

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Monday 13 July 2020

PRESENT:

Katie Freeman, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Vice Chair.

AnneMarie Allchurch, Emma Butler, Lesley Clark, Drean, Hill, Mrs Johnson, Morris, Pawson, Tuffin and Tuohy and Peter Warm.

Apologies for absence: Dr Catherine Bowness and Linden, Gwen Hughes, Margaret Thompson, Sara Wells.

Also in attendance: Heather Ogburn (Senior Leadership Advisor) and Helen Rickman (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 1.00 pm and finished at 2.40 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.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members in accordance with the code of conduct.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Chair's Urgent Business

Under this item the Chair discussed with Members the Wire Award.

It was agreed that Bristol would be contacted to request to use their criteria for this award.

4. Welcome to new Members - Appointment of New Members/ Current Membership

Under this item Lesley Clark (Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth Representative - Group A), Nic Gibson (Pagan Community - Co-opted Representative) and Peter Warm (Quaker Community Representative – Co-opted Representative) introduced themselves as new members of SACRE. Terms of office are as set out in the SACRE constitution.

Members also discussed:

- that ATL had merged with NUT;

- Humanist representation on SACRE and a request for a change to Group A (voting member) to be considered at the next meeting.

It was agreed that Ben Kerr (Humanist Representative) would write a brief statement regarding Humanist UK's stance on humanist representation at SACRE and this would be emailed to Members in advance of the next meeting as well as NASACRE guidance on this matter.

5. **Draft SACRE Annual Report - to follow**

Heather Ogburn introduced the Draft SACRE Annual Report to Members.

The Chair read out a statement from PCFCD colleagues, who were currently on furlough due to the recent Covid 19 pandemic. This statement would be included in the report.

It was queried if PCFCD would be in a position to use virtual meetings in the future to provide training/ sessions if restrictions were still in place in September 2020 – The Chair confirmed she would pass this comment on to PCFCD colleagues.

Members noted the Draft SACRE Annual Report.

6. **Local and National Developments - verbal update (Katie Freeman)**

The Chair led on the Local and National Developments item; the following was discussed:

- national training had largely moved to online provision; RE Exchange run by RE Online was now virtual and free tickets were being offered;
- concerns regarding the level of teaching RE at Oak Academy; SACRE was clear that it was a statutory requirement for RE to be taught on a weekly basis; there were concerns around 'catch-up' curriculums; The Chair read out a statement to be sent out with the bulletin to schools – Members discussed the design of the Plymouth syllabus to be inclusive, if there was benefit of video lessons and the role of Headteacher's to write Education Recovery Plans which should also include the teaching of RE;
- assessment materials for the new agreed syllabus – next working party to be used to discuss this to match with the Salisbury Diocese materials; Liz Hill and AnneMarie Allchurch confirmed they were happy to contribute if required;
- Rudy Elliott Lockhart had stepped down as CEO for the RE Council and Mike McMaster was now interim CEO;
- the Education Council and how much voice religious communities should have in what goes on in teaching RE – should the RE community be dominated by RE groupings? This was to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Members noted the update.

7. **Collective Worship - working party update (Ed Pawson)**

Ed Pawson led on the Collective Worship (Working Party Update) item – Members were advised that the collective worship guidance was out of date and had since been revised. The phrase ‘time to breathe’ was used as it was considered there was more of an emphasis on reflective practice other than religion. It was hoped that this could be disseminated to Plymouth schools to encourage collective worship and highlight that they need not follow archaic Christian practice.

The following was discussed:

- if the document could be headed with the Plymouth City Council logo and be disseminated to Plymouth schools;
- the terminology in the document, specifically the word ‘assembly’, as this was considered to not help with engagement;
- the importance of an inclusive approach as legally, schools were required to do collective worship;
- the importance of sending the document to Plymouth schools in preparation for September when children were expected to return; some schools may not have considered how to offer collective worship in light of changes brought about by Covid 19. There were concerns that collective worship may not be offered because some schools would be unable to offer assemblies;
- Liz was going to live stream her collective worship sessions from her school – this could be a way forward for other schools;
- the possibility of adding a statement from SACRE at the beginning of the document highlighted the legal duty of collective worship

Members agreed:

1. To the updated collective worship document;
2. That officers would liaise with the Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills, and the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation to progress the document and disseminate to Plymouth schools in preparation for September.

8. **NATRE - Deep Dive Ofsted Reports (Katie Freeman)**

This item was discussed as part of minute 6 above.

9. **Plymouth RE Hub and Learn Teach Lead - verbal Update (Katie Freeman)**

The Chair introduced the Plymouth RE Hub and Learn Teach Lead Update.

Key points included:

- the Plymouth Hub were currently working remotely; a conference scheduled for April had been changed to three webinars, the first session was held and was regarding implemented the new RE Syllabus – a link would be emailed to Members. Two further webinars were scheduled;
- a project was underway as part of the Teaching Schools Alliance to link schools in England with Ghana, specifically focused towards Oracy skills and RE – a representative would be invited to the next SACRE meeting to provide further information.

Members noted the update.

10. **Non compliant schools (Heather Ogburn)**

Heather Ogburn presented the Non-compliant Schools Update to Members. Members were advised that one school had been assessed as non-compliant and the Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills had been in correspondence with the school regarding this matter.

Members discussed:

- timescales for the school to meet requirements;
- the role of the DFE in monitoring and sanctioning non-compliance;
- the challenge the physical landscape of the school is having upon compliance.

Members noted the update.

11. **Home Learning and the place of RE (Katie Freeman)**

The Chair presented the Home Learning and the Place of RE update. Members were advised that schools had received a range of online RE resources they could use during lockdown. NATRE had also written a range of free online resources that were available to download – several linked to the Plymouth syllabus. The Chair offered to email a link to Members if they wished to see the resources.

12. **HMD Schools Event - planning (AnnMarie Allchurch)**

AnnMarie Allchurch presented the HMD Schools Event update. Members were reminded of the event which took place in January 2020 in Plymouth Guildhall and representatives from approximately 15 primary and secondary schools – the event was considered a success and was a good opportunity to reflect, view artwork and share learning. Every school that participated was given a free one hour workshop on lessons from the Holocaust. Be the Light in the Darkness was the theme for the next HMD.

Members discussed:

- that the next event may need to be hosted virtually; it was suggested that this was done via MS Teams or Google Meet/ Google Classrooms as Zoom was not considered to be as secure;
- a team of volunteers was required to undertake admin role for the event in order for it to be a success; Councillor Morris and Liz Hill volunteered to help with the event;
- that it would be nice to have a central place where the children's pictures could be exhibited;
- it was suggested that children may to write short poems for the event;
- the benefit of approaching an international speaker for the event; suggestions to be forwarded to the Chair.

Members noted the update and expressed their thanks to Plymouth City Council for their planning and help with the event.

13. **Update from Members**

There were no updates from Members on this occasion.

14. **Date and venue of next meeting**

Members were advised that the next meeting of SACRE was scheduled to take place at 1pm on 9 November 2020. It was not yet known when or if SACRE meetings would go back to being held in person in the Council House however the benefits of virtual meetings was discussed.