

Meeting of pan-Berkshire SACREs Hub
4.15 – 6.00pm 18th May 2016
Civic offices, Wokingham Borough Council

Minutes

Present:

Karen Butler - vice chair, Windsor and Maidenhead SACRE
Mary Harwood – chair, West Berkshire SACRE
Stephen Vegh – chair, Wokingham SACRE
Zvi Solomons – chair, Reading SACRE
Madeline Diver – vice chair, Bracknell SACRE
Anne Andrews – RE advisor to Bracknell, and Windsor and Maidenhead SACREs
Jan Lever – RE advisor to Wokingham and Reading SACREs
Alison Harris – Jan Lever consultancy
Emily Waddilove – LA link officer for Wokingham SACRE

Apologies:

Jo Fageant – RE advisor to Slough and West Berks SACREs

Not present:

Lynda Bussley – vice chair, Slough SACRE

The meeting was chaired by Jan Lever, who has now been appointed as Hub co-ordinator.

1. Welcome and introductions

Jan invited each SACRE representative to introduce themselves and to mention the current priorities for their SACRE. Priorities mentioned were:

Wokingham: developing the Hub; further developing the Crossing the Bridges project

West Berkshire: ensuring full membership of the SACRE

Windsor and Maidenhead: supporting secondary RE teachers with the new GCSE

Bracknell Forest: finding a new chair person. David Fawcett, the previous chair, resigned, and Madeline informed the meeting that she discovered recently that he has passed away.

Reading: developing the Hub; developing support for teachers; working with academies

2. Background and context for the Hub

Jan explained that the 6 Berkshire SACREs have been working together for some time, having collaborated on syllabus reviews and held joint summer conferences.

She feels that the more the SACREs can collaborate the greater the benefits, as resources can be maximised.

Ad hoc SACRE Hub meetings were arranged, leading up to more formalised collaborative working on the Crossing the Bridges project during the last year.

3. Update on achievements so far i.e. synchronising meeting dates; Crossing the Bridges project

The Crossing the Bridges project aims to support teachers' main concern and need: developing links with places of worship. The project was launched at the joint SACREs conference last June, to which teachers were invited. Materials have been developed, including interactive booklets to support visits to places of worship, and documents to support the process of booking visits to places of worship. The directory of places of worship is not yet complete, and further work is required to engage more places of worship and to disseminate the project materials more widely.

The syllabus review will need to begin next year, and Jan, as Hub co-ordinator, will be responsible for organising meetings and meeting follow up, and driving the review forward. She will produce a proposed plan for the review, which can be discussed at SACRE meetings.

In order to facilitate the efficient working of the Hub, the SACREs have agreed to synchronise their meeting dates, with meetings taking place during the second or third week after half term breaks.

4. Updates from SACREs on their current position regarding committing to the Hub (funding etc)

All 6 SACREs have agreed that they would like to be part of the Hub. In terms of funding, four of the SACREs have confirmed that they are able to contribute the necessary funds. Bracknell has not yet got official confirmation but are confident that they will be able to secure the funds. Jan believes that the Slough SACRE has the funds but will confirm this.

Action: Jan to confirm that Slough SACRE can contribute funding to the Hub.

A document outlining the funding required was reviewed (see appendix). Jan explained that Crossing the Bridges will just be a one year project during the financial year 2016-17. All agreed that they would like to fund the Hub co-ordinator for 3 days per term. Therefore the total sum required from each SACRE for the year is £1,700. It is proposed that a teacher (or two) works on developing the directory over 6 days during the year. This will involve developing relationships with places of worship.

Zvi suggested that other neighbouring LAs could be involved in the Hub and contribute funding. The meeting agreed that this could be considered in the future but, for the coming year at least, it would be best to work as a group of 6 SACREs.

Wokingham can issue invoices for Hub funding to the other SACREs, and be responsible for paying Jan for Hub work.

Actions:

- Jan to write a plan for the Crossing the Bridges project ready for sharing at forthcoming SACRE meetings. The plan will involve members of Jan's team who live more locally than Jan, including Alison who was present at the meeting. Anne Andrews will also be involved.
- Emily to send invoices to the other 5 SACREs for Hub funding as soon as possible

5. Principles, aims and terms of reference for the Hub

Discussion took place about the mission statement/ aims of the Berkshire SACREs Hub. Aims agreed were:

- To support the provision of outstanding RE for all pupils in Berkshire
- To provide effective support for teachers of RE
- To provide support to places of worship to enable them to contribute effectively to the RE curriculum
- To support effective collaboration between schools and places of worship
- To enthuse and inspire pupils through visits to and visitors from places of worship
- To support SACRE members
- To support SACREs to have complete membership
- To bring together SACRE members and teachers
- To publicise and raise awareness of the work of the SACREs

(Wokingham SACRE has focussed on this recently and could share its work with the other SACREs. The chair and advisor have given presentations at council meetings, governor meetings etc; the SACRE has been publicised at teacher network meetings; a leaflet explaining the SACRE has been produced –the template for this could be shared, for adaptation by the other SACREs)

An introduction to the terms of reference was discussed, which will explain the aims and also the ways in which the Hub will fulfil its aims. It was suggested that this could be divided into three sections:

- support for SACREs
- collaboration between SACREs (e.g. support and training)
- support for hosts/ places of worship/ visitors.

It was suggested that the Hub should also develop and maintain opportunities for gathering feedback from pupils. The teacher(s) working on the directory could gather feedback from both pupils and places of worship. (A feedback form for the project has already been developed)

Possible wording was discussed:

The Berkshire SACREs Hub will provide effective support for SACREs in a number of ways. It will:

- nurture the development and effectiveness of the 6 SACREs

The principles of the Hub were discussed and agreed:

- Willingness to share (e.g. training courses could be publicised across the 6 SACREs)

- Commitment and communication within the Hub and back to SACREs: i.e. commitment to attending Hub meetings, communicating between meetings, reading documents related to meetings, and carrying out actions agreed at meetings
- Commitment to synchronising the dates of SACRE meetings

Jan will support effective communication within the Hub and between the Hub and the SACREs.

6. Discussion and Planning:

- Annual SACRE Hub conference?
- Agreed syllabus review
- Other ideas

Ideas for activities for the Hub were discussed: In addition to the Crossing the Bridges project, how will the Hub achieve its aims?

Training for new members/ Conference:

It was agreed that the Hub could deliver induction sessions for new SACRE members. This would be more cost-effective than each SACRE organising sessions independently, and would also enable relationships to be developed by members across the SACREs. The session could be a 'refresher' for existing members as well as an induction for new members. Such a session is particularly important bearing in mind the syllabus review, the Crossing the Bridges project, and the desire to raise the profile of the SACREs.

It was agreed that it would be good to organise a conference-type event which could incorporate this training for new members. Teachers could be invited as well as SACRE members, and could give presentations sharing their work. Faith representatives could also be invited. It was felt that early in the autumn term would be a good time for such an event, which could take place instead of the usual summer conference which has not been organised for this year. The possible dates of 28th and 29th September were agreed. Stephen suggested that Waingels College could be the venue for the meeting.

Action: Stephen to look into booking Waingels College on either the 28th or 29th September from 6/ 6.30 – 9.00pm

Syllabus review:

Jan will produce a project plan ready for work to begin next spring. There are currently many variables in the education context, with discussions taking place about whether there should be a national curriculum for RE. Two areas for consideration during the syllabus review are likely to be British values and assessment. (British values could perhaps be a focus of the autumn conference). There may not need to be much change, if any, to the main content of the syllabus.

Other ideas:

- Working with trainee teachers (especially necessary for primary teachers who get very little, if any, RE training). Perhaps the SACREs could be the provider of RE training for student teachers?
- Support for teacher networking? – although network meetings are already offered within each LA. Syllabus review meetings will provide opportunities for teacher networking across the 6 LAs, as will Crossing the Bridges training events.

7. Next meeting date

Scheduling of Hub meetings: It was agreed that Hub meetings should take place during the first half of each term. Feedback can then be provided to SACRE members at SACRE meetings which will take place in the second half of each term.

The following dates were agreed:

Thursday 15th September 2016 4.15 -6.00pm

Tuesday 10th January 2017 4.15 – 6.00pm

Tuesday 25th April 2017 4.15 – 6.00pm

- all to take place at Wokingham Borough Council civic offices

Action: Emily to arrange for meeting rooms to be booked.

8. AOB

Westhill Award: Jan explained that there is one award of £4,000 remaining. The deadline for applications is the end of July. Jan suggested that she could write an application to be submitted on behalf of the Hub. The funds would enable the Crossing the Bridges project to be developed even further.

Action: Jan to draft a Westhill Award application to be shared at forthcoming SACRE meetings.

Appendix: Funding for pan-Berkshire Hub activities

Hub co-ordinator

2-3 days per term @ £500 a day:

2016-17:

3 days a term = £1500 = £4,500 a year = **£750 per SACRE**

OR

2 days a term = £3,000 a year = **£500 per SACRE**

Crossing the Bridges project

Project co-ordinator:

2016-17: 6 days during school year @ £500 a day = **£500 per SACRE**

Directory:

2016-17: Teacher time of 6 days @ £200 a day = £1200 = **£200 per SACRE**

Annual training for hosts:

2016-17: Adviser time 6 half days to plan and deliver 4 x half days training = £1500 = **£250 per SACRE**

Total required for 2016-17 per SACRE = £1,450 (for 2 days per term of Hub co-ordinator time) **or £1,700** (for 3 days per term of Hub co-ordinator time)

NB Funding for the **syllabus review** is not included here. For previous reviews, each SACRE has contributed approx £4,000 over two financial years. The advisors feel that this would be a sufficient amount to cover the costs of the forthcoming review.

The Hub co-ordinator role could be partly or wholly funded from syllabus review budgets?