

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
10 JULY 2014
5.00 - 6.30 PM**



Present:

David Fawcett, Church of England (Chairman)
Anne Andrews, Church of England
John Baidam, The Free Churches
Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Will Davison, Bracknell Forest Council
Madeline Diver, Associations Representing Teachers (VOICE)
Carol Nicholls, Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth
Councillor Clifton Thompson, Bracknell Forest Council

In Attendance:

Ms Jo Fageant, Oxford Diocese
Mrs Lisa Baveystock, Head of RE, Edgbarrow School

Apologies for absence were received from:

Mr Christopher Smith
Mark Olney
Councillor Andy Blatchford
Councillor Mrs Dorothy Hayes MBE
Kathy Hadfield
Martin Surrell

35. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and particularly welcomed Mrs Lisa Baveystock Head of RE at Edgbarrow School to the meeting.

36. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the alteration name being altered to Jan Lever in Minute 31 'Joint SACRE's Conference'.

37. Matters Arising

Minute 27 – Consideration of loaning the Artefacts Collection to neighbouring authorities schools would be considered later in the meeting.

Minute 32 - Jo Fageant advised that she could be part of the working group to look at the SACRE Development Plan but could not be involved in the following year.

38. Presentation and Attendance from Edgbarrow School

Mrs Baveystock Head of RE at Edgbarrow School gave a full presentation to the meeting about how RE and philosophy ethics and beliefs were delivered at the

school. She advised that there were two full time and three part time RE teachers, all were qualified philosophers and educated theologians, there was three hours of lessons across the fortnightly timetable. In the past three years students had achieved 100% A* to C grades at GCSE and Edgbarrow was in the top 10% of all schools for A Level results. The school used the Welsh Examination Board. In Key Stage 3 the results were in line with geography and history at the school. At Key Stage 4 the subject became a matter of choice for students, prior to the introduction of the English Baccalaureate Certificate (EBC) at the school 50% of students had elected to continue with RE with only 25% taking this option following the introduction EBC. In Year 12 and 13 there were three groups taking RE at A Level, with 12 – 18 students in each group, they had eight hours of lessons across the fortnightly timetable. Lisa advised that this was the largest cohort in the school for A Level and that there was a huge interest in this subject at the school.

The school arranged school trips, in Year 9 students visited a place of worship such as St Paul's Cathedral, Neasdan Temple and the Jewish Museum. Years 12 and 13 visited place in abroad Rome in 2012, Morocco in 2013 and in 2014 had visited Auschwitz.

Mrs Baveystock then showed a video of students from the school, the Year 12 students expressed why they had chosen to continue with RE at A Level and what they enjoyed about the course. Year 12 pupils then interviewed Year 7 students asking them what they enjoyed about the RE lessons that they received. It was clear that the students enjoyed the syllabus and learning about the subject area and achieved well.

The meeting noted that there were two areas of concern for RE in schools. Firstly the demise of RE as a subject choice following the introduction of EBC, this may be due to the loss of 'status' for the subject by the government and parents. The pressure of EBC and other subject choices persuaded students to drop this subject. Secondly the A Level specifications were currently under review with religious philosophy being withdrawn and focus being on pure philosophy. The Chairman reported that he had written to Michael Gove the Education Secretary expressing concern about these changes and had received a reply that the situation would be monitored.

The Chairman on behalf of the meeting, thanked Mrs Baveystock for attending the meeting and for her full presentation.

39. **NASACRE AGM**

Anne Andrews had circulated with the agenda papers her report on the NASACRE AGM on 22 May 2014. This included a list of 20 things that all SACREs should consider doing. Some of the items on the list Bracknell Forest SACRE had already been undertaken. The meeting considered that the profile of SACRE needed to be raised and considered the following as possible ways:

- Inviting teachers involved with RE to attend a SACRE meeting.
- Meeting during the day at a school. Concerns were raised should members of the public choose to attend that particular meeting, it was noted that other SACREs did not hold their meetings in public session.
- Invite the two local Members of Parliament Dr Phillip Lee MP (Bracknell Forest) and Adam Alfriyie MP (Windsor) to a future meeting of SACRE.

- Raise the profile of SACRE at Chair of Governors Briefings held termly and involve subject governors more at local level SACRE.
- Encourage schools to apply for the Religious Education Quality Mark. Schools could only apply for those schools who made RE lessons compulsory at Key Stage 4.
- Involve schools in creative work in writing and art work in a similar way to the recent commemoration by all Bracknell Forest Primary Schools of the 100 year anniversary of World War 1.

40. **Feedback on SACRE Questionnaires Responses**

There had been a limited number of questionnaires completed and returned, despite a reminder email being sent to all schools. Eight primary schools had completed the questionnaire and a summary of responses was presented to the meeting. Two schools did not have an RE subject leader, most claimed to attend the subject leader meetings, those that did attend found them useful and worthwhile. Blocking of teaching RE was being introduced in most schools. Little use was made of the artefacts held at the Education Centre the reasons given for this was the problem of collecting them and returning them. It was considered with the changing population of Bracknell Forest with more pupils having English as an additional language being part of the school system that the understanding and knowledge of other religions and faiths was becoming increasingly more important.

Anne Andrews would respond to all schools that had replied thanking them for their input and send a summary of the questionnaires responses to all schools.

(Action: Anne Andrews)

41. **Joint Conference Feedback**

The Joint SACREs Conference had been very good. There had been a positive feedback on a larger organisation to look at the development of RE in schools. The RE Council had suggested that there might be eight such bodies around England; all SACREs indicated that they wished to be part of this development. It was felt that the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities could work together as one unit, pooling resources. Development of hubs of SACREs may attract funding which could be used to fund a project manager that could work and develop individual projects on behalf of the joint SACREs. The meeting strongly endorsed a pan Berkshire SACRE. It was noted that Bracknell Forest's property development included six or seven new primary schools and a new secondary school.

The meeting agreed that they wished to be part of the working party to look at a pan Berkshire SACRE group, a meeting would be held in September 2014 to look at the way forward. There would be two representatives from Bracknell Forest SACRE – David Fawcett and Madeleine Diver with Councillor Dr Barnard being a reserve representative. It was anticipated that Anne Andrews would also be part of this group. Jo Fageant would circulate dates and times for the meeting in September.

(Action: Anne Andrews and Jo Fageant)

42. **Opportunity for Members to View Artefacts**

Anne Andrews updated members of the artefacts held at Bracknell Forest Education Centre and invited the meeting to look at the Religious Education artefacts collection that was on display at Easthampstead Park Conference Centre after the meeting.

43. **Dates of Future Meetings**

The next meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education would be held on 13 November 2014.