the following schools in Lincolnshire now had academy status:-

- Trent Valley Academy
- The Priory Federation of Academies – this consists of 3 academies (Priory LSST/ Priory City/Priory Witham)
- St George's Academy
- Skegness Academy
- Ruskin Academy Grantham
- Giles Old Leake
- QE Grammar Alford

Members were informed that the Department for Education had recently confirmed that the following schools had submitted business plans to become academies by November 2010 (although some delays were expected).

- Branston Community College
- West Grantham Federation (Grantham St Hugh's/ Corby Glen / Spittlegate/ Earl of Dysart)
- Caistor Grammer School
- Bourne Abbey
- Welton William Farr

The Chairman reported that further letters would be sent to the Priory Federation of Academies and also to Trent Valley Academy as no response had been received in respect of offering support for the services of the Religious Education Adviser. It was highlighted that Children's Services were currently working on the core offer and would require the County Council to be extremely clear on such an offer to all academies in view of potential budget reductions.

Discussion ensued regarding the possible diminishing role of SACRE if further schools opted for academy status. A further update on which schools had become academies would be given at the next meeting on 8 March 2011.

RESOLVED

That a further letter be sent to the Priory Federation of Academies and also to Trent Valley Academy addressed from SACRE.

12. REVIEW OF THE AGREED SYLLABUS

It was reported by the Religious Education Adviser that £5,000 funding had been allocated towards the review of the agreed syllabus.

Members were informed that although only the statutory and assessment sections required updating, just this alone would substantially amount to more in printing costs and guidance on a way forward was therefore sought.

It was reported that the statutory section could be re-written by the Religious Education Adviser herself and then submitted to the working party for their input. It was therefore advised by the Chairman that an initial meeting of the working party needed to be arranged as soon as possible and that estimates for printing costs should also be sought.

RESOLVED

That the statutory section of the agreed syllabus be re-written and updated by the Religious Education Adviser and once completed submitted to the working party for their consideration and subsequently to the next meeting of SACRE scheduled for 8 March 2011.

13. SACRE ACTION PLAN

A report was submitted by the Religious Education Adviser which updated Members on items currently included in the Action Plan.

RESOLVED

That subject to including the 'Celebrating RE' event on 31 March 2011, the status of the current Action Plan and archive version be approved.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That future meetings of SACRE be held at 2.00pm in Committee Room 1, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln, on the following dates:-

Tuesday 8 March 2011
Tuesday 21 June 2011
Tuesday 8 November 2011
Tuesday 6 March 2012

It was agreed that Mr N McFarlane would lead on prayers at the next meeting. It was also suggested that this should be included as an agenda item for all future meetings.

The meeting closed at 3.40 pm.