

**OXFORDSHIRE
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

***Minutes of the Oxfordshire SACRE Meeting
At County Hall, Oxford, on Wednesday 5th June 2019 at 4.00 pm***

Present: Committee A: World Faiths, Christian Denominations
M = Member Sarah Montagu (M)
SD = Standing Deputy Sheikh Ramzy (M)
Chandra Vadivale (M)
Rose Westwood (M)

Committee B: Church of England
Christine Price-Smith (M)
Carol Worthington (M)

Committee C: Teacher representatives
Ruth Cohen (M)

Committee D: Local Authority
Cllr Bob Johnston (M)

Co-opted Members
Shahin Bekhradnia (M)
Nigel Fancourt (M) – Vice-Chair
Margaret Godden (M)
Stephen Vickers (M)

In attendance: Helen Batten (Clerk)
Bill Moore (Advisor to SACRE)

Apologies: Steve Beegoo (Committee A)
Susan Grenfell (Committee B)
Catherine Hayward (LA officer)
Cllr Charles Mathew (Committee D)
Cllr Glynis Phillips (Committee D)
Nicholas Wood (Committee A)

1 Introduction

- NF welcomed everybody to the meeting.
- SM had been appointed as the representative for Judaism, and was welcomed to SACRE.
- Apologies tendered were accepted.
- Due to CV's delayed arrival, it was agreed to defer the Reflection until later in the meeting.
- Provisional appointments agreed at the last meeting, of CM to serve as Chair and NF to serve as Vice Chair, were confirmed.

2 Minutes of 6th March 2019 & matters arising

- (i) Minutes which had been circulated were approved as an accurate record.

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- (ii) Matters arising, not covered by the current agenda, were considered:
- **Liaison with OCC** [item 3]: BM reported that regular meetings are continuing, the next being scheduled for 17th June. Members welcomed this commitment, especially in light of the critical role SACRE will play in supporting schools with RE as they adjust to new Ofsted expectations.

3 2018 Annual Report

- The annual report and SACRE meeting attendance had been circulated. BM drew attention to the information contained under *Standards and quality of provision of RE*. Members approved this section without change. BM confirmed that data enquiries will be followed up with individual schools.

Actions

- ***Subject to receipt of further comments, BM will finalise the annual report for distribution.***

4 REC/NATRE Regional Ambassadors

BM reported that a national post and ten regional RE ambassadors have now been appointed, and he will be requesting a meeting with the regional ambassador covering Oxfordshire, Sarah Payne. Much of her role will be concerned with developing and extending support networks. SACRE should benefit from this work, although the ongoing challenge for schools will be finding sufficient time for these activities.

5 Teacher Network meeting 19th June

- Arrangements for the meeting were confirmed. Notification has been provided via OCC 'schools' news' but it is not certain that this information always reaches the right individuals. Other potential approaches were also discussed and details will be provided to the Diocese and OTSA (Oxford Teaching Schools Alliance). However it was also recognised that planning for future events must look at achieving more effective publicity.
- Essential information is being provided by faith group representatives. It was agreed that the best way to deliver this information will be by short presentations followed by distribution of hand-out sheets.

6 Reflection

CV posited that there is one religion but many faiths, and presented the personal thoughts of a Hindu towards Islam. He explained that there are many familiar aspects that are present in both religions but also some fundamental differences, and great benefit lies in understanding and respecting each other.

7 Chairman's letter to Secretary of State

- The letter and response had been circulated. Members agreed that Nick Gibb's response was as expected but there is value in regularly raising E.Bacc concerns. It was agreed to withhold a further SACRE response until the political situation is calmer.

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- BM suggested that the most positive aspect to the response is the statement that local authorities need to support SACREs to deliver their statutory duties. One duty of SACRE is to monitor the delivery of RE, and we should therefore expect support in dealing with non-compliance. It will be useful to return to this aspect in due course.

8 SACRE funding

- The NASACRE recommendation had been circulated. BJ advised that pressure on the local authority to allocate adequate SACRE funding needs to come from the Conservative group within OCC. It was also agreed that SACRE needs to be better informed about Central Services School Block funding within OCC in order to make a case for increased funding.
- BM confirmed that meetings with OCC will look at what could be achieved by SACRE with more funding, and these discussions will emphasise SACRE's role in helping the authority to deliver its responsibilities.
- RC suggested that SACRE also needs to acknowledge that there is great financial pressure on all services, and further consideration should be given to developing voluntary input to SACRE activities. BM will also raise this aspect with OCC.

9 Non-compliance

A letter from the Department for Education to the NASACRE Chair had been circulated. BM suggested that it would be useful to appraise teachers of these matters, emphasising the increased importance placed on RE as part of good quality education.

10 Ofsted framework & implications for RE

- BM explained the curriculum aspects that inspectors will be looking for. These requirements will need to inform the development of the next locally agreed syllabus, which may be completed in collaboration with Bucks SACRE.
- CPS noted that, besides being an academic subject, RE also has a vital role to play in SMSC (spiritual, moral, social & cultural) education, personal development and behaviour and it will be essential to ensure that schools fully understand this. CofE schools will also be working towards revised SIAMS (statutory inspection of Anglican & Methodist schools) requirements, which include greater expectations around RE teaching.

11 SACRE priorities

- The draft framework which had been circulated was discussed. It was clarified that Collective Worship is a requirement of current legislation and this wording needs to be retained. However interpretation will be important, ie, what we consider to be valuable experiences for children. Some amendments to the format of the questions were suggested. Members acknowledged the importance of knowing that SACRE has made a difference, which is covered in question 5.
- Following group discussion, responses to the questions were provided. BM requested any further comments by 13th June, following which responses will be collated into a first draft to be discussed at the meeting with OCC on 17th June. This will then be brought back to the November SACRE.

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12 Member contributions & updates

- A press cutting regarding falling numbers of students enrolling for RE degrees had been circulated. NF noted that a positive change is many universities are no longer insisting on qualifying A-levels which can help to make RE courses more attractive.
- Members notified some forthcoming events of interest.

13 Next meeting

The next meeting will take place at County Hall at 4:00 pm on Tuesday 12th November 2019.

NF thanked all members for their attendance and contributions, and closed the meeting at 5:55 pm.

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Agreed actions from SACRE meeting, 6th March 2019

Minute no	Action	Who?	When by?
4	Publicise <i>My A-Z of Islam</i> to schools.	R Cohen B Moore	
5.	Consider teacher network meeting content and publicity.	B Moore	
5.	Provide key points about belief and practice for each faith.	Faith group representatives	Provide to HB before June meeting.
7 (b)	Circulate draft letter to Secretary of State.	S Beegoo	ASAP
9.	Circulate draft Annual Report 2018.	B Moore	Before June meeting.