

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

5 February 2019

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

B Becher, K Denby, R Halsey, H Hastie, B Lane and M Miller, Becher and Randall

Group B: The Church of England

J Roberts (Chair), S Gill, C Hulbert, R Ingrouille and T Wilson

Group C: Teachers' Associations

J Goody, P Hammett, W Harrison, L Clay and P Randall

Group D: The County Council

E Brennan, C Channon, I Chubb and P Colthorpe

Co-opted Members

S Spence and B Twiggs

Advisor

E Pawson

Apologies:-

M Hext, J Taylorson, Parks, Flanagan, S Shute, G Winnall and M Squires

**65** **Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 November 2018 be signed as a correct record.

**66** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

**67** **Devon SACRE Membership**

Mr Pawson reported on vacancies representing the Baptist, Roman Catholic and Sikh communities. Respective representative organisations would be contacted requesting nominations.

The Chair and Mr Pawson would also contact the Mosque about the Islam Community Representation seeking a meeting about a way forward, including a protocol for school visits (and other community groups) to the Mosque which in the past had proved positive and educational.

**68** **Devon SACRE Annual Report 2017/8**

The Council received a draft Annual Report including a forward by the Chair. The draft covered Membership, activity and updates, interfaith work, holocaust Memorial Day and events in 2018, standards in Religious Education and collective worship.

Members' comments and discussion points with Ed Pawson included:

- the need for further discussion with Babcock about the timing and availability of the short course data (which was only made available the morning of this meeting);
- the positive progress and valued work of the Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) Hubs across Devon with the Hubs providing decentralised leadership in the support of RE teaching noting some gaps in school engagement;
- dissemination of the half termly newsletter, including the possibility of providing a link within the LTLRE material
- the gratitude of members for Claire Hulbert and Ed Pawson and the HMD Working Group in partnership with Exeter City Council for the HMD events in 2018;
- need for further analysis in the differences in school performances across Devon compared against national data and with other similar local authorities; and the likely future impact of the new Agreed Syllabus; data relating to individual school performances in Devon, the level of availability and take up of the short and full courses across Devon and reasons behind the differing performance and attainment figures and the complexities involved in making direct comparisons;
- the work to monitor RE in Schools including visits by the Chair and Ed Pawson;
- confirmation by the Minister for Schools regarding the legal requirement for all schools to offer RE as part of a 'broad and balanced' curriculum and the role of Ofsted in ensuring compliance;
- the lack of RE performance data relating to special schools, PRUs and Free Schools in Devon, which required further investigation with Babcock, alongside future data requirements in respect of Home Schooling;
- requirements for all Schools to outline online on their websites their RE offer [on-line tool available - copy in the school's URL and then the following including quotation marks into Google (or preferred search engine) "Religious Education" Site: then paste in the School's URL and press enter];
- unvalidated provisional data relating to KS4 Full Course Entries and Outcomes by individual Schools in Devon and reasons behind the different outcomes and interpretation of the data;
- the need for 'progress' data to assist with interpretation noting the availability of very good data via the SW Teacher/School alliance and the work of John Lang in this area; and
- the late arrival (received during the meeting) of the Short Course data (entries and outcomes), which showed a large drop in entries; and more time was required for analysis and interpretation.

When finalised the Report would be sent to the DfE and Devon's Schools.

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### **Agreed Syllabus Review**

Ed Pawson reported that following a recommendation by the Agreed Syllabus Conference to adopt the RE Today proposed Agreed Syllabus, he was now seeking the approval from Devon County Council's Head of Education and Learning for the Syllabus and to offer it to community schools free of charge. Torbay SACRE had accepted the RE Today Syllabus and Plymouth was expected to approve it shortly.

This SACRE meeting was now being asked to consider whether to offer the Syllabus to all schools in Devon free of charge or to charge the Academies, subject to approval of the Syllabus by the County Council. It was envisaged that delegate fees for attendance at the launch events organised by RE Today (when take-up in other areas had been good) would cover the cost of the Syllabus.

Members referred to the advantages of one single RE Syllabus available for all schools (irrespective of status) in Devon, helping ensure good quality, consistency and inclusivity, associated cost benefits and this would also assist effective monitoring by SACRE responsible for the overview of RE learning in all Schools.

It was **MOVED** by Tatiana Wilson, **SECONDED** by Claire Hulbert and

**RESOLVED** that the RE Today RE Syllabus be accepted as the Agreed Syllabus and that it is offered to all Schools in Devon free of charge, subject to ratification by Devon County Council.

## 70 Learn Teach Lead RE Updates

Tatiana Wilson gave an update on Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE):

- Hubs continued to meet in North Devon (Barnstaple), East Devon (Exmouth), South Devon (Newton abbot), West Devon (Tavistock) and Exeter;
- the Hub leaders had completed the Farmington Scholarships and organised a A Level RE Conference and led the sessions;
- 4 Devon teachers were now members of the NATRE Executive, a positive reflection of the standing of the LTLRE Hubs;
- there was an on-line presence on twitter #REChatuk with this month's focus on Hinduism;
- the coaching and mentoring course in RE continued with schools buying in support from hub leaders to induct new RE leaders and it was hoped that this programme would help develop better affordable 1:1 support across the region;
- new leadership over the Devon/Torbay and Plymouth and the LTLRE was offering support for the induction of the new RE Adviser in Cornwall and the Hub Leaders were involved in planning and delivery for the Local Authority;
- whilst St Luke's was funding residential places for hub leaders and student places at conferences there was still a need for financial support from SACRE to enable hub leaders to meet for retraining throughout the year; and
- a conference was planned for October 2019 on the new Agreed Syllabus implementation in St Mellion.

The Chair thanked Tatiana for the update.

## 71 National Developments: RE Commission report

Ed Pawson reported on national developments in RE covering:

- the Schools Minister's recent statement *'it is compulsory to teach RE in state funded schools at all key stages up to 18, even if pupils have not chosen to study religious education at GCSE or A Level. Schools that are not teaching RE are acting unlawfully or, in the case of academies, are in breach of their academy funding agreements. Where the Department is informed that a school is not fulfilling their legal duty, they will investigate accordingly'*;
- the final report of the Commission on RE 'Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward, A national plan for RE' and the shift in language from 'religion' to worldview';
- new proposed change of the name of the SACRE to Local Advisory Network for Religion and Worldview's; and
- NASACRE's response to the CRE's final report, including its disappointment with recommendation 8, to rename and reconstitute SACREs to become Local Advisory Networks and the change of status this implied.

Members' discussion points included:

- the view that what really mattered was what happened in the classroom in the teaching of RE and the wider meaning of spirituality and different world cultures;
- the need for clarification of the legal role of the proposed new Local Advisory Network, its funding and democratic input noting the active work of this SACRE which was effective in networking in Devon across schools, local authorities, faith communities and organisations; and
- the term 'Worldview' whilst to some appeared 'woolly' its meaning and emphasis on the plural and diverse nature of worldviews beyond the six major world faiths and humanism promoting greater understanding, perspectives and acceptance was supported; and the narrower interpretation of RE to some was not relevant or inclusive.

**72**      **Interfaith Developments**

The Chair reported that, whilst the event last year 'Dying Matters' had been successful with good participation, another Interfaith and Belief Forum conference would not be held this Spring, but consideration would be given to two events later in the year, one in northern Devon and the other in the south to facilitate access and greater school participation.

**73**      **Holocaust Memorial Day Events 2019**

The Chair reported on the events (details attached).

Members referred to the success of the events noting that the Buckfast Abbey event had raised £1700 for the Holocaust Education Trust, and the involvement of pupils which they had found stimulating and rewarding, and a suggestion from members to consideration of further participation with more student presentations at future events. Lorna Clay reported that a pupil from her school had also been appointed a pupil ambassador.

Agnes Grunwald-Spier was giving a Holocaust Survivor talk on Women's Experiences in the Holocaust on Thursday, 7 February 2019 at the URC Southernhay, Exeter to which SACRE members were invited (details attached).

Members commended the work of Ed Pawson and the HMD working group in partnership with Exeter City Council and local Schools in organising the events.

**74**      **SW SACRE conference Mon 4th March 2019**

Ed Pawson reported that 6 places were available for SACRE Members (details attached).

[N.B. places subsequently taken by Keith Denby, John Goody, Ed Pawson, Jeremy Roberts, Belinda Twigg and Tatiana Wilson]

**75**      **Future SACRE Meetings**

Friday, 7 June 2019 and Tuesday, 19 November (both at 10 am)

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.25 pm