



**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
20 JUNE 2023**

PRESENT:

Christian Denominations and Other Religious Denominations (Committee A)

Chris Burke (Chairman) (Roman Catholic Church), Dr Amanda Grant (Jewish Community), Andrew Hornsby (Methodist Church), Swathi Sreenivasan (Hindu Community) and Sian Wade (Assemblies of God Pentecostal)

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, Primary Schools).

The Local Authority (Committee D)

Councillor Ashley John Baxter, Councillor Mrs Jacqueline Brockway and Councillor Mark Anthony Whittington

Officer/Advisers

Gillian Georgiou (Diocesan RE Adviser), Wendy Harrison (RE Adviser) and Jess Wosser-Yates (Democratic Services Officer)

1 OPENING REFLECTIONS

Reflections were given by Jennifer King.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/MEMBER CHANGES

Apologies for absence had been received from Claire Simons.

3 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF SACRE HELD ON 7 MARCH 2023

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RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIRMAN (IF ANY)

No correspondence had been received by the Chairman.

6 LINCOLNSHIRE SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

Consideration was given to the final version of the Lincolnshire SACRE Annual Report 2021-22.

Wendy Harrison, Local Authority (LA) RE Adviser, highlighted that the purpose of this item was to inform the Council that the Annual Report had been forwarded to NASACRE and the Department for Education (DfE).

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

7 NASACRE SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Consideration was given to an update of the SACRE Self-Assessment Tool.

It was noted the Tool had been streamlined to identify key strengths and areas for improvement and the LA RE Advisor would produce an action to ensure that priorities of Lincolnshire SACRE were clear. The RE Advisor guided the Council through the document and provided a summary of the areas of strengths and weaknesses. During consideration of the item, the following points were noted:

- The Vice-Chairman requested the Action Plan be delivered at the next meeting.
- The importance of the relationship between a SACRE and its relative Local Authority was acknowledged and Members emphasised the significance of training to improve working relationships.
- A focus on collective worship within the work of SACRE could encourage a broader membership, especially in relation to a range of religious faiths.
- Although SACREs had a responsibility to keep the LA informed about the quality of collective worship, the LA RE Adviser admitted that emphasis was more on RE, due to time constraints.
- Members questioned the extent of pupil involvement in their local; the LA RE Advisor informed the Council that some LAs ran youth SACREs and invited pupils into discussions about RE which helped to provide useful feedback on the curriculum. The Diocesan RE Advisor also highlighted that the agreed syllabus was currently under

revision. Consultation was taking place with teachers and school leaders, and further input could be received by pupils.

- It was requested that active input be sought from pupils regarding RE, and it was suggested this could be facilitated through inviting pupils to observe a Lincolnshire SACRE meeting through an active citizenship project.
- Lincoln SACRE maintained good communication with local authority schools, however it was noted that this was more difficult with academies.
- It was considered whether the Agenda for the 2024 NASACRE Conference should include an item regarding the Self-Assessment Tool to provide national feedback.
- Members questioned how the Action Plan would inform the agreed syllabus, and whether it expired in 2024. It was noted that embedding the present syllabus into schools was rendered difficult due to the pandemic and the review had been postponed by a year.
- It was assured that the Action Plan would include information about the syllabus review, as well as a tentative completion date.
- Dr Amanda King suggested the completion of the agreed syllabus could be an opportunity for schools to be involved in training and shared-working opportunities; the Council was informed that there was a regional RE conference in summer 2024 that could facilitate this purpose.
- Lincolnshire SACRE shared a syllabus with North and North East Lincolnshire SACREs; the Diocesan RE Advisor noted that involving all three LAs and the Dioceses in the RE Conference would be highly impactful.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

8 NASACRE CONFERENCE UPDATE

Mark Plater provided an update following his attendance at the NASACRE Conference.

The Conference marked the 30-year anniversary of NASACRE, and included an array of activities, which included a discussion held by David Hampshire, former Chairman of NASACRE, regarding a lack of engagement with DfE legal requirements by a significant number of schools.

SACRE thanked Mark Plater for attending on behalf of the Council.

The Council requested that the 2024 NASACRE Conference involved consideration of the Self-Assessment Tool. The document as it stood was very lengthy and could easily be slimmed down.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

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9 AGREED SYLLABUS UPDATE

Wendy Harrison, LA RE Adviser gave an update on the agreed syllabus for religious education in Lincolnshire. It was noted that she and the Diocesan Adviser had identified a date for an initial discussion on the syllabus, and further information would be available at the meeting of SACRE due to be held in November 2023.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference would be organised after November which was a statutory requirement to provide checks and balances. Members would be contacted on how they would wish to hold this meeting.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

10 ANALYSIS OF SIAMS INSPECTIONS

The Council considered a report from Gillian Georgiou, Diocesan RE Advisor, which provided an analysis of recent SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) Inspections.

The high number of inspections was a consequence of the pause of inspections during the pandemic and were time-sensitive as the emergency legislation that increased the time-scales between inspections was due to expire.

Most schools were rated 'Good', and some received 'Excellent' classifications.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

11 DIOCESAN UPDATE

Gillian Georgiou, Diocesan RE Advisor, provided a verbal update which noted that the discussions regarding the Agreed Syllabus were ongoing. Additionally, there was a national focus on supporting schools, especially secondary schools, in delivering RE as statistics on recruitment and retention on staff delivering such subjects had worsened.

It was assured that work was underway through the Empowering Voices Project which shared lived examples of religious and non-religious worldviews from Lincolnshire and beyond. In addition, she continued to work on the national Worldviews Project, which sought to use the draft National Statement of Entitlement to develop RE curriculum. This project aimed to provide greater consistency in RE nationwide.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

12 ANALYSIS OF OFSTED REPORTS

Wendy Harrison, LA RE Advisor, provided an analysis of the Ofsted Reports and provided a summary of the key points to the Council.

Members were reminded that RE was no longer inspected as a separate subject, unless it was identified for a Deep Dive. The subject could be referred to under the '*Personal Development*' and '*Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural Development and British Values*' categories. It was noted that some feedback was overly descriptive, and often failed to provide consistent evaluations.

It was assured that the locally Agreed Syllabus met expectations of the Ofsted RE Research Review (2021) but inspections did not always appear to take note of the recommendations of the review; some anecdotal evidence suggested that some schools across Lincolnshire had been penalised if their curriculum had not include a minor level of understanding of the six main religions. In this case, teachers and staff were being empowered to direct inspectors towards their own RE research review to provide assurance that RE was being taught in line with the guidance given.

The Diocesan Advisor was analysing the questions inspectors asked RE teachers during the inspection to provide anecdotal evidence to the Ofsted National Lead for RE that more training should be provided to inspectors.

During consideration of the report, the following was noted:

- Members agreed that the Ofsted reports featured overly generalised feedback which was not meaningful for schools, pupils, or the LA as a whole.
- It was noted that RE received only 5% of curriculum time, and it was acknowledged that it would be difficult to deliver the RE provision given this balance.

13 UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ADVISER

Wendy Harrison, LA RE Advisor, provided the following updates to SACRE Members:

- She had provided specific support to Scampton Primary School, Crowland South View Primary, St Gilberts Church of England Primary, Belmont Community Primary School, Donington-on-Bain Primary and Metheringham and Welbourne Primary School.
- Support ranged from in-person meetings to remote meetings on Zoom and Teams
- The LA RE Advisor urged schools to be cautious commercially produced of RE schemes that were adopted as some were expensive, complex, and still required adaption to ensure they could be adapted to fit in with locally agreed syllabuses and current thinking on RE.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

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14 REFLECTIONS AT THE NEXT MEETING

Sian Wade offered to give reflections at the next meeting.

15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for 14 November 2023 at 2pm.

16 FUTURE MEETING DATES

The following dates for future meetings were considered:

- 13 February 2024 at 2pm.
- 23 July 2024 at 2pm.
- 12 November 2024 at 2pm.
- 11 March 2025 at 2pm.

RESOLVED

That the dates for future meetings be agreed.

The meeting closed at 3.14 pm