

NORFOLK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

SACRE MEETING
Wednesday 27 November 2024 at 12.30pm
Zoom Video Conference

Minutes

Present:

Committee A (Representatives of faiths and beliefs): John Turner (JT) Jane Green (JG) Deborah Carpenter (DC)	Committee D (Representatives of the LA): Cllr John Ward (JW)
Committee B (Representatives of Church of England): John Semmens (JS), Chair	Co-opted Members: Nikki McGee (NM)
Committee C (Representatives of the Teachers' Associations): Sue Paice (SP) Helen Jacquet (HJ) Jennie Warner (JW)	Advisers: Clerk: Christopher Perry-Yates (CPY) NCC: Jill Duman (JD)
Apologies received: Cllr Ian Mackie (IM) Simon Oldfield (SO), Vice-Chair Gayatri Verma (GV) Naageen Noorani (NN) Chris Allen (CA)	Observer: Mark Denman

Item No.	Item and discussion	Owner	Target Date
1.	Welcome and introductions: All members were welcomed and introduced themselves.		
2.	Apologies: Apologies had been received from Nikki McGee, Cllr John Ward, Clare Williams and Helen Jacquet. It was noted that the meeting was quorate.		
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2024:		

	<p>The minutes of the previous meeting on 21 May 2024 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate reflection of the meeting.</p> <p>Proposed: JS Seconded: JG All committees voted in favour with no abstentions.</p>		
4.	<p>Matters arising:</p> <p>The Chair advised that he had updated Lat Blaylock to request that the work agreed could be placed on hold.</p>		
5.	<p>Update on Questionnaire Project:</p> <p>Chris Allen provided an update on the Primary RE Survey results. A summary was shared on screen. It was noted that the feedback had been received from 91 schools (25%). There was a large number of church schools who had responded (73).</p> <p>SACRE noted the results of the number of primary schools who were undertaking the recommended time allocation to teach RE. It was noted that Church of England schools followed the legal entitlement for RE at 5% with an ambition of 10%.</p> <p>The recommendations around time allocation were reviewed. It was suggested developing some guidance or support from SACRE in the foundational teaching of RE and also recommendations about what could go onto school websites.</p> <p>It was noted that Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Humanism were studied by 96-100% of the schools who responded. Some schools had diversified religions and beliefs to include Baha'i, Paganism, and Jehovah Witnesses. Recommendations for the curriculum included a consideration of the breadth and representation and non-religious worldviews in the agreed syllabus and encouraging schools to ensure that the RE curriculum did not become stagnant.</p> <p>It was noted that the responses regarding disciplinary RE showed that there were some challenges with staff confidence, due to not having training, expectation on staff and confidence in teaching theology. Recommendations to SACRE were to consider offering free training, resources and guidance and drawing on other SACRE resources.</p> <p>SACRE noted the challenges schools had highlighted that they faced including staff knowledge, lack of curriculum time and subject knowledge. Recommendations were to signpost schools and provide ways to develop subject knowledge.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the split in responses was 31% from community schools and 69% from CofE schools. 50% of community schools taught less and in some cases significantly less RE than the statutory recommendations.</p>		

	<p>SACRE commended the analysis from the survey responses. There was concern expressed that the responses may be from those schools who were already focusing on RE delivery and it was agreed that it would be useful to know what the other 75% of schools were doing. It was noted that the wording of the letter had aimed to encourage participation from all schools.</p> <p>It was agreed that an aim of SACRE would be to engage as many religions and worldviews as possible in the review of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus.</p> <p>It was noted that assessment was an issue that was raised more and more in RE networks. It was highlighted that teachers were often unable to assess due to not having a strong curriculum in place and very broad Age-Related Expectations (ARE) that did not marry with the syllabus.</p> <p>SACRE discussed the need to address questions such as how to reach the 75% who did not respond to the survey and encourage them to teach RE and if there is assessment in KS1 or KS2, who that was going to be for when secondary schools were not engaging. There was consideration about how to encourage teachers to teach better RE. It was agreed that there was a place for purposeful assessment in KS2 to assess skills as well as knowledge. It was agreed that SACRE could look at ways of simplifying how schools could assess. It was also noted that a recent Ofsted report had highlighted a school's lack of a range of worldviews and as a result were not building an understanding of the wider world to prepare the children for life in a multicultural world.</p> <p>It was suggested that the approach to assessment should be assessment for learning and pupil progress in RE learning.</p> <p>SACRE was advised that 4 half day training sessions had been delivered looking at different aspects of RE with full attendance of 30 to 35 attendees. There had been strong attendance from community schools who had not previously engaged as much previously.</p>		
6.	<p>SACRE report assistance:</p> <p>The Chair advised that there was a need for SACRE to write an annual report.</p> <p>It was agreed that the report should be written to identify what had been achieved and what the pressures on SACRE were and the need for the Council to appoint a neutral RE Advisor.</p> <p>It was suggested that an agenda item should be included at the 9 January 2024 meeting. John Turner also volunteered to assist with the annual report.</p>		
7.	<p>Update on Agreed Syllabus Conference:</p>		

	<p>The Chair advised that a letter had been written to the Director of Children's Services requesting that SACRE are asked to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC).</p> <p>The clerk confirmed that a meeting room had been booked for 9 January 2025 between 9am and 3pm for the ASC. It was noted that SACRE had a budget of £9,612. It was agreed that the ASC should plan how the funds would be spent to avoid the funding be clawed back.</p> <p>It was agreed that an outline of both days would be circulated ahead of time.</p>		
8.	<p>NASACRE Training:</p> <p>The Chair advised SACRE of a training event being held by NASACRE on 11 March 2025 at 7-8pm entitled 'Working on an Agreed Syllabus Conference' at a cost of £25 per person.</p> <p>Attendees were confirmed as being John Semmens and John Turner with others to notify the clerk if they wished to attend.</p>		
9.	<p>Faith and Worldview representatives and RE Hubs training:</p> <p>It was noted that the RE Hubs provided training to accredit school speakers and all those members who provided this service were encouraged to undertake the training.</p>		
10.	<p>Any other business:</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>		
11.	<p>Date of the next meetings:</p> <p>9 January 2025 ASC at 9.30am to 3pm.</p> <p>6 February 2025 ASC at 9.30am to 12.30pm.</p>		

Meeting closed at 13:53

Actions: