



**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
11 JULY 2017**

PRESENT:

Christian Denominations and Other Religious Denominations (Committee A)

Neville McFarlane BEM (Chairman) (Salvation Army), Lynette Gaylard (Ground Level Network of Churches in Lincolnshire), Andrew Hornsby (Methodist Church) and Dr Tanweer Ahmed MBA (Islamic Association of Lincoln)

The Church of England (Committee B)

Cherry Edwards OBE

Associations Representing Teachers (Committee C)

Catherine Williamson (NASUWT) and Elizabeth Moore (NASUWT)

The Local Authority (Committee D)

Councillor Bob Adams

Officer/Advisers

Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Jill Chandar-Nair (Inclusion and Attendance Manager), Gillian Georgiou (Diocesan RE Adviser) and Wendy Harrison (RE Adviser)

Observer

Mark Plater (Bishop Grosseteste University)

44 WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Bob Adams from Lincolnshire County Council to his first meeting of SACRE. The Chairman stated that Christina Dring (Baptist Church) had resigned from SACRE due to moving to the north east of England and that the Clerk was in the process of seeking a replacement for her.

45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Chris Burke (Roman Catholic), Chris Rose (Society of Friends), Robin Young (Jewish Community), David Clements (Church of England), David Scoffield (Church of England), Sarah Thornton (NUT, Primary

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Schools), Kay Sutherland (National Association of Headteachers), Swathi Sreenivasan (Hindu Community), Councillors Jackie Brockway (Lincolnshire County Council) and Mark Whittington (Lincolnshire County Council).

46 OPENING REFLECTIONS BY DR TANWEER AHMED MBA

Tanweer Ahmed MBA gave the opening reflections.

47 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Cherry Edwards requested that a note should be made in the minutes that she was the Chair of the Board of Directors of the West Grantham Academies Trust (minute 49).

48 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF SACRE HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2017

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of SACRE held on 21 February 2017, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:-

1. The addition of "Mark Plater (Bishop Grosseteste University)" under the heading of "Officers and Advisers", on page one.
2. The replacement of the words "detailed in" by the words "submitted to" in the last paragraph of minute 37.
3. Bullet point 9 to read "Judaism was fundamental to understanding Christian issues. This was different from teaching about Judaism in its own right which was important to understanding Jewish issues today".

49 SUMMARY OF OFSTED INSPECTIONS OF LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS WITH REFERENCE TO THE PROVISION FOR PUPIL'S SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (SMSC)

SACRE received a report and presentation summarising inspectors' judgements on schools' provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in those schools inspected by OFSTED since the last report presented on 21 February 2017. It was noted that "Scramblesby" should read "Scamblesby" on pages 13 and 34 and "Kincoln" should be replaced by "Lincoln" on page 20 of the report.

Comments made by SACRE included:-

- In addition to the standard letter from the Chairman to the Headteacher, the Chairman of Governors should also be copied into the letter.

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- The letter from the Chairman to those schools not doing well should be amended to make it clear that the school would be encouraged to accept support in the form of a visit from the Religious Education Adviser.
- Concern was expressed on the limited reference made to RE as a subject in secondary schools compared to primary schools.

RESOLVED

(a) That the following schools receive a letter from the Chairman, copied to the Chairman of governors, congratulating them on positive remarks made by the inspectors as detailed in the report:-

- St Faith's CE Infant School, Lincoln
- Wainfleet Magdalen CE/Methodist School
- Welbourn CE Primary School
- Waddingham Primary School
- Morton Trentside Primary School

(b) That a letter be sent by the Chairman to the Frances Olive Anderson CE (Aided) Primary School, Gainsborough, with a copy to the Chairman of governors, congratulating them on being awarded International School award by the Times Educational Supplement.

(c) That the following schools receive a letter from the Chairman, copied to the Chairman of governors, expressing concern about various weaknesses identified by OFSTED, detailed in the report:-

- West Grantham Academy St John's
- Donington Cowley Endowed Primary School
- St Paul's Community Primary and Nursery School, Spalding
- Gainsborough Academy

50 LINCOLNSHIRE SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

SACRE considered the draft Lincolnshire SACRE Annual Report 2015/16, together with a presentation, before it was sent to NASACRE.

Comments made and the responses of officers, where appropriate, included:-

- There was an increase in the number of pupils taking the GCSE RE full course but a reduction in the number of pupils taking the GCSE RE short course.
- The results needed to be examined in more detail to explain the reason why there appeared to be significant outcomes in terms of gender in some schools, e.g. it was suggested that actual numbers should be examined instead of percentages.
- It was noted that at the William Farr School it was necessary to achieve a "B" grade at GCSE level in RE before a pupil could participate in particular courses.

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- It was noted that the teaching of RE was a core subject in Church of England schools.
- How difficult was it to recruit RE teachers? There was no requirement on Academies to appoint RE specialists and it was noted that for several years recruitment targets had not been met even though funding was available.
- There was concern that when a school offered a non-examination course on RE then the subject became "crowded out" by other subjects. Students were generally required to make a choice from a number of subjects to study and it was important that RS was offered as one of those subjects.
- It was noted that Religious Studies often compared unfavourably with other subjects such as English in terms of time allocation.

RESOLVED

That the report be approved and sent to the NASACRE.

51 SACRE ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

SACRE received a report on its Action Plan 2017/19.

Comments made and responses by officers, particularly about those priorities which showed "Not actioned", included the following:-

- Priority 1(i) (Promotional material on SACRE and what it does and faith communities it represents – supporting material from NASCRE). Was there a budget allocated for this priority? There was a budget and this would be brought to a future meeting. SACRE did have a website but it was no longer up to date. It was agreed that a volunteer from SACRE was required to administer the website. Gillian Georgiou agreed to speak to Wendy Harrison about this role outside of the meeting.
- Schools needed to be made aware of SACRE's role. In this respect, it was stated that the SACRE's Annual Report 2015/16 was a starting point but that only its key points should be sent to schools otherwise it would not be read. It was suggested that a single page PDF could be produced which could be placed on school noticeboards. It was suggested that the key points should be published on the County Council's website and in the local press. Headteacher briefings also provided an opportunity to disseminate information.
- It was agreed that Priority 1(iv) should be considered under Priority 1(i).
- Priority 1(vi) (Promotion of REQM award – through school visits, training, RE Conference) – it was noted that this action was on hold until the Agreed Syllabus had been finalised.
- Priority 2(iii) (Production of "Train the Trainer" pack for Primary RE Co-ordinators to deliver to non-specialist teachers) – it was noted that this Priority would be kept on the Action Plan until the Agreed Syllabus had been published.

RESOLVED

That the Action Plan and the various actions reported be noted.

52 AGREED SYLLABUS UPDATE

SACRE received a verbal update in connection with progress of production of the Agreed Syllabus.

Members were reminded that SACRE had agreed to delegate oversight of the syllabus to the Agreed Syllabus Conference. Because of the timescales involved it would not be possible to bring the syllabus back to the SACRE for consideration before the next meeting. However, it was proposed that the syllabus should be emailed to members at the beginning of September to allow them to comment before the syllabus was approved by the Conference. It would then be passed to the County Council for approval and then launched to schools.

Members were asked for their views on how the Agreed Syllabus should be launched once it had been approved by the County Council. It was noted that in the past a launch venue had been Lincoln Cathedral. It was suggested that to incentivise attendance hard copies of the syllabus should be made available to hand out to attendees.

Comments by members and responses by officers, where appropriate, included:-

- It was noted that the Agreed Syllabus was a slimmer version than in the past and 500 copies would be required for schools which would mean one hard copy for each school and a copy of the syllabus would be placed on the website. A copy would also be sent to all academies.
- The syllabus should be made available in a ring binder if possible.
- It was proposed to launch the syllabus in the spring term 2018 and introduced into schools from the autumn term 2018. Training would be provided by Wendy Harrison and Gillian Georgiou.
- The Headteachers' Groups would be an effective way of disseminating the syllabus.
- Academies would be provided with a free copy of the syllabus.

RESOLVED

(a) That the verbal update on the production of the Agreed Syllabus be noted.

(b) That, in view of the timescales involved, a copy of the draft Agreed Syllabus be emailed to all members of SACRE for their comments and that their comments be forwarded to the Agreed Syllabus Conference before the final version was forwarded to the County Council for approval.

(c) That the comments made by SACRE in connection with the launch of the Agreed Syllabus be noted.

53 DIOCESAN RE ADVISOR REPORTS AS FOLLOWS:-53a The Commission on RE

SACRE received a report and presentation in connection with "The Commission on RE" which was a high profile independent commission with a remit to make recommendations designed to improve the quality and rigour of religious education and its capacity to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Comments made by members and the responses of officers where appropriate, included:-

- The presentation would be sent to members. Members were asked to view the "news" section of the website to get some idea of the areas visited by the Commission.
- The recruitment of teachers of RE was a real concern. If the failure to recruit teachers of RE continued at its present rate could this lead to the closure of training departments? Officers stated that this had occurred with one establishment already.
- Officers stated that there had been several non-statutory frameworks provided over the last decade or so, including the Qualification and Curriculum Authority materials in 2004, the Department for Children, Schools and Families materials in 2010 and the National Curriculum Framework for RE developed by RE Church of England and Wales in 2013. None of these were statutory but some schools thought they were required to follow them, hence the confusion.
- The Commission proposed to bring out an interim report in September 2018.
- Officers stated that the Commission had been due to report just before the General Election 2020 but this had subsequently changed following the snap General Election in June 2017 and the Commission was now only able to recommend changes.

REPORTED

That the report be noted.

53b Diocesan RE Advisor Report

SACRE received a report in connection with the work undertaken by the Diocese on RE matters. This included the opportunity to start a second block of training on the "Understanding Christianity Resource", ensuring Church schools were familiar with the expectations of the Church of England Education Office in connection with RE (the "Statement of Entitlement") and involved in carrying out some research in curriculum balance in RE in both primary and secondary schools.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

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54 ASSOCIATION OF RE INSPECTORS, ADVISERS AND CONSULTANTS'
CONFERENCE - UPDATE

The SACRE received a verbal report and presentation in connection with national initiatives in RE discussed at the annual conference of the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants. The main focus of the conference had been on assessment and progress. The key message from the conference had been "do less but in more depth".

Gillian Georgiou noted that the Statement of Entitlement included an expectation that progress and entitlement in RE in church schools was monitored. Schools were looking for guidance on assessment procedures. It was noted that the Diocese had written to Church schools to remind them that governors should be monitoring RE. Gillian Georgiou stated that she had already led some training on monitoring and assessment for Church schools.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

55 ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN YORK ON 16 MAY 2017

The SACRE received a report from Andrew Hornsby on his attendance at the Annual Conference in York on 16 May 2017.

It was noted that the heading of "How SACREs impact the quality and vigour of contemporary RE with evidence of success, barriers and challenges" was relevant to the Action Plan (minute 51).

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and that Andrew Hornsby be thanked for his report.

56 OPENING REFLECTIONS AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE SACRE ON
14 NOVEMBER 2017

Cherry Edwards agreed to do reflections at the next meeting.

57 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of SACRE would be arranged for 2pm on Tuesday 14 November 2017, at the County Offices, Newland, Lincoln.

Following a brief discussion on the removal of children from school on religious grounds, it was agreed that SACRE would view a DVD produced by the Police on extremism in schools at a future meeting.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm