

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
Monday, 10th October 2022 at 6.00 p.m. at Blue Coat C of E Infant School

Present:

Mrs P. Lane (Church of England, Lichfield Diocese)
Mr A. Orlik (Church of England, Lichfield Diocese)
Mrs K. Donnellan (Church of England, Lichfield Diocese)
Mrs R. Graham (Church of England, Lichfield Diocese)
Dr G. Gomez (Roman Catholic)
Mrs M. Gibbons (Methodist, Walsall)
Mr D. Lomax (United Reformed Church)
Mrs D. Letford (New Testament Church of God)
Mr M. Sacha (Muslim Welfare Society)
Deacon Helen Webster (Walsall Methodist)
Councillor G. S. Sohal (Walsall Sikh Forum)
Councillor M. Statham
Councillor E. Lee
Councillor R K Mehmi
Councillor C. Horton

In attendance:

Fiona Moss (RE Today Advisor)
Nick Perks (Quality Assurance Team Manager, Walsall Council)
Reena Farmah (Democratic Services Officer, Walsall Council)
Nikki Gough (Democratic Services Officer, Walsall Council).

1. Apologies

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Mrs V. H. Matterface, Mrs H. Leadley, Ms M. Marther, Mr I. Saeed-Ur-Rahman and Councillor K. Pedley.

In receiving apologies, the Chair announced the following permanent changes to the membership of SACRE:

- Mrs Mather would replace Ms B. Groombridge as the Walsall Quakers representative.
- Deacon H. Webster would replace Ms M Gibson as the Walsall Methodist representative.

2. Late Items to be introduced by the Chair

There were no late items to be introduced.

3. Minutes

Copies of the minutes of the meetings held on 7th March and 20 June, 2022 were submitted

(see annexed).

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 7 March 2022 and 20 June 2022, copies having previously been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

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

It was noted that there were no items to be considered in private session.

5. Presentation from Pupils at Blue Coat C E Infant School:

A discussion took place between the RE Today Advisor and pupils.

Infant and junior pupils responded to questions in relation to:

- What pupils enjoy most about RE
- Trips to places of worship
- What pupils enjoyed about school
- If pupils learnt about different religions during RE, including Christianity
- Bible verses.

The Chair thanked pupils for attending.

6. SACRE Integration Briefing Note

This item was deferred to the next meeting. The following discussion took place under the item.

The RE Today Advisor informed members that enquiries had been received from schools in relation to visiting places of worship. A discussion took place regarding the formation of a guide for local places of worship for schools to visit. Members commented that visits created opportunities to help pupils experience a variety of religions and beliefs, reinforcing learning undertaken in schools.

A Member commented that the synagogue in Birmingham welcomed educational visits and suggested that a synagogue be included in the list.

The RE Today Advisor informed members that the Arts Society Birmingham had collaborated with six different places of worship to produce a list for schools to visit.

Resolved

That a guide for visiting places of worship be created.

7. Self-Assessment of SACRE / Action Plan

A report was submitted

(see annexed).

The report was presented by the Chair. Members noted the short-term, mid-term and long-term actions contained within the plan.

The following key points were discussed;

New members to have induction training

The RE Today Advisor informed members that training was available to all members via the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) training programme. The Programme included new member induction training. Members were encouraged to participate in training and report back on training undertaken.

Members raised that login details had not been issued.

Standards and Quality of RE

The RE Today Advisor commented that SACRE had limited access to data making it difficult to evaluate the standards and quality of RE.

The Quality Assurance Team Manager responded that data available to the authority contained generic pass rates, the standards and quality of RE was not discussed as a specific topic by the authority.

Councillor M. Statham, introduced himself as the Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills, he commented that he would report back any specific issues from SACRE.

The Quality Assurance Team Manager explained that data was not validated until January 2023. Members agreed for data to be presented at the spring term meeting.

A discussion took place regarding academy representation on the committee. It was agreed that communication with academies required developing and would be an area of focus for the committee.

Effectiveness of the agreed syllabus

The RE Today Advisor informed members that the agreed syllabus for religion and worldviews launched in September 2022 and suggested for feedback from teachers be gathered in 12 months' taking into account a complete cycle of teaching.

Collective worship

The RE Today Advisor explained the determinations process, members agreed that clarity was required regarding the process for SACRE in Walsall.

Resolved

- 1) To note and agree the self-assessment action plan for SACRE;**
- 2) That the Chair explore NASACRE login details and report back; and**
- 3) To add RE data to the spring term agenda for discussion;**

8. SACRE National Updates

A report was submitted

(see annexed).

The RE Today Advisor highlighted the following key points:

Students in England and Wales taking a GCSE in religious studies increased nationally by 0.6% from the previous year. The take up of RE in Walsall had decreased.

The NASACRE had introduced a new team of regional leads; who will be representing and supporting their regions with a new RE Hub project (see annexed).

The RE Council of England and Wales (REC) had published draft resources for RE and worldviews, the resources were available with via the REC website (see annexed).

9. RE in Walsall including OFSTED updates

The RE Today Advisor reported on local OFSTED inspections held since 21 September 2022. Members noted that there was no requirement for the inspection report to include RE.

A member questioned whether Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) reports were available. The RE Today Advisor responded that reports were available on an annual basis. The Church of England representative suggested contacting the diocese directly for the reports.

10. Education in Walsall updates

The Quality Assurance Team Manager provided an update on OFSTED inspections.

He reported that two inspections had taken place during September 2022. A further four inspections were due to take place this week. Results of these inspections would be reported at the next meeting.

The meeting were informed that a Walsall Head teachers' conference was due to take place with Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted in attendance.

11. Walsall SACRE Annual Report

A report was submitted

(see annexed).

The RE Today Advisor explained that it was SACRE's statutory duty to publish an annual report by the 31st December each calendar year. Copies of the report are sent to the Secretary of State for Education and NASACRE.

Members were asked to note that data was not validated until January 2023 and therefore this year's data would be included in next year's report.

Resolved:

That the Walsall SACRE Annual Report be approved.

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 7:55p.m.

Signed.....

Date.....