

**Minutes of the meeting of the
Cambridgeshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Thursday 17th June 2021 at 4.15pm**

Present: Amanda Fitton (AF, SACRE Adviser), Aga Cahn (AC), Tony Reynolds (TR), Julia Ewans (JE - SACRE Chair), Becky Palmer (BP), Dr Shirley Hall (SH), Virginia Barnes (VB), Reverend Mackley RM), Catherine Watts (CW), Caroline Vinall (CV)

Apologies: Dennis Johnson and Moira Middleton and Isobel Rawlinson

In attendance

Laura Corcoran, SACRE Clerk
Susan Scholan (SS) – Cambs teacher and potential SACRE member
Becky Layfield (BL) – Cambs teacher and potential SACRE member
Laura Penrose (LP) - Cambs teacher and potential SACRE member
Jackii Crockett (JC) - MOD Schools & Settings Defence Children Services

1. Welcome and Introductions

Julia Ewans (Chair) opened the meeting and all Members were welcomed.
JE welcomed the new teacher members SS, BL and LP.

2. Apologies

Noted from Moira Middleton and Isobel Rawlinson

3 Declarations of interest

None.

3. Minutes of 3.2.201 and matters arising not elsewhere on agenda

The minutes were approved as a true record and duly signed.
There were no outstanding matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4. SACRE Membership / Vacancies Update

The Clerk advised of the current vacancies as follows: Methodist, Orthodox and Roman catholic Clerk to contact the Cambridge centre regarding suitable candidates.

AF to approach the Methodist church.

It was agreed that the three headteachers would be co-opted

**Clerk
AF**

5. Correspondence and updates – NASACRE / DfE

Members referred to the email request from Jessi Wilson university from Portsmouth regarding student participation on SACRE. Members agreed that the email was not clear as to what was being asked of SACRE or even if this specifically related to an RE student.

It was agreed that AF and BP would investigate local options as a more suitable arrangement. Clerk to respond

Clerk

6. Westhill

Members discussed the fact that they hoped this project could be revisited in the Autumn with the view to integrating arrangements with interfaith week in November. JE and AF had already started to pull the required information together ahead of making contact with schools. JE added that she hoped SACRE would still be able to access the group of teachers and faith leaders originally involved. It was agreed that the mosque at Cambridge would be approached. AF added that schools

AF

are keen for this to go ahead and that she has received some enquiries; some schools even mention the Westhill project on their website. It is possible that SACRE will report to NASACRE next year if this project is able to go ahead in the autumn term.

8 NASACRE conference and FOI report

JE had attended the NASACRE conference. The technology had broken down so break out rooms did not go ahead. There was a lot of jargon. There were afternoon workshops. The clerk has circulated the discussion paper which the RE council has produced. This is a bigger concept of the manner of teaching RE and is a useful read.

National data – there were a lot of slides and statistics. We hope to revisit this as it had to be rushed through and it was very in depth. There is a workshop next week (22nd June 7-8 pm) and members were encouraged to join NASACRE workshops where they can.

On behalf of the committee, JE had expressed her desire to NASACRE to be involved in the conversations relating to faith.

9. Ofsted review of RE

Members had accessed the new RE report on RE as circulated by the clerk.

AF delivered an Ofsted presentation regarding the new framework, highlighting the following points:

- Teaching should be grounded in academic study Ofsted say what it taught and learned should be grounded in what is known about religion or non-religion from academic study
- Cover content collectively enough rather than superficial – the curriculum should cover substantive content and concepts collectively enough rather than simply covering excessive amount of content superficially
- Well sequenced curriculum key for dealing with sensitive topics
- Pupils should learn the ways of knowing – Ofsted research suggests it would be more useful and constitution for teachers to plan for pupils to learn ways of knowing which are specific
- Assessments should not be excessively onerous on teachers. Ofsted states that leaders should ensure assessments are not onerous for teachers and there should also be professional development opportunities for staff which allow them to reflect on how different assessments frame expectations
- Sufficient time must be allocated to RE in order to develop an ambitious RE curriculum there must be sufficient time Ofsted wants that problems can sometimes emerge when RE is too weakly classified.

A discussion followed. Members agreed the importance than any inspector proving grades should have the appropriate RE knowledge to do so. BP said that NATRE have been working alongside inspectors to help improve their knowledge.

Members acknowledged that there is a lot of training about deep dives and being Ofsted ready. Members discussed that funding is a barrier and where is the time to train staff to understand the content well enough to deliver those high-quality lessons.

AF Agreed that there is a gap in teachers knowledge and will be delivering specific training this year in the different faiths so that schools make sure that their teachers are teaching the RE that they should. Whilst Ofsted want the teachers to be the experts, cultural capital is a very broad term. Members agreed the need for young people to meet people of different faiths and that this had been restricting due to the pandemic. Ofsted are encouraging engagement with faith groups so that pupils get to meet a variety of people.

10. Update on the monitoring of schools' websites / RE provision

The committee discussed their involvement so far. The primary schools exercise is now complete and the secondaries are not yet finished. It was clarified that in some cases it was difficult to find the RE curriculum (on schools' websites). in some primaries only a small amount of RE was being delivered. There are some secondaries where there is no RE on the websites at all. There are also some excellent school websites. Members were reminded that the review was for SACRE purposes only and not for public consumption. Members acknowledged that RE is taking place in some

Clerk

schools yet his is not being promoted or mentioned in the websites. There is a requirement for all schools to have their curriculum published on schools' websites. There is possibly a link between deep dives, re curriculum etc. it I thought that schools had been reminded about this requirement from Jonathan Lewis. This does not have to be an in-depth description, LP suggested that what is specifically required is clarified. Members have feedback on the websites they had visited.

11. Schools' attendance at training February – June

AF advised of the training which had taken place since the last meeting including Leading RE and, the basics of Judaism, the basics of Hinduism and RE network meetings.

The course on 7th July would focus on the new RE Ofsted report. AF added that attendance has been quite low but we are aware that teachers have been under a lot of pressure. fortunately, we have not had to cancel any training this term.

Clerk to send full breakdown of training for 2021-22.

Clerk

12. Members' updates

It was noted that there are updated materials and resources related to KS2 on world religions and eco schools. Person (sorry not sure who) to send through the website to the clerk for circulation.

JE advised of some work she is doing supporting of secondary schools in Uganda. This involves a project whereby schools are purchased at a small cost.

AC advised that the 40th anniversary of the synagogue in Cambridge had taken place and that she had circulated the video.

AC added that she had started to go into schools to provide support on a socially distanced basis for example attending outside classrooms

13. Agreed Syllabus 2023-2028

AF advised that SACRE start to think about the arrangements and should consider whether they work in conjunction with Peterborough and Rutland. with this exercise.

Members considered that their options were as follows:

Option 1

Review the current agreed syllabus and update any areas that need to be updated, but the basic outline stays the same. FOC to the end user.

Option 2

Review the current syllabus update in line and add more resources and curriculum information to reflect the new Ofsted report and the changing views on RE in our schools i.e., Religions and world views. FOC to the end user.

Option 3

Update the statutory guild lines to in line with the new Ofsted report and reports from the REC (The Religious Education Council of England and Wales). This is costly as materials will have to be written and money will need to negotiate with the council.

A discussion followed. If there is no one willing to subscribe there is a lot of work for SACRE relating to option 3. It may be too late by the time this comes out. AF said that following yesterday's training it has been agreed that a teacher can be sent. AF to survey the teachers first and will find out what money is available. Members agreed that Councillors would need to play a pivotal role and therefore representation at the next meeting is vital.

AF

The committee discussed the fact that as per the NASACRE report, the only SACRE budget is for provision of AF and the clerk's time as well as the NASACRE annual membership.

Diocese involvement was suggested. As money is short for councils this is also a good way of sharing resources.

It was agreed that AF will take the views of Cambridgeshire SACRE to Peterborough as there are two Diocese representatives on that committee.

14. Interfaith Week 14-21 November

The clerk had circulated the correspondence relating to IFW from 14-21 November. this would be an agenda item for the Autumn term so that members can update on related activities and celebrations.

15 Annual report 2020-21

AF advised that given the pandemic, the report content would likely be similar to that of last year and would be ready for September. To be circulated by AF/Clerk.

AF/Clerk

16. AOB

TR referred to the recent NATRE report relating to anti-racism and said that there had been some concerns raised about the teaching of certain controversial subjects in schools for example slavery there is a very clear steer on how primary school teachers should be dealing with what they should teach. The NATRE advice is very clear and provide guidance for schools in the form of their own versions of documents. Clerk to access documents from the website.

Clerk

Meeting dates for 2021-22

-Weds 22 September – Potentially face to face

-Weds 2 Feb – Via Zoom

-Thursday 16 June – Potentially face to face

The meeting closed at 17:20.