

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Monday 10 December 2012

PRESENT:

Miss H Mitchell, in the Chair.

Councillor Aspinall, A Bradley, Councillor Drean, Councillor P Davey, M Edmonds, Ms T Griffiths, Dr C Hamon, Mr J Heselden, Mrs Hill, Mr Kerr, Dr Saha, Mrs P Shelmerdine, Mrs Slow, and Dr B Wintersgill.

Apologies for absence: Mrs Z Abubakar, Cathy Bowness, Councillor Gordon, Anna Kelly, Councillor Ricketts and Councillor Stark.

Also in attendance: Mr Marshall (RE Adviser) and Andrew Pearson (Member Training and Development Officer).

The meeting started at 1.30 pm and finished at 3.30 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

51. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by SACRE members.

52. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2012 are confirmed as a correct record subject to Mrs Hamon's title being changed to Dr Hamon.

53. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

The Re Advisor informed members that Councillor Aspinall had arrived at the venue for the meeting but had been unable to attend because there was no disabled access.

54. **WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

The Chair welcomed Mr Jamie Haselden, representing the Roman Catholic faith, to his first SACRE meeting.

55. **UNMET NEEDS PROJECT**

Linda Rudge, Project Director, reported that –

- (a) the Unmet Needs Project covered Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay, and had the possibility of being extended beyond the three years of its agreed duration;
- (b) a website had been developed for the project www.ltIRE.org
- (c) most projects had begun to meet, with the sharing of good practice;
- (d) seven out of the 12 Hub Leaders had been appointed, with a further five appointments to be made.

The following comments were raised –

- (e) 12 teachers would initially receive training, and while there would be a job description there needed to be a degree of flexibility to encourage teachers new to RE;
- (f) the project would not be able to meet the training needs of all RE teachers but it was hoped to grow what could be provided;
- (g) further comments and questions could be posted on the project website.

Agreed that Linda Rudge is thanked for her presentation and report.

56. **SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2011 - 2012**

The RE Adviser reminded members that an annual SACRE report was a requirement, and requested that any changes to this draft document be forwarded to him.

Agreed that –

- (1) a foreword and updated SACRE membership are added;
- (2) Liz Hill to forward information about a self-evaluation tool for use with both teachers and parents;
- (3) the heads of the four houses are circulated the final draft of the SACRE annual report for agreement.

57. **SUMMER 2012 EXAMINATION RESULTS**

The RE Adviser commented that –

- (a) it was difficult to attribute great overall significance to the results as could be noted by the various changes that occurred each year;
- (b) the rise in GCSE entries was encouraging;
- (c) 'A level results were positive.

Agreed that –

- (1) the RE Adviser would provide an in depth school by school profile of the summer 2012 examination results at the next SACRE meeting;
- (2) Summer 2012 examination results would form an agenda item at the next SACRE meeting.

58. **OFSTED REPORTS**

The RE Adviser informed SACRE members that –

- (a) 14 schools in Plymouth had been fully inspected between May and the end of October 2012;
- (b) the respective Ofsted reports –
 - made no mention of RE or collective worship;
 - in most cases did not fully explore the spiritual, moral, social and cultural processes at work in schools.

Liz Hill noted that Ofsted supplied detailed guidance to schools about providing evidence, and the subsequent preparatory document compiled by schools could be used to promote RE with SACRE's help.

Dr Wintersgill pointed out that the preparatory document compiled by schools was not compulsory under the new inspection framework employed by Ofsted, while in Ofsted reports there was no requirement for judgement when mention was made of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural processes at work in individual schools.

Agreed that –

- (1) Liz Hill would present her school's preparatory document for Ofsted inspection at the next SACRE meeting.
- (2) The RE Adviser would continue to review Ofsted inspection reports and report back to SACRE on their findings.

59. **THE FUTURE OF RE**

The Re Adviser referred to the recent talk given in Plymouth by John Keast, Chair of the Religious Education Council, on the place of RE in schools and the community.

Issues considered in the talk included –

- (a) what was happening to RE in schools both locally and nationally;

- (b) the dismantling by central government of all national support and structures for RE, thus making RE a solely local matter;
- (c) how the RE community was responding;
- (d) the Unmet Needs Project as a positive development.

Agreed that –

- (1) the RE Adviser would circulate the PowerPoint presentation used in the talk to SACRE members;
- (2) organising a faith trail walk in Plymouth in May would form an agenda item at the next SACRE meeting.

60. **ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Dr Wintersgill advised SACRE members that in her view this was a positive development as RE now possessed a political voice in the form of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education. It was noted that –

- (a) the Group would be holding an enquiry into teacher supply in RE and the degree of support for RE teachers using the following methodology –
 - questionnaires to primary and secondary school RE teachers;
 - a corporate evidence paper using nominated topics to others in education, such as SACREs and teacher training organisations;
 - presentation of oral evidence.
- (b) 300 primary schools had returned questionnaires, which was enough for a representative sample, but only 120 secondary schools had done so, which was a poor return and a major concern;
- (c) Dr Wintersgill would be drafting a report for the Group by the end of March 2013, although there was currently no publication date.

It was pointed out that social networking sites could be used to contact RE teachers, with one example being a 'Save RE' page on Facebook.

Agreed that the RE Adviser would forward reminder questionnaires to secondary schools in Plymouth.

61. **SACRE WORKING GROUPS UPDATE**

SACRE members were provided with an update from working groups that had met since the last meeting.

Liz Hill, champion for group five on the key priority – to revise guidance and identify key resources for collective worship – reported that the sixteen pages of documentation around the resources for collective worship had yet to be published and distributed. It was proposed that both hard and electronic copies could be published, with a celebratory launch event to be held.

The Chair, champion for group one – to seek ongoing opportunities to raise the profile of SACRE – informed members that a travelling SACRE display would comprise seven boards with text and graphics.

Agreed that –

- (1) Liz Hill to liaise with the RE Adviser about a launch event around publication of the resources for collective worship;
- (2) the Chair would bring the travelling display to the next SACRE meeting.

62. **MINSTER PROJECT**

The RE Adviser reminded members that money identified in the SACRE budget had been ring-fenced for a project to develop the Minster Church of St Andrew to improve resources and offer visits to the Minster. It was noted that -

- (a) some progress had been made but that there would be inevitable delays until after the Reverend McKinnel's successor had been appointed;
- (b) some funding was left over and it was proposed that this be used for a new project to explore the faith diversity of young people in Plymouth via production of a dvd.

Agreed that the RE Adviser proceed with the project to explore the faith diversity of young people in Plymouth via production of a dvd.

63. **PLYMOUTH CENTRE FOR FAITHS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

The RE Adviser reported that the Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity had now moved to permanent accommodation within Salisbury Road Primary School.

64. **HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2013**

The RE Adviser informed members that –

- (a) a public exhibition and schools event would be held in the Roland Levinsky Building at Plymouth University on Friday 25 January 2013;
- (b) the annual civic ceremony of remembrance would be held in the English Garden at Mount Edgcumbe on Sunday 27 January 2013;

- (c) in the week beginning Monday 14 January 2013, Solly Irving, a Jewish Holocaust survivor, would be making his twelfth visit to Plymouth to share his testimony with University students, secondary schools and colleges.

65. **DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

Agreed that the next SACRE meeting would be held on Monday 4 March 2013 from 1000 to 1600 at Boringdon Golf Club.

66. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.