

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
8 DECEMBER 2021**

PRESENT:

Christian Denominations and Other Religious Denominations (Committee A)

Chris Burke (Chairman) (Roman Catholic Church), Peter Crosby (Baptist Church), Andrew Hornsby (Methodist Church), Swathi Sreenivasan (Hindu Community)

The Church of England (Committee B)

Cherry Edwards OBE (Vice-Chairman)

Associations Representing Teachers (Committee C)

Chris Thompson (NEU)

The Local Authority (Committee D)

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

Officer/Advisers

Wendy Harrison (RE Adviser) and Emily Wilcox (Democratic Services Officer)

1 OPENING REFLECTIONS

Opening reflections were received by Cherry Edwards OBE, in which tribute was made to former Councillor Bob Adams.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Chris Burke be elected Chairman of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education until the AGM in November 2022.

CHRIS BURKE IN THE CHAIR

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3 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Cherry Edwards OBE be elected Vice-Chairman of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education until the AGM in November 2022.

4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/MEMBER CHANGES

Apologies for absence had been received from Jill Chandar-Nair, Gillian Georgiou, Dr Amanda Grant, Jennifer King, Elizabeth Moore, Mark Plater, Claire Simons and Sian Wade.

5 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

6 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF SACRE HELD ON 6 JULY 2021

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of SACRE held on 6 July 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIRMAN (IF ANY)

The Chairman reported that he had not received any correspondence since the previous meeting.

8 FEEDBACK FROM RE SURVEY AND EXAMINATION TIME ALLOCATION

The Committee received a presentation from the RE Adviser, which provided an update on the RE Survey and Examination Time Allocation; recent Ofsted inspections and work with schools and CPD, covering items 8, 9 and 10 of the agenda.

Feedback from the RE Survey and Examination Time Allocation

The Committee received an update on the feedback received from the RE Survey and Examination Time Allocation. The Committee was advised that the survey had been sent out to all primary and secondary schools within Lincolnshire, of which only 17 primaries and 2 secondary schools had responded.

Of the 17 Primary Schools which that had provided feedback, data showed that:

- Most were delivering RE as a discrete subject with acceptable time allocation, with RE being delivered mainly by class teachers
- Only four primary schools were 'extremely confident', and three said they were not confident at all

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- Two schools expressed concern about certain areas – this will be followed up
- A number of training needs had been identified in order to deliver RE more effectively
- RE had continued to be taught remotely during the covid-19 restrictions

The following feedback had been provided from the two Secondary Schools who had responded to the survey:

School 1

- RE was taught as a discrete lesson for one hour a week (KS3) and was taught by subject specialists
- The Subject Leader was very confident that the school has a well sequenced and knowledge-focused curriculum and believed that teachers were very confident about their subject knowledge.
- 100% of pupils were entered into a GCSE examination for RE
- The school had identified that they needed more resources to teach Hinduism
- The school had not seen an impact on the teaching of RE as a result of Covid-19

School 2

- RE was taught as a discrete lesson for one hour a week (KS3) and was taught by subject specialists
- The school in question was an academy and therefore a different syllabus was used, with a focus on enquiry and skills
- The Subject Leader was fairly confident that the school had a well sequenced and knowledge-focused curriculum and believed that teachers were fairly confident about their subject knowledge
- Pupils were offered examination options, in which around 40% were entered for GCSE examination
- There was no RE on offer for those not taking an examination course
- The school identified a number of training needs including new assessment methods which enabled students to know and remember the substantive content of what they had been taught.
- During the Covid-19 restrictions, RE had been taught via remote learning. There was no significant 'catch up' to be done, beyond a gap analysis

Members of the Committee were invited to ask questions on the feedback to the RE Survey, in which the following points were noted:

- It would be difficult for the RE Adviser to put together schemes of work that would cover all aspects of the syllabus that suited all schools. The Diocese had produced some model lesson plans that schools could buy into. The RE Adviser would be seeking the views of subject leaders to identify what resources they required to support them in their teaching of RE
- It was suggested that it should be the job of the subject leader to produce a scheme of work for the department. However, if the subject leader was not a specialist, the

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school may need external help and support should needs should be directed towards subject leaders to help them produce schemes of work that met the needs of their school

- From the feedback provided, it was suggested that there may be a number of teachers who did not want to be teaching the subject
- It was highlighted that there were many free resources online, including model lesson plans, which could be used to support teachers
- The Committee acknowledged that teachers had been under exceptional pressure as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic
- As the response to the feedback had been poor, the survey was only a small sample of the responses received so it was not representative of the whole of Lincolnshire's schools
- It was suggested that the Council assessed the way that they sent out surveys to schools as a change in method could increase the response rate. The RE Adviser agreed to discuss this with the Inclusion and Attendance Officer to identify the best approach for future surveys

The RE Adviser provided an update on time allocations in primary schools. Analysis was based on data provided by Deborah Weston, Research Officer for NATRE (National Association of Teachers of Religious Education). The data was reported by schools to the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the school census in November 2020. 2928 schools were included in the sample, which included the majority of state funded secondary schools. Some schools had not reported any data this year for a variety of reasons. The data showed hours taught for years 7 to 13, in RE and philosophy.

The Committee was provided with the names of those schools of which had reported zero hours of RE teaching; had not provided any data on RE and where hours of RE had decreased from 2019-20.

In response to the information provided on time allocation, it was suggested that as with any data, caution had to be applied regarding analysis, i.e. the data provided raised questions rather than provided answers.

Ofsted Update

The Committee received an update on recent Ofsted inspections within Lincolnshire, which included the following:

- 6 schools had been inspected between September and December 2021, but there had been no 'deep dives' into RE as part of any of the inspections
- The schools which had been inspected: Benjamin Adlard; Moulton Chapel; Scampton CE; Bourne Abbey; Swineshead St Mary's and Wrangle. Details of their inspection in relation to SMSC/British Values/RE were provided.
- Areas for improvement included: ensuring pupils received support to develop a more detailed enough knowledge of diversity and of faiths and cultures that were different to their own and a better understanding of diversity and difference in British society.

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- There were also improvements to be made on the curriculum coherence and sequencing.

Update on the work for schools and CPD

The Committee then received an update on the work for Schools and CPD, which included providing online training for teachers in February and March, and face to face training in Summer 2022.

Schools had also been invited to receive an RE 'Health Check' free of charge, which would involve the RE Adviser analysing the schools use of policy, planning and preparations for RE. There had already been a positive response to the offer of RE Health Checks.

The Committee was invited to ask questions on the update, in which the following points were noted:

- The Committee emphasised the importance of making materials very easy to access for teachers who were often time limited and under pressure as well as a need for making materials interactive and fun so that younger pupils could become more engaged in the learning of RE.
- There was a need for leaders within schools to acknowledge the importance of training in RE and to encourage staff to participate in the training available.
- The RE Adviser was now working with the training provider Focus Education to develop training resources for RE which would offer support to subject leaders.

The Committee joined the RE Adviser in paying tribute to Karen Topliss, an RE colleague from Manor Leas Infant School who had recently passed away.

RESOVLED:

That consideration be given to the presentation and that the comments made by the Committee be noted.

9 OFSTED UPDATE

Information relating to this item was considered as part of a presentation under item 8 – Feedback from RE Survey and Examination Time Allocation.

10 UPDATE ON THE WORK WITH SCHOOLS AND CPD

Information relating to this item was considered as part of a presentation under item 8 – Feedback from RE Survey and Examination Time Allocation.

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11 DIOCESAN UPDATE

The Committee had received a written update from the Diocesan RE Adviser, which was included within the agenda pack.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

12 REFLECTIONS AT THE NEXT MEETING

Jennifer King and Claire Simons would be put forward for opening reflections at the next meeting.

13 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 22nd March at 2.00pm. Due to concerns regarding Covid-19, it was yet to be confirmed whether the meeting would take place in person or via Microsoft Teams.

The meeting closed at 3.22 pm