



**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
7 MARCH 2023**

PRESENT:

Christian Denominations and Other Religious Denominations (Committee A)

Chris Burke (Chairman) (Roman Catholic Church), Andrew Hornsby (Methodist Church), Swathi Sreenivasan (Hindu Community), Dr Amanda Grant (Jewish Community) and Claire Simons (Salvation Army)

The Church of England (Committee B)

Cherry Edwards OBE (Vice-Chairman) and Lynsey Norris

Associations Representing Teachers (Committee C)

Jennifer King (NAS/UWT) and Elizabeth Moore (NAHT)

The Local Authority (Committee D)

Councillor Ashley John Baxter and Councillor Mrs Jacqueline Brockway

Officer/Advisers

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

18 OPENING REFLECTIONS

Opening reflections were given by Cherry Edwards OBE.

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/MEMBER CHANGES

Apologies for absence had been received from Sian Wade, Mark Plater and Councillor Mark Whittington.

20 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None were declared.

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21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF SACRE HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIRMAN (IF ANY)

No correspondence had been received.

23 REQM GOLD AWARD: WILLIAM FARR

The Board were pleased to hear that William Farr Church of England Comprehensive School had been awarded the REQM Gold Award which recognised outstanding learning in religious education.

Jennifer King expressed pride in receiving the award updated SACRE on the rigorous process undertaken within the department and commended the knowledge and efforts of pupils during interviews and thanked SACRE for ensuring a personal approach, and the Diocesan RE Advisor for supporting William Farr to maintain an excellent standard of learning in religious education.

Members congratulated Jennifer King and all those at William Farr for an excellent achievement.

24 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Board noted a vacancy for a Baptist Church Representative on SACRE.

25 NASACRE SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

SACRE members had been asked to complete the NASACRE Self-Assessment Tool which would review the work of Lincolnshire SACRE against examples of good practice, helping to identify what works well and areas for improvement.

In considering the feedback received, the following points were noted in relation to the work of SACRE in Lincolnshire:

- The role of Local Authority Representatives on local Education Forums as a means of communicating the needs and the views of SACRE were recognised, this could include being better informed on the wider Lincolnshire County Council education strategy.
- SACRE highlighted the benefits of regular communication with schools to inform and update on the work of SACRE and provide schools with advice and offers of support,

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which could be through regular updates in diocesan newsletters or notifying schools of points of contact for support.

- The Committee noted that the centre for peace and reconciliation had recently released a report on data around religion and diversity and it was suggested that access to the report be requested.
- The diverse nature of Lincolnshire SACRE was acknowledged. Members welcomed more opportunities to use SACRE to represent and celebrate all faiths to enrich the learning opportunity for others, such as regularly inviting keynote speakers and holding meetings at different places of worship.
- A lack of funding and budgetary resource was highlighted; however Members were appreciative of the support and knowledge provided by the RE Adviser and the Diocesan RE Adviser and recognised the positive impact this had on the Committee.
- The need to develop a training programme which would provide training to new members and regular training to existing members was suggested.

Based on the feedback received, an action plan for improvement would be formulated and submitted to the next meeting of the committee.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

26 DIOCESAN UPDATE

The Diocesan Adviser had continued to visit schools to offer training, support and assist with resource writing. She had also contributed to the creation of a recently launched podcast series, the [Empowering Voices project](#). The podcasts sought to help children and young people in their understanding of religious and non-religious world views through examples of lived experiences.

Two podcast episodes had been released so far – the exploration of white British converts to Islam and the experiences of Black Evangelical Christians in the South West. Future podcast episodes on Humanism, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism and Christianity were also scheduled to be released.

A link to the podcast would be shared following the meeting.

27 EMERGING PATTERNS IN OFSTED REPORTS - BRITISH VALUES AND MUTUAL RESPECT

The Diocesan RE Adviser expressed concern over an emerging pattern within Ofsted reports - that many schools were receiving critical comments about pupils' understanding of religion and belief.

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More evidence was needed to determine whether there was a need to review and support in the teaching of RE in Lincolnshire Schools. The Diocesan RE Adviser planned to further examine the reasons for the critical comments and would focus on:

- Identifying whether school leaders understood the need to promote respect for and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs within and beyond the RE curriculum.
- Whether some inspectors were of the view that promotion of respect for and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs through the RE curriculum should equate to teaching about six major world religions, which was not supported by the Lincolnshire locally agreed syllabus.

In considering the update, the following points were recorded:

- It was suggested that there was often a lack of depth in learning in schools and the importance of depth of knowledge in promoting critical thinking was emphasised.
- The importance of ensuring that school leaders understood their responsibilities under law for the teaching of religious education was highlighted. The committee identified SACRE as a potential means to communicating with school leaders on this issue.
- It was suggested that research be undertaken to see if the issue had been identified on a national scale.
- A lack of training for Ofsted inspectors was identified as one reason for the comments.
- The importance of working with school leaders and equipping them with the evidence to ensure inspection of RE is in line with the expectations set down in the Ofsted RE Research Review (2021)
- The difficulties faced by children in understanding and managing tensions for British Values was highlighted.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

28 AGREED SYLLABUS UPDATE

At its last meeting, SACRE had recommended to the Local Authority that the review of the agreed syllabus be deferred for a year as it was acknowledged that a more detailed review was needed, which would make it extremely difficult for the new syllabus to be implemented by summer 2023.

NASACRE had been consulted on the matter and were satisfied with the deferral, given the process of review had begun in 2023. The Diocesan RE Adviser advised that the review process was already underway.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

29 UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ADVISER

This item was deferred due to the absence of the RE Adviser.

30 REPORT ON RE TIME ALLOCATION IN LINCOLNSHIRE'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The Diocesan RE Adviser referred the committee to the information detailed in the report on RE time allocation in Lincolnshire's Secondary Schools given that there was an expectation that every child and young person from reception to end of KS5 receive an hour a week of learning on religious education, which was a national expectation.

In reviewing the report, it was evident that the expectation of learning was not being met in many cases, particularly in KS5. A number of reasons for this were identified, such as recruitment and retention, particularly on the East Coast of Lincolnshire. The Diocesan RE Adviser agreed to circulate the maps identifying stronger and weaker RE provision across the County.

As a priority, the Diocesan RE Adviser was working with secondary schools to help ensure that learning requirements were being met. It was also acknowledged that academies had the freedom to choose their curriculum.

The Committee highlighted the introduction of the 'life curriculum' in many schools as being problematic.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

31 SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

In considering the annual report, it was agreed that reference to Discovery RE would be removed given the submission of the annual report as a public document.

A need to update the photographs in the report and for more regular communication between meetings was also highlighted.

RESOLVED:

That the draft annual report be agreed, subject to the changes suggested.

32 REFLECTIONS AT THE NEXT MEETING

Jennifer King offered to give reflections at the next meeting.

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33 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 20 June 2023.

The meeting closed at 15:16.