

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

5 June 2018

Present:-

Group A: Christian and Other Religion and Belief Communities (with the exception of the Church of England)

K Denby, M Hext, B Lane, M Miller

Group B: The Church of England

S Gill, C Hulbert (Chair), A Parks, T Wilson

Group C: Teachers' Associations

R Flanagan (for K Walshe), J Goody (Vice-Chair), P Hammett, E Mihas, S Shute

Group D: The County Council

C Channon, P Colthorpe and M Squires

Co-opted Members

J Roberts, S Spence, B Twiggs

Advisor

E Pawson

Apologies

H Hastie, R Khreisheh, R Nathwani, W Harrison and Councillor G Hook

(C Hulbert in the Chair)

43 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2018 be signed as a correct record.

44 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no matter raised as a matter of urgency.

45 Devon SACRE Membership

The Chair welcomed new Members and Mr Pawson reported the appointment to the Council of Mr Abdo, but noted that Mr Abdo was not present at this meeting. Mr Pawson would clarify who was representing Exeter Mosque at future meetings.

46 Devon SACRE Annual Report 2016/7

Mr Pawson reported on the Devon SACRE Annual Report for 2016/7 and provided a comparison between the performance of Devon schools and national schools in GCSE Religious Education.

The discussion surrounding the Annual Report included:

- the prospect of monitoring visits to schools to ensure that the Religious Studies syllabus has been implemented;
- concerns whether schools have fulfilled legal obligations to deliver Religious Education;

- the percentage of the 2017 Key Stage Four cohort that have completed full course GCSE Religious Education;
- the introduction of new GCSEs this June;
- the English Baccalaureate;
- the GCSE Religious Studies short course; and
- the challenge that few indicators have existed to gain an understanding of what is happening in schools surrounding the teaching of Religious Education and that GCSE results provide the only external indicator.

RESOLVED that the Devon SACRE Annual Report for 2016/7 be received.

47 **Learn Teach Lead RE Updates**

Ms Wilson provided updates on the latest Learn Teach Lead news. These updates included:

- the news that Learn Teach Lead continued to be an effective way of improving the teaching of Religious Education in schools; and
- that Exeter Diocese, Marjon and the All Saints Teaching School Alliance are offering teachers the opportunity to undertake a course to gain a System Leader Qualification in Religious Education and School Ethos.

The Vice-Chair reported on the progress in delivering the Exeter Hub and the challenges surrounding its delivery.

RESOLVED that the results of the Learn Teach Lead evaluation be provided for the November meeting.

48 **Agreed Syllabus Review Planning: Setting up an Agreed Syllabus Committee (ASC)**

Mr Pawson reported on the planning for the 2019 Agreed Syllabus Review and recommended that Devon SACRE should establish a steering group to process this, consisting of either nominated Devon SACRE Members or the whole of Devon SACRE.

An Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) and joint working and consultation with other neighbouring SACRES were to be arranged.

Mr Pawson clarified the working arrangements with other local authorities, including those surrounding finances, and reiterated the points made during the February training meeting.

The need to ensure that all schools in Devon should follow the same Religious Education syllabus was also underlined.

Mr Roberts highlighted the importance of working collectively with SACRES in neighbouring authorities as much as is possible and suggested that the ASC should meet to discuss required resources and the sharing of costs.

Councillor Channon emphasised the necessity of conducting effective research and analysis into what schools wanted and current practice before work progressed.

Mr Pawson outlined how a questionnaire could be sent out to schools to gain an understanding of how supported schools feel in delivering the Religious Education syllabus.

RESOLVED that appropriate external speakers be invited to the next meeting of the Devon SACRE in November.

49

Commentary on Agreed Syllabus Review from Katy Staples, adviser to Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Swindon SACREs

Ms Staples shared examples of best practice and decision making from other local authorities and presented the SACRE Members with potential questions that they could ask when deciding how to choose an appropriate Agreed Syllabus for schools in their area.

Ms Staples also discussed potential criteria for the selection of the new Agreed Syllabus and highlighted the usefulness of surveying schools to understand how long existing syllabuses have been in use for. The difference between the Agreed Syllabus and support materials was also clarified.

Members noted that the Learn Teach Lead hubs offer an excellent means of gathering feedback on the Agreed Syllabus.

Members also raised points relating to;

- Devon's rurality;
- the recoument of costs via conference fees;
- where resources were limited, introduce more support for Religious Education school coordinators through Learn Teach Lead;
- that DEF may wish to consider what schools take up or cost may be if schools were to attend any conference;
- questions surrounding the budget for the Agreed Syllabus Review; and
- the coordination of the degree of change to the existing model of cost effectiveness.

Members adjourned to their houses to nominate representatives for the Agreed Syllabus Committee.

RESOLVED that the below nominees be appointed to the Agreed Syllabus Committee;

Group A

Mr Bernard Lane
Mr Denby
Ms Hext
Ms Miller

Group B

Ms Gill
Ms Hulbert
Mr Parks

Group C

J Goody
P Hammett
B Twiggs

Group D

C Channon
P Colthorpe
M Squires

50 **HMD 2019 Planning**

Mr Pawson reported on the preparations for the Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) in 2019 and confirmed that the event is in the planning stage. A meeting has been arranged for June.

51 **Interfaith Developments**

Mr Pawson provided an update on interfaith developments, which included news that schools are being offered places to bring year 10 and 11 pupils to the 'Dying Matters' conference hosted by the Devon Faith and Belief Forum. This conference will form part of the 2018 Inter-Faith Week and will be held on 9 November 2018.

Mr Pawson also announced that there will be Interfaith Visitor training hosted on three Saturdays in Autumn 2018.

52 **National Developments: Commission on RE**

Mr Pawson gave an outline of the Commission on Education's Interim Report, including the Report's key recommendations and its impact on the teaching of Religious Education in schools.

Mr Pawson further explained that humanists had been welcomed onto SACREs in Wales.

53 **Future SACRE Meetings**

Proposed dates are Thursday, 15 November 2018 and Tuesday, 5 February 2019 at County Hall Exeter (subject to confirmation) at 10.00 am.

The County Council's calendar of meetings can be found at

<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>.

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.35 pm