

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1 November 2016

Present:-

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

K Denby, Hastie, M Hext, N Nation, J Taylorson and C Walmsley,

Group B: The Church of England

C Hulbert, E Pawson, T Wilson

Group C: Teachers' Associations

J Goody (ATL rep), G Winnall (NATRE Primary rep), T Griffiths (substitute for Dr K Walshe UCU rep) and W Harrison (NUT rep)

Group D: The County Council

P Colthorpe, M Squires and R Younger-Ross

Co-opted Members

J Marshall and J Roberts

Apologies:-

J Berry, C Channon, P Cornish, M Dearden, R Halsey, R Khreisheh, R Nathwani, B Lane, M Dearden, Cornish, S Shute, J Berry, C Channon, A Hannan, S Spence and G Teece

17 **Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman and Group Spokespersons**

RESOLVED

(a) that Mary Hext, Claire Hulbert, John Goody and Christine Channon be elected Group spokespersons for Group A, B, C and D respectively for the ensuing year;

(b) that Claire Hulbert and John Goody be elected Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively for the ensuing year.

18 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2016 be signed as a correct record.

19 **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

20 **Devon SACRE Membership**

The Chairman and Mr Pawson welcomed Maia Miller representing the Pagan community to her first meeting, replacing Viannah Rain.

Mr Pawson reported that, whilst membership would normally roll-over for a further 4 year period (ending in May 2017), it was now opportune to carry out a review of the Groups and that those members who felt that they could not continue should contact him.

21 Understanding Christianity: Roll out training, Comment and Critique

Mr Pawson and Tatiana Wilson reported, that following adverse OFSTED reports on the quality of the teaching of Christianity within the RE Syllabus and a new teaching resource developed by a range of expert advisors, Understanding Christianity a new RE resource for EYFS, KS1,2 and 3 for Church and Community Schools.

Members' discussion points included:

- to date some 100 teachers had been trained (from approximately 130 schools) and feedback on the whole had been positive, although the package of material was substantial and seen by Gerry Winnall who had undertaken training as somewhat overwhelming (especially for non-church primary schools), it was designed to be a flexible resource, as part of a spiral curriculum, exploring Christianity through key concepts in a progressive way through the Key Stages;
- the part the LTRE Hubs will play in disseminating the material and providing follow-up training;
- the need to avoid an in-balance of teaching in respect of the other faiths as a result of this material, and that this material does not represent the whole of the RE Syllabus,
- details and costs of the course training,
- details of the key purpose and aims of the resource and areas of learning within the Key Stages;
- training and support available for teachers.

22 Interfaith Focus: Faith and Belief Training, Interfaith Conference, Interfaith Week 2016, Hindu Workshop

Mr Roberts reported on the arrangements for the conference on 5 November at the Mint Church, Exeter entitled 'Not in God's Name' arranged by SACRE and with excellent support of Jude Taylorson from the Devon Interfaith Belief Forum and they encouraged Members and community representatives to attend.

He also reported on the Hindu Workshop for Schools on Friday, 4 November at Sidmouth College for a maximum of 100 children with Sushma Sahajpal leading, who would also be a main contributor to the conference at the Mint the following day.

Mr Roberts outlined the programme of Faith and Belief Speaker training starting next April over 3 weekend sessions, details of which would be published on the SACRE and DBF website. Bookings could be made through the website or directly through Mr Pawson.

Mr Denby also referred to training provided by the British Humanist Association on 19 November at MARJONS, Plymouth.

Mr Roberts to a local initiative whereby the Ottery St Mary community was offering to host refugee families.

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23 Learn/Teach/Lead Religious Education (LTLRE): Conference and Hub Groups

Mrs Wilson reported on the LTLRE annual conference on 20/21 October 2016 at St Mellion, Cornwall with some 100 -120 PGCSE teachers and PGCSE students with inspirational and thought provoking speakers.

Mr Goody (who, along with Ruth Maxwell had been appointed as Exeter Hub Leader) reported on the excellent training the conference had provided.

Mr Pawson thanked SACRE for providing a small grant to the LTLRE to support teachers of RE across the County. He also referred to the need to provide easier access, particularly for community schools to attend conferences, training, resources and materials such as the 'Understanding Christianity' package with the increasing tight budgets available for CPD in all schools. He was currently about to commence negotiations involving Babcock LDP and the Exeter Diocese to allow him to run the Understanding Christianity training for all Devon Schools.

RESOLVED that the Chairman write offering SACRE's support for additional high quality training material to be available for all Devon Schools for the teaching of RE, including the new Understanding Christianity package.

24 Working Group: Assessment Project

Mr Roberts reported on

- the Task Group's 3 meetings (since last reporting) and the work of teachers between meetings trialling material and negotiating with Schools;
- impacts on the work of the groups have included the further development of the theoretical model based on revised Blooms Taxonomy by Barbara Wintersgill who provided clarification of the issues to help make the theoretical approach a more practicable and sustainable offer for teachers;
- national developments including launch of the Understanding Christianity package;
- linked initiatives through the LTLRE hubs and Plymouth, Torbay and this SACRE's work in this area;
- a proposition from the Task Group's meeting on 17 October that having trialled materials based on the Barbara Wintersgill's framework and feedback from Head teachers, Co-ordinators and teachers that this SACRE be recommended to:

(a) seek formal support to bring together representatives of the 3 Partner SACREs to revise the guidance documents accompany the Agreed Syllabus as appendices (reference on the LTLRE website and executive summary of the theoretical approach);

(b) revise the enquiry/topic grids to include more guidance for teachers – clearer expectations;

(c) produce samples of high quality assessment activities matching some of the suggested enquiries in the guidance attached to the Agreed Syllabus; and

(d) seek funding from the 3 SACREs to enable the above with Task Groups of 7 teachers representing Early Years through to KS3 for 3 days at a cost of £3200 plus Advisor Time to facilitate £1200.

25 Planned Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Devon Schools

Mr Pawson reported on a range of courses and training events for teachers and which were also open to SACRE members:

(a) GCSE/A Level Islam subject knowledge course, Exeter Mosque Wed 23rd November 2016

(b) GCSE/A Level Buddhism subject knowledge course, Hartridge Buddhist Monastery, nr Honiton, Wed 30th November 2016

(c) Secondary RE conference, Thurs 9th February 2017

(d) New to RE in Devon, Thurs 9th March 2017

(e) Primary RE course, Thurs 20th April 2017.

Members discussed training available from Examination Boards some of which was on-line and which appeared to lack content and be more process led and the day training was often difficult to access due to their teaching commitments.

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National Developments

Mr Denby reported on the white paper Educational Excellence Everywhere, published by the Department for Education on 17 March 2016 which set out the government's plans for education between now and 2020. The Paper stated in Paragraph 4.72 that LAs will "focus on delivering their core functions, working as partners with the schools system of the future and champions for parents and the local community."

There appeared no reference in the White Paper to SACREs and their continued funding by LAs and future existence. Councillor Younger-Ross advised that members could relay their concerns to their respective MPs and they in turn were likely to forward the representations to the Secretary of State.

Mr Pawson reported on the following:

- Religious Education Council (REC): and establishment of a commission on the future of RE and its membership and aiming to produce an interim report and thereafter a final report with recommendations to the DfE. Areas to be covered included the RE Syllabus, funding and local determination, role of SACREs and their funding, academy teaching of RE and the right of withdrawal;
- the encouraging uplift in the recruitment of specialist RE teachers over the last 18 months following a national campaign
- RE Quality Mark and national distribution of awards of which there were relatively few in Devon and SW peninsula. Members referred to the relatively high cost of the assessments leading to awards, particularly for small primary schools and the scope for funding of the costs by Multiple Academy Trusts (MATs) or through County Councillors' Locality Budgets.

RESOLVED

(a) that the schools in Devon achieving the RE Quality Mark be sent letters of congratulation by this SACRE;

(b) that Mr Pawson draft bullet points on the possible implications of the White Paper, Educational Excellence Everywhere, for the future of SACREs for Members in order that they can relay concerns to their respective MPs.

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Holocaust Memorial Day 2017: Planning and Preparation

MR GOODDY IN THE CHAIR

Mr Pawson reported on arrangements for the Holocaust Memorial Day in Exeter 2017 as follows, details of which were shortly to be circulated to schools:

Holocaust Memorial Day Exeter 2017, Friday 27th January
Theme: How Can Life Go On?

The Guildhall, High St, Exeter

10.15 - 10.45am: opening ceremony by the Lord Mayor of Exeter and representatives from Devon County Council, Exeter Cathedral and Devon SACRE

10.15am - 3.30pm - Free Exhibition on the Holocaust and other genocides

10.30am-2.45pm: Human rights trail: a guided, reflective walk around central Exeter

11am - 2.15pm - Showings of the Film 'Porajmos': the story of the Gypsy Holocaust (Y9 + above) (no wheelchair access)

3.30 - 3.45pm: Closing Ceremony, Moments of Reflection & Candle Lighting led by the Jewish Community

St Stephen's Church, Exeter

11am - 2.30pm: presentations of poetry, poems, prayers and stories from students from Devon schools

12.30 - 1.30pm: Public Talk

5.00 - 6.30pm: Public Talk

Talks:

Dr Christine King: The untold story of the persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses by the Nazis

Hanneke Coates: Surviving the Japanese Holocaust in Java

Jewish Holocaust survivor (subject to confirmation)

Exeter Synagogue

10am-12pm: 30 minute guided tour

28 Future SACRE Meetings

Wednesday, 8 February 2017, Wednesday 7 June 2017 and SW Conference on Monday, 6 March 2017.

29 Groundwork Scheme

Councillor Younger-Ross advised Members about the 'Bags of Help' a local community grant scheme where the money raised from the 5p bag levy was being used to fund community projects. The projects must meet the criteria of promoting community participation in the development and use of outdoor spaces and was open to community and other groups with awards of £5000, £2000 and £1000.

Details available on-line at:

<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/tescocommunityscheme/pages/Category/apply-for-a-boh-grant-tes2>

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.10 pm