
(SACRE) STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2012

Present:

Group A –
Christian Denominations
Gail Ratcliffe

Other religions
Priti Dave and Elizabeth Jenkerson

Group B – Church of England

Group C – Teachers
Jackie Meering and Mr D Parrott

Group D – Members of the Council
Councillors Daunt, Kaur and Paffey

Also in attendance:
Varina Emblen, Children's Services and Learning

Others (Non-Voting)
Chris Davis

Apologies
David Vane, Andy Mills, Mrs Margaret Blake, Peter Howard, Tony Blackshaw, Ellen Humphries, Councillor Brian Parnell, Kate Martin, Chris Robinson and Sian Roberts

1. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and thanked them for coming. It was noted that the meeting was not quorate.

Apologies were received from:-

Group A - Margaret Blake
Group A - David Vane
Group A - Pete Howard
Group A - Andy Mills
Group B - Tony Blackshaw
Group D - Councillor Parnell
Group D – Kate Martin
Co-opted - Sian Roberts
Co-opted - Chris Robinson

2. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2012 be approved and signed as a correct record. (Copy of the Minutes circulated with the Agenda and appended to the signed Minutes).

Matters Arising

Page 3 – Collective Worship for Schools – Jackie Meering stated that the second paragraph should read “Jackie Meering stated that School Governors **should** know what Collective Worship arrangements were in place”.

Jackie Meering reported that she was still trying to contact Judith Lownes regarding the document “Collective Worship in Schools”.

The Chair reported that only one written response had been received in connection with the way Collective Worship was taught in schools, although Jackie Meering confirmed that schools have themes set each week.

3. **MEMBERSHIP OF SACRE**

The Chair welcomed Varina Emblen as the new LEA representative and he also welcomed Elizabeth Jenkerson as the new Baha’i representative.

The Chair reported that he was contacting members who had not attended for some while and would report back to the next meeting. It was noted that Tony Blackshaw, Mr Palmer and Chris Robinson had all agreed, since the last meeting, to serve another four year term.

4. **FEEDBACK ON EVENTS**

The Chair reported that he had attended a Joint SACRE meeting in early October for the Southampton/Portsmouth/Hampshire/West Sussex/Bournemouth/Poole and Isle of Wight groups, which he had found to be a useful meeting. Meetings were scheduled for twice a year and the Terms of Reference had been expanded to include many groups. It was agreed to distribute the Minutes of these meetings to members of the Southampton SACRE group.

The Isle of Wight SACRE group had reported that the island consisted of mainly Church of England schools and there was therefore little interaction with other faith schools. They stated that they would like to host a multi-faith conference and the Chair had offered to help in the organisation of this event.

The event “Meet the Hindus” had been well attended on 30th September and David Vane, the secretary of SCOF, was asked to forward details of an event “Celebrate Faith and Light” on 25 November to the Clerk, for onward transmission to Members.

5. **NATIONAL SUBJECT REVIEW OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The Religious Education Council of England and Wales had been commissioned to conduct a review of Religious Education in England. The Chair stated that the report of the Proposed Review was for Members to note at the present time and that the Clerk would forward a copy to all SACRE members. Once the draft report had been written after 31 October, there would be a consultation period during which it would be sent to

Members via email and an extra meeting could be arranged to discuss it. The Chair stated that he would keep SACRE up to date with progress achieved.

6. **DISCUSSION ON FAITH SCHOOLS**

The Chair reported that as Anas Al-Korj and Tony Blackshaw had both sent apologies to the meeting, it would not be possible to discuss in detail the Fitrah SIPS and Church of England schools in the city.

Academy status within schools was becoming more prevalent and it was felt that the teaching of religious education would be difficult to monitor in the future as the Local Authority did not have rights to intervene. Within secondary schools there was a degree of monitoring via the GCSE results but this did not apply to younger children. Varina Emblen stated that she would check if School Inspections specifically included the teaching of RE. The Chair said that he would contact the Religious Education Council and other local SACRE groups to enquire what they were doing to monitor RE in non-Local Authority schools. Elizabeth Jenkerson stated that she would enquire about teaching of RE in Academies at the NASACRE meeting to be held on 6th November. She also stated that a training session would be held on 19th October for secondary school RE teachers. The Southampton SACRE Terms of Reference may need to be adjusted to take account of this trend as, currently, Academy Members did not have voting rights.

7. **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT 2012**

Varina Emblen made a presentation to the meeting regarding educational attainment for 2012. Whilst there was a trend of improvement, the gap continued to widen negatively between Southampton and other areas. One area of concern was the level at which many 4 year old children entered school, with poor levels of language and self management. These matters were addressed by schools but issues of poverty were causing increasing concern. In a data presentation given to the Southampton Children's Trust Board, the Early Years age group was the group of highest concern.

Varina Emblen stated that in Key Stage 2 there was a need to accelerate progress of children by focussing on gaps and being aware of where children could be making better progress and attaining at a higher level.

Key Stage 4 had borne the brunt of the English debacle and Southampton results were not as strong as had been predicted at GCSE.

Post 16 had received a very good outcome and NEETS (Not in Employment, Education or Training) had received a very significant improvement, bringing the result to below the national average.

Future challenges were considered to be the changing state of educational provision, attendance, shrinking local resources and the entitlement of every child and young person to a "good" education.

It was agreed that it would be useful if the GCSE RE results could be broken down by school and their pass rate. Once this had been established, Varina Emblen was asked to bring the figures to the next meeting. It was agreed that it would also be useful to know which schools were not teaching RE but recognised that this may be difficult. Elizabeth Jenkerson offered to give Varina Emblen a questionnaire to send out to

schools and the Chair agreed to collate the results and give the questionnaire to the Cabinet Member/Director to take to the Heads' Conference, in order to promote filling it in.

Priti Dave stressed the need to promote to schools the benefits of doing collective worship and the teaching of RE.