

## STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

25 November 2020

### Present:-

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

W Becher, K Denby, R Halsey, H Hastie, M Miller and H Brown

#### Group B: The Church of England

S Gill, C Hulbert, B Twiggs J Roberts (Chair),

#### Group C: Teachers' Associations

J Gooddy, C Cornwell L Clay, P Hammett and P Randall

#### Group D: The County Council

Councillors C Channon, I Chubb, P Colthorpe, G Hook, C Whitton and M Squires

#### Co-opted Members

R Northcott and S Spence

#### Adviser

Ed Pawson

#### Apologies:-

M Hext, G Kang, B Lane, R Nathwani, J Taylorson, R Ingrouille, T Wilson, R Flanagan, P Hammett, S Shute, G Winnall, R Khreisheh, P Rouvas and G Teece

### 112 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2020 were signed as a correct record.

### 113 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

(Mr Roberts left the meeting for the duration of the election of a Chair).

#### RESOLVED

(a) that Jeremy Roberts be elected Chair until when the SACRE is able to meet in the Committee Suite at County hall, Exeter;

(b) that John Gooddy be thanked for his service as Vice Chair and nominations be submitted by email for the appointment of the Vice Chair; and

(c) that John Gooddy be invited to future meetings pending his nomination as Co-opted Member.

**114      Officer Support: Charging**

Jeremy Roberts reported on a proposal by Devon County Council to charge for Democratic Services Officer support for the meetings of SACRE. Ed Pawson was discussing the matter with Babcock and Devon County Council colleagues with a view to maintaining good working links with the County Council.

**115      Devon SACRE Membership Update**

Ed Pawson reported on the following changes:

(a) the following had stood down and leaving with the gratitude of SACRE:

John Gooddy (NEU)  
Sue Shute (NATRE secondary)  
Greg Sheldon (Councillor)  
Bernard Lane (URC)

(b) the following were welcomed as new Members:

Helen Brown (Roman Catholic Church)  
Caitlin Cornwell (NEU)  
Carol Whitton (Councillor)

(c) A nomination would be sought for the co-option of John Gooddy.

Philip Randall also reported the amalgamation of Devon Association of Secondary Heads (DASH) and Devon Association of Primary Heads (DAPH) into one Teacher Association, Devon Schools Leadership Services (DSLS).

The SACRE also remembered Myfanwy McCorry, the former Buddhist representative, who sadly died during the summer.

**116      Update on Schools Support during Covid 19**

Ed Pawson reported on the support for Schools during Covid-19 lockdown (March – July) which had included Newsletters, lesson resources, online learning and useful links made available to support schools. In the Autumn Term there had been high quality CPD through LTLRE via virtual meetings. Collective worship guidance and support had continued and there was also RE support through the half-termly newsletter, useful links for online access to visitors, visits and resources.

Members' comments included:

- generally primary schools were coping well and the new Agreed Syllabus was especially valuable in support for all schools; and
- whilst collective worship was missed there was successful examples of virtual collective worship and class bubble recitals which was enjoyed by

pupils and the 2 minute silence on Remembrance Day had been also well observed through various IT platforms.

**117      Devon SACRE New Guidance on Collective Worship**

Ed Pawson and Jeremy Roberts reported on new guidance on collective worship drafted by a Joint Working Party which had comprised Torbay and Devon teachers and school leaders which had met in early March in Totnes. Church Schools and Community Schools were also represented. The Working Party had looked at good practice locally and examples of recently updated SACRE policy and guidance. Work by Newham and Bristol was particularly important. The title of the new guidance was Time to Breathe.

The SACRE Guidance now offered :

- an updated guide on collective worship in community (non-Church) schools;
- valuable help in understanding the law;
- reasons to take ‘time to breathe’;
- explanation of the phrase ‘wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’ (from DfE circular 1/94);
- ways in which schools can provide creative and spiritually uplifting input from a diversity of perspectives;
- practical ideas to create reflective experiences, encouraging active pupil participation;
- a sample school policy document; and
- opportunities for spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development.

The guidance document aimed to support schools in Devon to develop an up-to-date policy and to encourage active pupil participation in collective worship. SACRE wanted to help schools put in place effective practice and reflective experiences for their pupils. The guidance explained the legal obligations, including the right to withdrawal, and outlined some of the rich opportunities that assemblies/collective worship could offer pupils for spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development.

The Guidance had been sent to all schools and posted on the Devon SACRE website.

To date feedback from schools had been positive and Members commented that the Guidance was not based just on faith and themes included humanity and reflection.

**118      RE and Anti-Racism**

Ed Pawson reported on issues being addressed through the LTLRE and other platforms. These explored issues of equality and unconscious bias in schools and included 6 steps towards an anti-racist school:

1. Raise awareness amongst staff, pupils, parents, wider community

2. Re-assess the assumptions underpinning school culture
3. Re-examine school pedagogy and curriculums
4. Create whole school learning enquiries on race and culture awareness
5. Badge yourself as an anti-racist school
6. Embrace Fair Trade

Ed Pawson also referred to RE Today which had published a set of anti-racist RE learning packs for KS2 and KS3 for September 2020 and publications by RE Today and NATRE working with the Free Churches Group and Methodist Schools on reducing racism in our communities. He also referred to the worldviews lens to explore unconscious bias.

Members referred to the work of the Fair Trade Steering Group and the importance of links to Schools and the Devon Development Education and the need to promulgate good practice to all schools.

Ed Pawson indicated that Devon Development Education could be invited to future meetings of SACRE and commented on the scope to develop links beyond the Fair Trade fortnight.

#### **119      Understanding Christianity Offer to Community Schools**

Ed Pawson reported on a subsidy of £150 per school which had been made available for the cost of the Understanding Christianity course, specifically for community schools. Schools would be made this offer in the Spring Term. Understanding Christianity was the teaching resource which gave detailed support for the Christianity units in the Devon RE syllabus.

Resources were limited (£8,000 across the Country) so schools needed to react quickly to take advantage of this offer.

#### **120      Update on Schools Monitoring**

Ed Pawson reported:

- No data was available for exam 'results' for summer 2020 due to the pandemic;
- SACRE was continuing to monitor RE in primary and secondary schools
- on a NATRE complaint which had been upheld involving a parent in complaint about RE at an academy reinforcing the Minister for Schools suggestion that people concerned about the level and quality of provision for RE should use the statutory school and academy complaints process.

• <https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/success-for-persistent-parent-in-complaint-about-re-at-an-academy/>

**121      Update on Learn Teach Lead RE**

Ed Pawson and Belinda Twiggs (South Devon and Torbay Hub) reported on the operation of the Hubs during the pandemic:

- Meetings were successfully being held online and most hubs had been able to offer meetings;
- Many experienced improved attendance and were generally well-attended and attracting new members and improving CPD;
- Some were offering separate primary and secondary meetings; and
- Some hubs were joining together to offer meetings.

Members acknowledged the importance and value of LTLRE.

Ed Pawson further reported LTLRE Autumn 2020 talks and interactive training sessions as follows:

Decolonising the RE curriculum (secondary)  
Ed Pawson, Anthony Nderitu and LTLRE secondary hub leaders  
4.00-5.15pm Tues 13th Oct

Bringing sacred texts to life (primary)  
Adam Robertson  
4.00-5.15pm Wed 11th Nov

Revealed: the secrets of RE planning at KS3 (secondary)  
David Hampshire  
4.00-5.15pm Tues 17th Nov

How does RE connect with Relationships and Sex Education? (cross phase)  
Katy Staples  
4.00-5.15pm Thurs 26th Nov

**122      National Developments: Worldviews Report, Worldviews Lens**

Ed Pawson reported on developments as follows:

- during summer 2020 RE: online hosted blog series called 'Opening up conversations about religion and worldviews' and
- The Commission on RE Final (CoRE) Report published in September 2018 which sparked debate about the title and purpose of RE. This series of blogs, commissioned by the RE Policy Unit (a joint venture of the National Association of RE Teachers, the Religious Education Council and RE Today Services), was welcomed as an addition to that conversation.

**123      Holocaust Memorial Day Planning**

Jeremy Roberts reported on the success of the January 2020 events and the challenge this presented for January 2021 particularly in view of the pandemic.

Events would include:

- a Commemorative event (Exeter Cathedral) (social distanced) and live streamed to schools through various platforms for example You Tube and via the Babcock site
- video of talks and films and resources for Schools and include for example the Kindertransport and its impact;
- a poetry competition and painting of foundation stones, and
- tutor time on Holocaust denial.

Keith Denby also referred to the opportunity to include learning on the Jewish diaspora in North Devon.

Caitlin Cornwell also referred to a possible input from the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem and a virtual exhibition.

#### **124      Future SACRE Meetings**

Thursday, 11 February 2021 (moved from 9 February) and Thursday, 1 July 2021 (both at 10 am).

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.20 am