

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
7 MARCH 2019
5.05 - 6.04 PM**



Present:

Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Ms Moira Gaw, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Ian Leake, Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Mrs Isabel Mattick, Bracknell Forest Council
Rev Jackie Case, Free Churches - Methodist
Deborah Owen, National Union of Teachers (NUT)
Arfan Rashid, Muslim faith
Robyn Lynch, Catholic Church

In Attendance:

Anne Andrews, Oxford Diocese Adviser
Steve Bogg, Bracknell Forest Council

Apologies for absence were received from:

Madeline Diver, Associations Representing Teachers (VOICE)
Councillor Mrs Dorothy Hayes MBE, Bracknell Forest Council
Wayne Erasmus, Free Churches
Ruth Jackson, NAHT Headteacher

13. Election of Chair and Appointment of Vice-Chair

As the meeting was inquorate, a chairman could not be elected. Councillor Dr Barnard was appointed Chair for the meeting.

14. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

15. Matters Arising

Arising from the minutes of the previous meeting, the following comments were noted:

- SACRE reiterated how impressed they had been by the RE ambassadors who had presented at the last meeting, and were pleased to note that the scheme had been extended to include St Michael's Easthampstead Primary School.
- It was proposed that it be investigated whether SACRE members who were not present at the meeting could vote by email on any matters which required a formal vote, to resolve a history of inquoracy. Following investigation, it was clarified that this was not possible and votes could only be taken in person.
- SACRE members were reminded of the importance of attendance at meetings, or notification of apologies to allow for action to be taken.
- SACRE noted that Rev Jackie Case would be retiring from its membership from September 2019.

16. **Budget Update**

Steve Bogg presented the SACRE budget which currently indicated an overspend of around £1,000 related to the work towards the curriculum review and syllabus launch. SACRE agreed that they were comfortable with this position, given the necessity and infrequency of syllabus reviews.

17. **Annual report & GCSE/A Level Results**

Anne Andrews presented the exam results for GSCE and A Level Religious Education which had been incorporated into the SACRE Annual Report.

At GCSE, 219 pupils had entered into GCSE in 2018, which equated to 60 fewer entrants than in 2017. Attainment and progress was in line with national averages. One school had entered 157 pupils out of a year group of 219, and so SACRE noted that the overall attainment and progress for the Borough's statistics was dependent on one school.

SACRE recognised the disparity between secondary schools in the borough, where some schools entered the majority of the year group and some schools did not enter any candidates. It was proposed that secondary schools might be contacted to establish their plans for RE in future GCSE years.

There had been fewer A Level entries in 2018 than in previous years, but attainment had been in line with expectations. The number of pupils attaining A* and A grades was above the national average.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- For future data, SACRE requested percentages and cohort sizes to accompany the number of entries to establish comparative data. **(Action: Steve Bogg)**
- It was commented that as the Ofsted framework encouraged a broad curriculum, there were opportunities to further the impact of RE teaching and qualifications in schools.
- SACRE noted the fact that only 3 secondary schools had entrants into RE A Level in 2018, compared to 4 secondary schools in the previous year. Across the 3 schools, 38 pupils had entered RE A Level. SACRE was reminded that sixth forms varied significantly in size across the Borough.

18. **Hub Update**

Anne Andrews reported on the Berkshire SACRE Hub.

In 2016-17, the Chairs of the Berkshire SACREs had successfully applied for a Westhill grant to fund school trips to places of worship.

A subsequent bid for Westhill funding was underway to fund small groups of teachers going to visit places of worship and making video interviews to use in a classroom setting. The visits were hoped to have a positive impact on the teachers visiting, whilst also being useful and accessible for pupils to watch back.

The bid had been submitted following the approval of all 6 SACRE chairs. It was anticipated that the winners would be announced at NASACRE in May 2019.

Anne asked SACRE members whether they wished to continue to support the Berkshire Hub arrangement if the Westhill bid was not granted.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- If the Westhill Bid was unsuccessful, the matter of the Berkshire Hub would be brought back before Bracknell Forest SACRE for consideration.
- SACRE welcomed the bid proposal and supported the concept of making videos for classroom use.
- It was proposed that SACRE could consider progressing the project, notwithstanding the bid.
- It was noted that while it was possible to Skype faith leaders from around the world from the classroom, it was important to get the input local people from faith groups.
- SACRE commented that it was important to use specialist faith-based language in the video and not to avoid challenging concepts.
- Councillor Barnard and Anne Andrews agreed to meet to develop a 3 year plan for SACRE to include milestones against which to consider the budget. **(Action: Anne Andrews / Councillor Barnard)**
- A workshop was proposed for the summer term to develop objectives for SACRE.

19. **Westhill bid update**

The Westhill bid was discussed under the previous agenda item.

20. **RE Network update**

Anne Andrews reported that the RE network had received positive feedback on the syllabus from subject leaders. Bracknell teachers seemed to be using the questions and outcomes in the syllabus to inform their teaching.

21. **OFSTED new framework - proposals on RE**

SACRE received the new framework from Ofsted for information.

SACRE members commented on the rate of demographic change within Bracknell Forest and the context in which RE teaching would sit to facilitate community cohesion.

22. **Monitoring of new syllabus - what do we propose?**

SACRE considered the best means to monitor the new syllabus following the launch in the summer. It was suggested that the impact on primary schools in Bracknell Forest would be key to the syllabus' success.

It was proposed that the views of teachers in primary school might be sought to assess the impact of the new syllabus, and a data gathering exercise by letter or survey was proposed for the end of the summer term. Schools would be asked about their experience using the new syllabus, and where any successes or barriers had been identified.

Councillor Barnard agreed to draft the letter prior to the local borough elections on 2 May for distribution through the summer term. **(Action: Councillor Barnard / Anne Andrews)**

23. **Suggestions of items for next newsletter**

SACRE members were asked for suggestions of items for the next SACRE newsletter which would be distributed after the Easter holidays.

The newsletter would prepare schools for the survey to follow regarding the curriculum.

Members suggested that the newsletter should stress the importance of supporting all faiths in the changing demography of Bracknell Forest.

It was suggested that children's artwork could be used on the front of the newsletter.

Members were encouraged to submit any information or advice to Anne Andrews for inclusion in the newsletter.

24. **Any Other Business**

Anne Andrews asked SACRE members whether they agreed to send out the syllabus guidance material to schools. It was agreed that the documents could be distributed to schools in their current format.

Robyn Lynch asked whether there had been an update on whether nominated substitutes could attend the meeting if any SACRE member was unable to attend. It was agreed that this would be investigated further.

25. **Dates of Future Meetings**

4 July 2019

13 November 2019