

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
28 FEBRUARY 2024**

PRESENT:

Christian Denominations and Other Religious Denominations (Committee A)

Chris Burke (Chairman) (Roman Catholic Church), Andrew Hornsby (Methodist Church) and Sian Wade (Assemblies of God Pentecostal)

The Church of England (Committee B)

Lynsey Norris and Mark Plater

Associations Representing Teachers (Committee C)

Elizabeth Moore (NAHT) and Chris Thompson (NEU)

The Local Authority (Committee D)

Councillor Mrs Jacqueline Brockway and Councillor Mark Anthony Whittington

Co-opted Member

Eve Darwood

Officer/Advisers

Gillian Georgiou (Diocesan RE Adviser), Wendy Harrison (RE Adviser) and Emily Wilcox (Democratic Services Officer)

1 OPENING REFLECTIONS

The Chairman opened the meeting with reflections.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/MEMBER CHANGES

Apologies for absence had been received from Cherry Edwards OBE, Dr Amanda Grant, Claire Simons, Swathi Sreenivasan and Jennifer King.

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3 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None were declared.

4 RATIFICATION OF THE NOTES OF THE INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON 14 NOVEMBER 2023

RESOLVED

That the notes of the informal meeting held on 14 November 2023 be ratified.

5 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIRMAN (IF ANY)

None had been received.

6 HUMANISM AND COMMITTEE A

Eve Darwood, Co-Opted Humanist Representative did not take part in the discussion on this item.

Members were invited to consider the status of the Humanism on Committee A following recent court ruling and recent guidance issued from the Department for Education (DfE) to Local Authorities regarding representatives from non-religious belief systems and their appointments to Group A of SACRE and Agreed Syllabus Conferences.

It was the view of the DfE that appointments of persons to a SACRE or ASC was a matter for Local Authorities and this could include consideration of whether such representation would help ensure that the relevant traditions and beliefs in the Local Authority's area were appropriately reflected in Group A.

Having considered the report, members of SACRE unanimously supported Humanist representation on Committee A and voted to recommend to Lincolnshire County Council that the SACRE constitution be amended so that committee A be defined as 'such Christian and Other Religious Denominations and other non-religious world views.'

RESOLVED

1. That the addition of a Humanist representative on Committee A of Lincolnshire SACRE be recommended to the Local Authority;
2. That it be recommended that the Constitution of Lincolnshire be amended to define Committee A as 'such Christian and Other Religious Denominations and other non-religious world views'.

7 ALLOCATION OF TIME SPENT ON RE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Consideration was given to a report by Wendy Harrison, RE Adviser, which provided data on the allocation of time spend on RE in Lincolnshire's Secondary Schools, as set out at pages 17-20 of the agenda pack. The RE Adviser would email all schools to check that they were meeting the requirements for time spent on RE or whether further support was necessary.

During the discussion the following points were recorded:

- The RE Adviser would investigate the reason for there being several schools missing from the data. However, Members were assured that the email sent would be to all Lincolnshire schools.
- Concerns were raised over the lack of RE teaching at Boston High schools. It was thought that Boston High School could be using a name other than Religious Education for their studies but the RE Adviser would investigate further.

8 ANALYSIS OF OFSTED REPORTS : 1 APRIL - 31 DECEMBER 2023

Consideration was given to a report by the RE Adviser, which invited SACRE to review the analysis of published Ofsted reports from 1 April – 31 December 2023, including any comments made on RE learning. Members were referred to Appendix A to the report.

During the discussion, the following points were recorded:

- Members commended the comment made about RE learning at West Grantham CE Primary School, referencing pupils speaking about 'doing the right thing, even when no one is watching' and emphasised this as being exceptional and an advanced concept for children to understand.
- Concerns were raised over the qualitative difference of comments within some reports, with some comments offering little understanding of learning and being unacceptable in their quality, with little use to members of the public reading the report. It was acknowledged that inspectors were restricted in how they could articulate findings, however the difference in reporting could be a due training in religious education inspections being voluntary. Often verbal feedback session for school leaders was much more detailed.

9 LINCOLNSHIRE SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

Consideration was given to a report by the RE Adviser, which invited members to consider and comment on the Lincolnshire SACRE Annual Report 2022-23, as set out at Appendix A to the report. The report would be submitted to the DfE and sent to the National Association of Standing Advisory Council's for Religious Education (NASACRE).

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During the discussion, the following points were recorded:

- Members highlighted the disparity between male and female GCSE and A Level results, in particular for short course GCSE or AS Level. It was clarified that very few children undertook short course GCSE or RE at AS level as it was not counted towards school progress measures.
- It was noted that there had been questions raised within the teaching community as to whether examinations favoured certain cohorts of people.
- In relation to the Membership of SACRE, the Democratic Services Officer agreed to investigate the types of representatives that could be included within Committee C, the Teachers Panel, for example whether there could be representation from academies on the committee.
- Concerns were raised over the attendance statistics of some members of SACRE and the Democratic Services Officer would contact those with low attendance to ensure that individuals previously appointed were still the most suitable.

10 DIOCESAN UPDATE

Consideration was given an update by the Diocesan RE Adviser, as set out on page 45 of the agenda pack.

Members noted the update.

11 SIAMS INSPECTIONS

Consideration was given to report by the Diocesan RE Adviser, which provided an update on recent SIAMS inspections, as set out on pages 47-48 of the agenda pack.

Members noted the update and during the discussion the following points were recorded:

- The challenges in finding inspectors with the capacity to carry out inspections outside of their own diocese was highlighted. This had led to a delay in carrying out SIAMS inspections which had to be carried out within a legal timeframe set by the DfE.

Schools had welcomed the changes in reports and had been extremely positive about the new framework which did not give graded outcomes and instead judged schools to be either living up to their foundation as a church school or as having strength but also issues that leaders needed to address as a matter of priority.

12 WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was noted.

13 REFLECTIONS AT THE NEXT MEETING

Lynsey Norris agreed to give opening reflections at the next meeting.

14 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was due to take place on the 23 July 2024.

The meeting ended at 14:53

14:54PM - SITTING AS THE AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE

15 NOTES OF THE AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE ON 10 JANUARY 2024

The notes of the last conference were noted.

16 DRAFT TIMELINE FOR THE AGREED SYLLABUS

Wendy Harrison, RE Adviser, thanked members for their confidence in recommending her to produce the next agreed syllabus. A report on the progress and development of the new syllabus would be reported regularly.

WH was in the process of setting up a primary advisory group and the RE Adviser would advise on the membership at the next meeting of the conference.

Reference was made to the timeline set out at Appendix A to the report, which was subject to change. It was hoped that by Autumn 2024 there would be a 'soft' launch of the syllabus for all schools which would give teachers a good idea of the structure and preparations needed in terms of planning.

In response to a question, the RE Adviser explained that once agreed, the new syllabus would be expected to be used for planning from 2025 onwards, although it was acknowledged that it could take some time to embed within schools.

Members also noted that North and North-East Lincolnshire had adopted the current Lincolnshire RE syllabus and the RE Adviser would need to analyse the contractual arrangements if they wished to adopt the new framework as this would be the property of Wendy Harrison and not Lincolnshire County Council.

The meeting of the conference closed at 15:08pm