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(SACRE) STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
NOTES OF THE INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2014

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Present:

Group A

Christian Denominations

None present

Other religions

Elizabeth Jenkerson, Priti Dave, Anas Al-Korj

Group B – Church of England

None present

Group C – Teachers

Jackie Meering, Mr D Parrott

Group D – Members of the Council

Councillor Parnell, Kate Martin

OTHERS non-voting

Southampton City Mission, Chris Davis

Also in attendance:

Sue Lawrence – Clerk to the SACRE

Alison Philpott – RE Professional Support to the SACRE

Alison Philpott welcomed members to this informal introductory session, to introduce herself as the new Local Authority professional support for the SACRE.

Alison outlined her background and reported that she had already linked with the South Central Hub to develop knowledge of local practice and with Councillor Daunt as previous Chair of the SACRE. The aim of the meeting was to discuss a positive way forward for the SACRE in general but in particular with regard to the first of the three annual statutory meetings in January 2015.

Alison invited members to highlight issues which they felt had arisen.

The group agreed that chairing the SACRE had been an issue for the past few meetings with each meeting electing a Chair for the purpose of that meeting alone and there being no chair elected for the municipal year.

Alison suggested that the Professional Support could take a stronger facilitating role at future meetings (as occurred at the Hants SACRE meetings) with the Chair taking a more nominal role. It was agreed that this might assist with encouraging members to come forward to take on the role of Chair.

Members felt that the SACRE had become a talking-shop unable to carry out its statutory functions due to the lack of professional support and a dedicated budget, in particular:

- Annual Report
- Evidence gathering regarding RE in schools – primary schools especially
- Data regarding long/short course take-up
- Use of Agreed Syllabus
- Training for SACRE members
- Offering training and support to RE teachers
- Evaluation of RE attainment in schools

It was highlighted that the review of the Agreed Syllabus would form a major part of the SACRE workload for the next year.

There was discussion around work carried out by some members on the questionnaire to schools. It had been agreed that the previous head of education for SCC would arrange for this to be finalised and sent out to schools – this had not unfortunately been progressed.

There was discussion around other possible areas of work (which would include data gathering) including:

- Future working with academies,
- Governing bodies
- Visits to schools to support RE
- Offering schools support regarding education on specific faiths
- Development of online social networking service eg Twitter for RE teachers
- Auditing if not monitoring work on RE in City schools
- Training for SACRE members to undertake supportive school visits
- Possible development of list of faith contacts in SACRE to support schools.

Alison agreed to undertake some in-depth research into RE attainment in schools in the City for the next formal meeting.

Additionally, Alison would email a revised version of the questionnaire to the group with a view to it being sent out to schools in the City in early January.

Following discussion of suitable days/times for future meetings as canvassed by Alison's invitation to this meeting, it was agreed that the next formal meeting of the SACRE would be arranged for either Monday 26 January or Monday, 2 February in the Civic Centre (to be confirmed by email). There was general agreement that Monday afternoons were generally the most suitable but consideration of other venues be given for future meetings.

Members noted that the next meeting of the South Central Hub was on 9<sup>th</sup> February and Alison invited any members interested in attending to contact her.

It was also agreed that:

- notes of the meeting would be circulated to members
- the next meeting agenda include a session on the Agreed Syllabus
- copy/link to the Agreed Syllabus be circulated to members
- members bring list of what they could do to support faith teaching in schools
- and further to above produce examples of any protocols in use regarding school visits (Alison)
- for the next meeting members consider what one thing was not being done in schools in the City – perhaps being done by Hampshire as an example.
- Copies of/links to the following be circulated to members:
  - Latest Ofsted report
  - Review of RE in C of E schools
  - RE Council information
  - RE The Truth Unmasked

Members noted that the consultation on revised subject content for GCSE and A level religious studies for first teaching from 2016 ended late December (link below).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-and-a-level-reform-religious-studies>