

Standing Advisory Council For Religious Education Strategy Sub-Group

held on Monday, 6th February, 2012 at 4.30 p.m.

at Pleck Methodist Church, Bescot Road, Walsall

Present

Mrs. V. Morris
Mr. R. Simmons

In Attendance

Mrs. S. Blackmore
Mrs. M. Gibbons
Mr. E. Richards (Walsall Children's Services - Serco)

Appointment of Chairman

In the absence of the Chairman, Mrs. Morris agreed to take the Chair.

Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. C. Hopkins and Councillor Robertson.

Notes of meeting held on 19th September, 2011

The notes of the meeting held on 19th September, 2011 were submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the notes of the meeting held on 19th September, 2011, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Late items to be introduced by the Chairman

There were no late items for introduction by the Chairman.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)

There were no items for consideration in private session.

Progress on Five Year Development Plan

A copy of the Five Year Development Plan was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Mrs. Blackmore informed Committee that NASACRE could be introducing a new agreed syllabus requirement. The Government could be looking to introduce regional SACREs to include one or two Members representing each Local Authority area. The proposal could introduce a Black Country or Midlands area SACRE. The Government was also looking into the development of education in the future. Mrs. Morris agreed that the future of RE was in question in view of the establishment of Academies.

Mr. Simmons stated that Ofsted had recently operated spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their inspections and every lesson plan had to include this.

With regard to the inclusion in year 2011/12 to promote RE for field of study for older pupils, Mrs. Morris felt that the introduction of the faith tour guide qualification could be investigated. The induction course for public sector employees had been acknowledged as a requirement within the public sector and felt that the satisfactory teaching of RE in schools would address this prior to young people taking up posts in the area.

Mr. Richards informed the Group that schools had not been very receptive to completing the questionnaire on RE resources within their schools or to receiving visits by Members of SACRE. Since the introduction of the new framework and the conversion of schools to Academies, the situation was worsening. Sandy Moran had contacted schools to arrange visits but had received no response, therefore, no evidence base had been developed on how well the agreed syllabus was being used within schools. A small number of schools were teaching RE and some staff were attending training sessions being provided by Lat Blaylock, RE Today.

In response to questions, Mr. Richards confirmed that training sessions in respect of secondary RE were not taking place as secondary staff were not attending. Mrs. Morris stated that there was a need for an induction for employees in RE but if this was recognised at schools it would negate the need.

Resolved

That a joint report be submitted to the next meeting of SACRE on the use of resources for RE in schools and the implications for RE on schools moving towards Academy status.

Members thanked the Lichfield Diocese for their work in maintaining Church schools going through the process.

Resolved Further

That the progress on the Five Year Development Plan be noted.

RE Today - Launch Event

Mr. Richards informed the Group that it was anticipated that the launch event would take place on either 19th, 20th or 21st June, 2012 from 1.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. It was hoped that five documents prepared by RE Today would be available at the launch.

Mr. Richards informed the Group that discussions had been taking place on proposals to introduce a newsletter on RE for circulation to schools via the Well.

Resolved

- (1) That the date for the launch event in June be confirmed as soon as possible;
- (2) That approval be given to the introduction of a newsletter to be published on the Well for all schools;
- (3) That Reena Saggu be requested to investigate the possibility of including a competition in the newsletter.

Gifted and Talented Days for Young People

Mrs. Blackmore informed the Group that Sandwell had declined the offer to combine the gifted and talented days with Walsall. The proposal was for Year 8 children to support Year 5 children in RE. Mrs. Blackmore indicated that the holding of a G and T day for young people in May would be too soon as the event would require planning and resourcing.

Resolved

That the information be noted and investigations take place into the possibility of holding a gifted and talented day for young people in the future.

Programme of Inter-active Visits for RE teachers, including “bus trip”

The Group discussed the possibility of inter-active visits for RE teachers but was of the view that this should be held in abeyance until more detail on the religious awareness induction course was known.

Resolved

That a programme of inter-active visits for RE teachers be held in abeyance until the details of the religious awareness induction course was known.

Agenda for the next meeting of SACRE to be held on 12th March, 2012

A copy of the draft agenda for the meeting of SACRE to be held on 12th March, 2012 was submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Group agreed the content of the agenda, subject to the deletion of the item relating to Monitoring visits to schools and the inclusion of an item to be called SOS - RE and schools. The Group also agreed to defer consideration of the SACRE self-evaluation pending the outcome of changes to RE in the light of schools adopting Academy status.

The Group agreed that the July meeting of SACRE take place at Pleck Methodist Church, Bescot Road, Walsall.

Termination of meeting

The meeting terminated at 5.50 p.m.