

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

held on Monday, 8 March, 2010 at 5.45 p.m.

at Salvation Army Citadel, Green Lane, Walsall

Present

Councillor Ault
Councillor Cook
Councillor Rochelle
Councillor Turner
Mrs. S. Blackmore
Reverend Elizabeth Snowden (Chairman)
Mrs. M. Gibbons
Mrs. Valerie Morris
Mrs. Barbara Groombridge
Mr. R. Simmons
Mr. K. Yeates
Mrs. Lynn Edwards

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologised for the late start as the premises had not been made available.

Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Ms. Elaine Davies, Mr. C. Hopkins, Father Michael Leadbeater, Mrs. P. Mullins, Mr. Dhiren Thakker and Mr. Mahmood Sacha.

Minutes

(a) 12 October, 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October, 2009 were submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October, 2009 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

(b) Self Evaluation Working Group – 1 October and 26 November, 2009

The minutes of the Self Evaluation Working Group held on 1 October and 26 November, 2009 were submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the minutes of the Self Evaluation Working Group held on 1 October and 26 November, 2009 be noted.

(c) SACRE Strategy Sub-Group/Agreed Syllabus Working Party – 8 February, 2010

The notes of the SACRE Strategy Sub-Group/Agreed Syllabus Working Party held on 8 February, 2010 were submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the notes of the SACRE Strategy Sub-Group/Agreed Syllabus Working Party held on 8 February, 2010 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Councillor Ault in the list of those present.

Late items to be introduced by the Chairman

There were no late items to be introduced by the Chairman.

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

There were no items for consideration in the private session.

Agreed Syllabus Conference – Update

A copy of the conference flyer was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Mr. Richards stated that so far 22 people had indicated that they would be present and the event had been well advertised.

Resolved

That the content of the conference and the information provided be noted.

Children's Services – Serco – database

The report of the Executive Director (Resources) was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Mr. Richards enlarged on the report and attachments circulated and confirmed that a new advanced skills teacher was in post at Blue Coat School.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) That a letter be forwarded to the RE Advanced Skills Teacher at Blue Coat School congratulating her on her recent qualifications.

Trend for G.C.S.E. results

Spreadsheets showing examination results in RE were circulated:-

(see annexed)

Mr. Richards confirmed that the information was based on 19 secondary schools with analysis over the past four years and the numbers taking RE as a full GCSE had increased. In 2009 65.9% of pupils obtained a GCSE in RE although the national average was around 75%.

Mrs. Morris questioned whether the syllabus in secondary schools could consist of one module on contemporary issues and the second module on a faith chosen by the students for example Christianity or Islam.

With regard to studies in school, this could be investigated during visits.

Resolved

That the spreadsheets and information set out above be noted.

**Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools / Section 48:
(a) Christ Church CE (VC) Primary School**

The National Society Statutory Inspection report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the report be noted and a letter be forwarded to Christ Church Primary School congratulating them on their successful inspection.

(b) Blue Coat CE (VA) Junior School

The National Society Statutory Inspection report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the report be noted and a letter be forwarded to Blue Coat Junior School congratulating them on their successful inspection.

Visits to religious establishments

Mrs. Morris informed SACRE that she had requested at the last Multi Faith Forum a list of contact numbers for representatives from places of worship that might be recommended for visits if we could support or help in any way to make visits beneficial and a positive experience it would be advantageous. The possibility of training faith tour guides was being investigated although there were financial implications.

Mrs. Morris reported that Wolverhampton MBC had decided to fund an exercise and questioned whether the Multi Faith Forum could do something similar on a shared basis with SACRE although SACRE would prefer to explore this as the pupils of Walsall Schools would most benefit from an improvement in the quality of visits.

Councillor Turner referred to services held at the National Arboretum Memorial which schools might wish to consider attending.

Resolved

- (1) That a report be submitted to the next meeting of SACRE on the process to be adopted with regard to the provision of faith tour guides and a cost involved;
- (2) That Mrs. Morris provide feedback to the next meeting of SACRE on the outcome of the March meeting.

Visits to Schools

The draft questionnaire and correspondence to schools and protocol for visits were submitted:-

(see annexed)

The Chairman informed the meeting that during visits Members would talk to staff and request information to enable appropriate decisions to be made on RE in the future. SACRE had no remit other than to look at work and talk to people and visits would be supportive and enable SACRE to be informed of what was being delivered in terms of RE in schools.

After discussion it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the protocols for visits to schools be agreed as set out in the minutes of the SACRE Sub-Group held on 10 May, 2007;

- (2) That the letters circulated for visits to schools be approved subject to a slight amendment inviting schools to request SACRE to visit;
- (3) That the questionnaire to go out to all schools be amended to include:-
 - What central resources might schools find useful?
 - Asking whether training would help improve the delivery of RE
 - Does the school follow any examples in RE, if so specify examples and modules studied (secondary schools only)?
 - How can SACRE further support your school?
 - How useful was the questionnaire and whether any other comments to make?

Opportunity for SACRE and multi faith forum to work together

Mrs. Morris confirmed that the Multi Faith Forum was keen to work with SACRE in order that information could be shared and it was hoped that information on places of worship would start the process.

Late Items

Mrs. Blackmore referred to the problem earlier in the meeting with accessing the venue.

Resolved

That SACRE meet in venues in the Borough to be agreed and that the Salvation Army be thanked for hosting meetings over the last few years.

Termination of meeting

The meeting terminated at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: