

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
10 NOVEMBER 2009
5.00 - 6.35 PM**



Present:

Free Churches

Rev Michael Bentley
Mrs Paula Ridgway
Mrs Irene Robinson

Church of England

Mr Gordon Anderson (Chairman)
Mrs Maureen Beadsley

Other Religions

Joel Roszykiewicz, Buddhist Faith
Mrs Kusum Trikha, Hindu Faith
Mr Arfan Rashid, Muslim Faith

Roman Catholic Church

Mrs Anne Gibbons
Mrs Carol Nicholls

Representing Teachers

Mrs Samantha Hunt, ATL Representative

Bracknell Forest Council

Councillor Mrs Dorothy Hayes

Co-opted Members

Dr Kathy Hadfield

In attendance:

Jo Fageant, SACRE Associate Adviser
Martin Surrell, Senior Adviser, Children, Young People & Learning
Liz Sanneh, Democratic Services

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Leake and Thompson, Rabbi Zvi Solomons, Colin Hickson, and Felicity Allen

114. Welcome and Introductions (prayer to be led by The Rev Michael Bentley)

The outgoing Chairman, Gordon Anderson, welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Mrs Carol Nicholls, representing the Roman Catholic Diocese and replacing Louise Birley. Mr Anderson also welcomed Sean Hood who was attending the meeting as an observer for Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action where he was Equality Development Officer. Brief introductions were made around the table.

Rev Michael Bentley led the meeting in prayer.

115. Election of Chairman (Clerk in the chair)

On the proposition of Rev Michael Bentley, seconded by Mrs Maureen Beadsley, it was

RESOLVED that

Gordon Anderson be appointed as the Chairman of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the academic year 2009-2010.

116. Election of Deputy Chairman

On the proposition of Mr Anderson, seconded by the Rev Bentley it was

RESOLVED that

Mrs Paula Ridgway be appointed as the Deputy Chairman of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the academic year 2009-2010.

117. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 8 July 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

118. Matters Arising

QCA/DCSF Curriculum Consultation

The Chairman asked whether the results of the QCA/DCSF Curriculum Consultation (Item 109) were available yet, but as the consultation had not ended until 24 July, it was too early for results.

Planning Methodology

The Chairman raised a question about the Planning Methodology which had been mentioned in the draft Annual Report section 2.3.2, and the Senior Advisor, Social Care and Learning advised the meeting that this had been sent electronically to Heads and RE Co-ordinators in all schools and would be put onto the website. In response to a request from the Chairman, the Senior Advisor agreed to send hard copies to all schools as well.

119. SACRE membership

The Chairman told the meeting that Mrs Ranjit Bilkhu had been appointed to SACRE as a Sikh representative, and asked the Clerk to check that Mrs Bilkhu had received papers for the meeting.

He also told the meeting that it was hoped that there might be a nomination for a PAT representative on SACRE; secondary school heads had been contacted to see whether someone would be able to represent them at SACRE, and this would be discussed at the Heads group.

Rev Michael Bentley told the meeting that he had originally been appointed to SACRE as a representative of the Free Churches, but had subsequently retired from his post as a free church minister, and was now attending Warfield Parish Church and was no longer a member of the free church. The Chairman explained that under

the constitution of SACRE it was acceptable for the Rev Bentley to remain as a member until a new person was appointed. In view of the Rev Bentley's valuable contributions to the SACRE in the past, it was suggested that he become a co-opted member of the group, making way for a new Free Church representative to be appointed.

It was **RESOLVED** that Rev Michael Bentley be co-opted to SACRE, and a new Free Church representative be sought and appointed.

120. Recruitment and Training

The Chairman informed the meeting that training was available to SACRE members, and asked whether anyone would be interested in receiving training or a refresher course. Mrs Carol Nicholls and Mr Arfan Rashid indicated their interest, and Jo Fageant agreed to facilitate this.

121. Resources Centre and Artefacts report/update

The Senior Adviser, Social Care and Learning, reported to the meeting that there had been no problems relating to the loans service, and it was working well. The Chairman asked that details of loans should be attached to the minutes of the meeting (see Annex A). Jo Fageant asked whether a package from the Muslim faith had been received and added to the collection, but it was not clear whether this had been received by Bracknell Forest. Jo Fageant agreed to investigate.

The Chairman reminded the meeting that in a previous discussion with Ranelagh School about their collection of artefacts, it had been agreed that there would be sharing of loan information. The meeting agreed that data on Bracknell Forest SACRE loans should be sent to Ranelagh School and a request made for information about their loans for the past year. The Senior Adviser, Social Care and Learning agreed to provide statistics for the past academic year.

Jo Fageant told the meeting about some of the resources available online. These included some worksheets and guidelines for Key Stage 1, and copies were circulated to the meeting (<http://www.shapworkingparty.org.uk/>) She also spoke about the Stapleford Centre's tips for teaching RE, and these are available at <http://www.stapleford-centre.org>.

Ms Fageant also circulated copies of the RE Newsletter for Bracknell Forest Schools which also gave information about resources, including some on the internet. The Senior Adviser, Social Care and Learning, indicated that the newsletter would be distributed at the RE Co-ordinators' meeting, and requested an electronic copy of the newsletter.

122. The Practicalities of SACRE's responsibilities for RE and CW in schools

The Chairman reported that he had met with Alan Kendall, Bob Welsh and Martin Surrell to explore ways to make progress in monitoring the SACRE responsibilities for Religious Education and Collective Worship in Bracknell Forest Schools. The landscape had changed dramatically. Ofsted no longer makes direct reference to RE and collective worship in its schools reports. Bob Welsh had looked at what other LEAs were doing to monitor this.

Discussion followed about self-evaluation forms for RE and collective worship, which currently were private to schools. In order for SACRE to be able to see these, it would be necessary to ask schools to release these, and SACRE would need to give

reasons and outcomes. A suggestion was that SACRE should lead on self-evaluation, gaining co-operation from a sample of schools, perhaps 10% each year, to get an insight into what happens in schools.

The Senior Adviser, Social Care and Learning, indicated that there were no longer specialist subject advisers in the local authority, and no subject specialists. Limited resources were available to help with evaluation, and this was not unusual in small authorities. He indicated that self-evaluation was well developed in secondary schools, and this might be a route to explore.

The Chairman reiterated that the SACRE had a duty to look at community schools as well as church schools. He suggested that the LA Advisers should be asked to look at what might be practical and give cost implications for monitoring this over 4-5 years, and asked for a brief paper to be brought to the next meeting.

ACTION: Martin Surrell

123. Bracknell Forest Schools' RE examination results - review

The Chief Advisor, Social Care and Learning tabled the RE exam results. He explained that GCSE in RE was taken in four out of six schools in Bracknell Forest. 23% of pupils had taken the full course, and the results reflected very favourably. The GCSE short course was taken in four schools, with one school entering the whole cohort. At GCE A-level, success rates were also good.

Jo Fageant commented that authority-wide data does not give sufficient information as if results were broken down into schools, it would be possible to see where best practice could be shared. She asked whether all the schools have a gender discrepancy, with more girls than boys taking the exams. The Chief Adviser reported to the meeting that he had talked about this with other advisers. The Local Authority possessed data within schools and had had conversations with schools about achievement and quality. If there was a perception of specific areas with problems, then the LA would give support. The data were not in the public domain, and therefore were not broken down by school for the SACRE group.

[Rev Michael Bentley left the meeting at this point]

The Chairman asked whether this was standard practice for Local Authorities to give data which was not broken down by school, and Joel Roszykiewicz asked whether the group could be given the privileged information. Jo Fageant explained that raw data needed knowledge of the school as well. She reported that in other LA she received data for individual schools, and she was able to publish it in SACRE reports. The Chairman asked whether the Authority could be asked for this, and Jo Fageant suggested that those involved in review with the school could report to SACRE as the group would need help to interpret the data. The Chairman agreed to obtain a sample of another SACRE's report, and to approach Bracknell Forest Council for similar data. The meeting agreed with this action.

The meeting agreed that the examination results were good, so far as it was possible to tell.

124. Bracknell Forest SACRE's Development Plan 2009-2012

The Chairman had made changes to the Development Plan as previously discussed, and it had been circulated with the Agenda. The meeting was asked to approve the Plan, and this was agreed.

125. Bracknell Forest SACRE's Draft Annual Report 2008/2009

The Chairman thanked Jo Fageant for the draft Annual Report which had been circulated. Some small additions were agreed:

2.1.1 to include papers

2.2.2 GCSE report needed exam data, including trend data

2.3.1 Primary co-ordinators – Mrs Samantha Hunt agreed to provide some detail

The meeting agreed that the Annual Report be signed-off by the Chairman.

126. National Interfaith Week: 15 to 21 November 2009

The Chairman circulated a leaflet about the National Interfaith Week and asked whether anything was happening locally in support of this. The members told the meeting that there was a website listing events, and that Reading Hindu temple was having an open day. More information was available at <http://www.interfaithweek.org>.

127. Any Other Business

Jo Fageant told the meeting that a Draft Code of Conduct for RE teachers was available on the Religious Education Council's website <http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org/>)

Mrs Paula Ridgway told the meeting that photos from the previous SACRE meeting, showing presentation of awards to Garth College students, were now available, and she had written to the local press. Jo Fageant agreed to add them to the current RE newsletter in which she had written an article about the presentation.

Jo Fageant reminded the meeting that if they wished to contribute to the RE Newsletter, contributions needed to be with her by the last week of the Christmas holidays for the next edition, and by the last week of the Easter holidays for the following one.

Arfan Rashid suggested that there should be a list of contacts for different faiths to include people who would visit schools on request to talk about their faith. The Chairman told the meeting that a Directory already existed, and suggested it could be circulated to schools along with the catalogue of artefacts.

128. Dates of Future Meetings

It was agreed to try to vary the day of the week when meetings were held, and it was suggested that the next one be held on Wednesday 10 March 2010, with the following one possibly on Thursday 8 July, and subsequently on Tuesday 10 November to facilitate attendance. The Clerk agreed to look into room availability for these dates and to report back to the Chairman.

ACTION: Liz Sanneh

CHAIRMAN