

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
15 JUNE 2017
5.00 - 6.30 PM**



Present:

Tracey Williams, Church of England (Chairman)
Madeline Diver, Associations Representing Teachers (VOICE) (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Ms Moira Gaw, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Mrs Dorothy Hayes MBE, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Mrs Isabel Mattick, Bracknell Forest Council
Wayne Erasmus, Free Churches
Ruth Jackson, NAHT Headteacher
Kathy Hadfield, Co-opted Member
Carol Logan, Church of England
Deborah Owen, National Union of Teachers (NUT)
Rabbi Zvi Solomons, Jewish faith

In Attendance:

Anne Andrews, Oxford Diocese Adviser

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Ian Leake, Bracknell Forest Council
Arfan Rashid, Muslim faith

26. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

- Minute 16: SACRE discussed what could be offered to assist schools who found provision of collective worship *difficult*

27. Matters Arising

With regard to the minutes of the previous meeting, the following updates were given:

- New reminders would be issued to those schools who had not submitted a collective worship policy to SACRE. **(Action: Lizzie Rich)**

SACRE also welcomed Robyn Lynch, Richard Harling and Juanita Dunlop as observers to the meeting, with the view that they may wish to become members.

28. Collective Worship (revised guidance and sample policy)

Anne Andrews presented the Collective Worship Guidance and Sample Policy 2017, which had been adapted from the document written by Jo Fageant and checked for compliance with legislation.

In response to discussion and questions, the following points on the sample policy were noted:

- Although the legislation required collective worship to be of 'a broadly Christian character', there were no exclusions to the faiths which could be included in the syllabus. Collective worship required children to reflect, and it was expected that they would bring their own experience of any faith in this.
- It was best for a school to have separate RE and Collective Worship Co-ordinators, although SACRE recognised that this was often not the case.
- The sample policy was intended to be used as a template to be adapted by schools, and if approved, the document would be hosted on the SACRE website.
- It was clarified that while sixth formers were able to withdraw themselves from Collective Worship, only pupils over 18 could withdraw themselves from Religious Education. Parents could withdraw their children from Collective Worship at any age.
- It was noted that children who were withdrawn from Collective Worship should not cost the school any additional resource.
- It was hoped that the Collective Worship policy would embrace the different meanings of worship.
- Anne Andrews was due to meet with other RE advisers to discuss schools where a collective worship had not been provided, and what would happen in these cases.
- It was agreed that Anne Andrews would discuss the Sandy Lane request for determination with Rachel Morgan, Head of Standards and Effectiveness. It was hoped that the Sandy Lane case would reiterate the importance of Collective Worship policies to other schools.

SACRE approved the Collective Worship Guidance and Sample Policy 2017.

29. **Determination Policy (draft guidance and application form)**

Anne Andrews presented a draft report on Applying for a Determination for Collective Worship in Bracknell Forest.

At the last meeting, SACRE had discussed the decision at Brent Council to take a Local Authority-wide determination from the requirement to provide Collective Worship of Christian nature in schools. When Sandy Lane had issued a request for a determination, it was found that Bracknell Forest did yet not have a procedure for determinations.

The new draft process of applications for determinations for Collective Worship outlined that Governors, Parents, Staff and Pupils all needed to be consulted prior to an application for determination being submitted. The Governing Body was required to be in agreement, and the school was required to outline the reason based on the heritage and background of its school demographic. Any application was to be sent to SACRE, where a discussion and decision would be made on any application. A form had been created to this effect, which required schools to conduct the necessary steps before applying. If granted, a determination would last for 5 years following which a fresh application would need to be made.

It was noted that applications for determinations for academies and free schools would go straight to the Department for Education rather than the Local Authority.

It was agreed that determinations were not to be encouraged as SACRE believed that the requirement for Collective Worship was beneficial to the cultural, social and emotional needs of any school. A determination would not grant permission to omit

Collective Worship, rather it would vary the 'broadly Christian nature' element of the requirement.

In response to discussion, the following points were noted:

- RBWM had had one determination for a school, but this had lapsed.
- It was suggested that a FAQ section be added to the start of the policy to outline what a determination was, and what it didn't do.
- In a successful determination, the word 'Christian' would be replaced by another faith, and not a subset of any faith, for example 'broadly Islamic nature'
- Anyone could report concerns with a school's Collective Worship, and SACRE would be responsible for following up this concern. It was recognised that monitoring the compliance, quality and regularity of Collective Worship was difficult, past assessment of the policies. Ofsted were also likely to check a school's Collective Worship provision.
- It was noted that since the Governor appoint process had changed, the Local Authority could not appoint a Local Authority governor to keep updated on Collective Worship and other policies, rather, the Local Authority would nominate a candidate to the Governing Body who could agree or disagree to their appointment.
- A rolling visiting programme for SACRE members to observe Collective Worship in schools was suggested.

SACRE approved the application policy document and process, and agreed that the policy should be held until required in the event of a determination application.

30. **Syllabus Review**

Anne Andrews pretend the Pan-Berkshire Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Review 2017-18, which had been agreed in principle at the Pan-Berkshire Hub on 24 April 2017.

The Bracknell Forest RE Agreed Syllabus was due to be reviewed in 2017, and Ann had held two subject leader meetings to gauge opinion on the current syllabus which was generally well liked. Subject leaders had commented that further guidance would be helpful.

In order to create an agreed syllabus, the Local Authority was required to convene an agreed syllabus conference. In the past, the Local Authority had asked SACRE to act as the agreed syllabus conference in addition and separately to their role as SACRE, and it was suggested that this be done again. **(Action: Lizzie Rich to ask Derek Morgan)**

Jan Lever had scheduled a pan-Berkshire syllabus review meeting for 4 October 2017, but Anne Andrews would be undertaking a separate Jewish syllabus review meeting as the meeting clashed with the Eve of Sukkot. A survey had been submitted to all RE teachers in Berkshire, and the information arising from this would be collated by Jan Lever in the summer holidays.

SACRE asked whether the agreed syllabus needed to be ratified by SACRE or the Local Authority, and it was agreed that this would be confirmed with the Council's Democratic Services. **(Action: Lizzie Rich)**

SACRE members were also informed of pan-Berkshire SACRE training taking place on 28 September 2017 at the Holiday Inn, Winnersh Triangle, and each Berkshire SACRE was required to fund four places. Tracey Williams and Madeline Diver expressed interest in attending, and a further two places were available to Bracknell Forest SACRE members.

31. Hub Update and details of next Hub Conference

Anne Andrews updated on the pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub, which had most recently met on 25 April 2017.

The Hub meeting had planned the Training on Roles and Responsibilities of SACRE members, and the pan-Berkshire RE Conference.

The Crossing the Bridges project had been completed, and it was hoped that the complete Crossing the Bridges directory could be hosted on the Bracknell Forest Schools Management website.

32. Constitution Review

SACRE discussed the existing SACRE Constitution.

From September 2017, teaching associations NUT and ATL would be merged into one association, resulting in two member spaces on SACRE merged into one. It was proposed that Bracknell Forest do the same as Reading SACRE and combine the teaching associations into one group to avoid making regular changes to the Constitution depending on the associations. It was agreed that it was better to secure teacher representatives than specific union representatives. Anne Andrews agreed to approach the subject leaders' group to invite them to join SACRE as teaching representatives.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- SACRE could only decide the numbers within the groups, as the groups themselves were fixed.
- The ability to co-opt members kept some flexibility in the SACRE membership.
- In terms of quoracy, one representative from each group was required to attend for SACRE to be quorate, because in a formal vote one vote would be allocated to each group. It was noted that Bracknell Forest SACRE was always quorate due to regular attendance, but at other Berkshire SACREs, maintaining quoracy had been a challenge.

SACRE agreed the constitutional change to amend Group C to be Teachers and Teachers' Representatives (6), and asked that this amendment be made through the Local Authority. (**Action: Lizzie Rich**)

33. Crossing the Bridges

The Crossing the Bridges update was covered under the Hub update item.

34. NASACRE - Feedback from Conference

Anne Andrews gave an update from the NASACRE AGM which she had attended on 16 May 2017 in York, on behalf of Bracknell Forest SACRE.

The conference had been a useful and interesting, and had included talks from Joyce Miller from REC and CoRE, and Aaqil Ahmed. Only RBWM and Bracknell Forest SACREs had been represented from Berkshire, so information sharing opportunities had been limited.

Anne commented that she had been reassured that other SACREs were asking the same questions about issues such as Collective Worship as had been asked in Bracknell.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- It was suggested that a SACRE competition or celebration press release be arranged to raise the profile of SACRE's work in Bracknell Forest.
- Talks and Question and Answers from the conference would be uploaded on the NASACRE website. If any SACRE member required the log in for the NASACRE website, they were asked to contact Lizzie Rich.

35. **Any Other Business**

SACRE were informed that David Fawcett, past SACRE chairman and Borough Councillor had passed away. It was agreed that a letter of condolence be sent to his family to recognise the impact he had during his time with SACRE. **(Action: Lizzie Rich)**

36. **Dates of Future Meetings**

The next meeting was scheduled for 8 November 2017.