

Special SACRE Strategy Sub Group / Agreed Syllabus Working Group

held on Wednesday, 21 April, 2010 at 4.00 p.m.

at Green Lane Baptist Church

Present

Councillor Ault
Reverend E. Snowden
Mr. R. Simmons
Mrs. V. Morris
Mrs. S. Blackmore

Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mrs. E. Taylor, Mrs. M. Gibbons, Mr. D. Thakker and Mr. K. Yeates.

Appointment of Chairman

In the absence of the Chair it was:-

Resolved

That Reverend E. Snowden be appointed Chair for the duration of the meeting.

Reverend E. Snowden in the Chair

Notes of meeting held on 8 February, 2010

The notes of the meeting held on 8 February, 2010 were submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the notes of the meeting held on 8 February, 2010 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Resources, training and support for schools

Mr. Richards confirmed that he had spoken with Lat Blaylock of RE Today who had quoted a budget for fifteen days work in the sum of £7,875. Work would be allocated to his team in accordance with the specialities they held, there would be a lead advisor

who the authority would contact, they could provide professional advice to SACRE, various other facilities would be provided by them including subject leader meetings, holding one per term or half term and the conference day could be allocated as one of their contracted days. Mr. Richards undertook to speak with the Interim Managing Director, Walsall Children Services – Serco, Mr. Graham Talbot to establish whether this facility could be introduced on a traded service basis whereby a school would be requested to pay £500 per year for three traded days, entrance to the conference and to provide a package that would be attractive for schools to buy into. Services to schools by Serco were currently free.

The Clerk questioned why SACRE should be charged for services that would be provided for schools from their own budget and thereby restricting activities that SACRE might want to enter into during the financial year.

Mr. Simmons agreed that the use of the money was wider than just schools. Mr. Richards stated that it could be used to develop work in schools with Lat Blaylock and a development plan could be written to indicate how much was required. With regard to the figures, SACRE could decide what it wanted to do and include costings in the development plan; for example it could request help on ICT, a website or a learning platform.

Mr. Simmons stated that a sixth form conference could be held so that older pupils could receive instruction in RE towards the national minimum number of hours required.

Mrs. Blackmore informed Members that Lat Blaylock attended SACRE meetings of other Authorities of which she was a member, and gave an input to each meeting, he could advise on changes in the RE curriculum that were coming forward. He would be at Sandwell SACRE on 22 June, 2010.

Mrs. Ensor stated that Walsall Children's Services – Serco could invite Mr. Blaylock to a discussion on the service that could be provided, and suggested that a joint meeting with Sandwell could take place. It was also hoped that with the support of an RE specialist, attendance at meetings of SACRE might improve.

Resolved

1. That Walsall Children's Services – Serco invite Mr. Blaylock to a meeting to discuss what assistance could be provided;
2. That a letter be forwarded to all Members of SACRE informing them of the proposal to commission Lat Blaylock to assist SACRE in its work.

Report from the SACRE training, London

Mrs. Blackmore gave a brief overview of the training session held in March 2010 at which changes to the primary curriculum were discussed, the Agreed Syllabus would need to be addressed to take on board the changes. A Primary Curriculum Network Advisor would be appointed for the West Midlands.

With regard to the role of SACRE, Mrs. Blackmore stated that it was intended to produce an RE set form for September 2010 and it was also planned to include the Agreed Syllabus from every Local Authority on the NASACRE website so that SACREs could share good practice. The deadline for the annual report had been deleted although it still included that it must be written and submitted within twelve months and should be included on the authorities website. There appeared to be a big push to link up SACREs in regions or nationally for good practice.

Mrs. Ensor agreed to raise this matter at the next Democratic Services Network Meeting and to include an item on the next agenda for SACRE.

School questionnaires

A copy of the draft questionnaire was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

That the questionnaire as submitted be approved subject to minor amendments and that it be forwarded to schools together with letter number one and that visits take place as follows:-

Monday, 5 July, 1 – 4.00 p.m. – Little Bloxwich School

Monday, 12 July, 9 – 12 noon – Phoenix School

Friday, 16 July, 1 – 4.00 p.m. – Joseph Leckie School

Future work

Members were of the view that Lat Blaylock should be employed to plan the date for the next Walsall SACRE Conference and suggested a joint conference to include training with the other Black Country Authorities.

Resolved

That an item be included on the agenda for the July meeting of SACRE requesting nominations for a Member of SACRE to observe subject leader training.

AST's

The Chairman requested whether Advanced Skills Teachers could be invited to attend SACRE meetings and requested that the Advanced Skills Teacher for Blue Coat School be invited to attend the next meeting to deliver a short presentation on her role and bring examples of good work.

Multi-faith forum

Mrs. Morris referred to training of faith leaders and stated that the Multi-faith forum was keen to work with SACRE in achieving a faith tour training session as this would benefit schools.

NASACRE Conference 12 May, 2010

Resolved

That Mrs. Morris be nominated to represent Walsall SACRE at the NASACRE Annual General Meeting to be held on 12 May, 2010.

Termination of meeting

The meeting terminated at 6.10 p.m.