

# **Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education**

**held on Monday, 10 October, 2011 at 5.30 p.m.**

**at Green Lane Baptist Church, Green Lane, Walsall**

## **Present**

Mr. C. Hopkins (Chairman)  
Councillor Arif  
Councillor Barker  
Councillor Robertson  
Mr. A. Orlik  
Mrs. M. Gibbons  
Mrs. V. Morris  
Mrs. B. Groombridge  
Mr. R. Simmons  
Mr. R. Askari

## **In Attendance**

E. Richards	}	Walsall Children's Services -
S. Moran	}	Serco

## **Apologies**

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors Rochelle and Turner, Mr. D. Thakker, Father J. Nankivell and Mrs. S. Blackmore.

## **Minutes**

### **(a) Minutes - 18 July, 2011**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July, 2011 were submitted:-

(see annexed)

## **Resolved**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July, 2011 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**(b) Strategy Sub-Group - 19 September, 2011**

The notes of the meeting of the Strategy Sub-Group held on 19 September, 2011 were submitted:-

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

That the notes of the meeting of the Strategy Sub-Group held on 19 September, 2011 be received and noted.

**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 late items for consideration in the private session.

**Action Plan - Update**

An update on the Action Plan 2011/12 was circulated at the meeting:-

(see annexed)

**Resolved**

That the update on the Action Plan 2011/12 be noted.

**RE Network Group - Presentation**

Mr. Richards introduced Fiona Moss of RE Today who had carried out a training session with seventeen subject leaders from Walsall schools at the Education Development Centre on 10 October, 2011 and gave a brief update on how the agreed syllabus was being used in schools.

Ms. Moss informed SACRE that the first RE Network Group was held last year; four half day training sessions took place involving approximately 15/20 staff and was designed to support them to bring the agreed syllabus into schools. Schemes of work and training that they could pass on to other members of staff in schools were considered as well as teaching specified religions, including Judaism and Islam. The sessions included subject knowledge and good practice for teaching and learning in the classroom. The general picture of RE in Walsall showed that it was being taught and/or managed by higher level teaching assistants. This situation was not unique.

Ms. Moss gave a presentation to SACRE on the methods used in the teaching of RE and indicated links into other subjects:-

(see annexed)

Mr. Blaylock had produced two additional units of work in respect of:-

How do we say thank you for our beautiful world?	}	Aimed at
What can we learn from stories Christians tell?	}	Year 2

Christian and Hindu answers to questions:-

What is God like?	}	Aimed at
What matters most in life?	}	Year 4
What happens when we die?	}	pupils

The teacher training sessions aimed at encouraging teachers to be more thoughtful about their teaching of RE and the quality provided to pupils. Work between the statutory and non-statutory information that was contained within the agreed syllabus was also focused on.

Mr. Simmons asked whether the work programmes would be provided to schools to support the agreed syllabus and was informed that it was for SACRE to determine in view of the financial implications.

Mr. Richards confirmed that information on the schemes of work was already available on "The Well" for schools to access.

Mr. Richards suggested that schools be invited to an event at the Education Development Centre to promote the schemes of work that had been produced. He undertook to include information on the agenda for Primary and Secondary Heads Forum and to write out to schools promoting the event which could take place in March, 2012.

Ms. Moss referred to SACRE's Action Plan relating to the promotion of RE as a field of study for older pupils and stated that RE Today did have access to funding that could assist. There could be several "gifted and talented" days for young people that could include pupils and teachers. SACRE would need to provide accommodation and refreshments for the training and the funding that RE Today could access would provide two trainers who could work with up to 100 students.

She stated that a programme of inter-active visits for RE teachers at the training session could be explored with a view to a variety of places of worship being identified. She suggested a "bus trip" for a number of teachers visiting a variety of places of worship on one day that could link in with faith tour guides.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That a launch event be held on a date to be confirmed in respect of the units of work that had been provided by RE Today for all schools in the Borough;

- (2) That work take place on gifted and talented days for young people, at which trainers and other students would be invited to attend, some of the funding for which would be accessed by RE Today;
- (3) That a programme of inter-active visits for RE teachers, including a “bus trip”, take place in order that teachers could visit as many different places of worship as possible.

### **Action Plan - Update**

A copy of the revised Action Plan was submitted:-

(see annexed)

### **Resolved**

That the Action Plan update be received and noted.

### **Funding**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

### **Induction programme for public services staff - progress**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Mrs. Morris introduced the report and informed SACRE that it had been highlighted that people coming to work in Walsall had little or no knowledge of religious awareness or the different cultures within Walsall. A number of organisations had expressed an interest in becoming part of an induction programme for public service staff, including WHG and NHS. She stated that the ICOCO report had highlighted problems relating to the number of ethnic groups that stay together in an area and it was important for those coming to work in Walsall to have an awareness of this. The problems had come to light through the faith tour guide training and organisations had indicated that they would be willing to pay for attendance at an induction session. In the initial stages, finance would be required to set up the programme and buy in expertise.

With regard to the induction programme attached to the report, the four major faiths in Walsall would be addressed and faith tour guides would give presentations at the venues to be visited.

### **Resolved**

That SACRE endorse, in principle, the proposal to introduce an induction programme for public services staff and a report be submitted to the next meeting on progress.

### **Monitoring visits to schools**

Mr. Richards informed SACRE that consideration was ongoing with regard to the monitoring of visits to schools and requested Members to contact him with any schools they wished to visit.

### **Feedback from earlier visits for use in the next agreed syllabus**

Mr. Richards informed Members that information relating to this was included in paperwork previously circulated.

### **Venue for 12 March, 2012 meeting**

#### **Resolved**

That the meeting to be held on 12 March, 2012 take place at Green Lane Baptist Church, Green Lane, Walsall.

### **Termination of Meeting**

The meeting terminated at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman .....

Date .....