

MINUTES of the meeting of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held at Committee Room 1, Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford HR1 2HX on Friday 20 March 2015 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor J Stone (Chairman)

Councillor CNH Attwood, Mrs L Barker, Councillor EMK Chave, Mrs A Nugent, Sr. D. O'Donnell, Miss A Taylor and Mrs M Williams

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mrs S Catlow-Hawkins, Mrs A Daniel and Mrs E James.

2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

None.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 21 November were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

There were no written public questions.

5. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE NEW AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RE

The RE Consultant provided the Conference with an update on progress on the Agreed Syllabus Review. The following points were made:

- That there would be an exemplar unit available for secondary schools at the launch of the syllabus. All units would be finalised within the next twelve months
- That the launches for both the Primary and Secondary schools would be held at Whitecross School in Hereford

Resolved: That the update be noted.

6. 2015/16 SACRE BUDGET UPDATE

It was noted that there was a standstill budget for SACRE for 2015/16 of £5k, which made it difficult to hold more than two meetings a year. It also meant that there was a shortfall for the introduction of the new RE Syllabus, but that funds would be made available from allocated budgets and the sale of the syllabus.

Resolved: That the report be noted

7. RELIGIOUS STUDIES EXAMINATION RESULTS 2014

SACRE received a report on the Religious Studies exam results 2014. It was noted that:

- The number of entries for GCE A level Religious Studies in the county had been lower than the previous year with 76 in 2014 compared to 95 in 2013. This was reflected in the number of entries for GCE AS level Religious Studies in the county which had been 16 in 2014 compared to 26 in 2013 (19 in 2012; 25 in 2011; 18 in 2010).
- Of this year's full A level entries, 100% achieved grade E or above, compared to 99.8% nationally. The AS course saw 100% of learners achieve grade A*-E, compared to 86.4% nationally. Hereford Sixth Form College was the only centre to offer this qualification. The percentage of A*-A grades at A level and A-B grades at AS level in the county outperformed the national figure.

Resolved: the Religious Studies A level examination results for 2014 be noted.

8. UPDATE ON ANY NEW INITIATIVES OR NEWS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

SACRE received a report on new initiatives or news in religious education. The RE Consultant highlighted the following areas:

- That the consultation process around changes to A levels had received a good level of feedback, but that received from schools had been higher for religious studies than for any other subject. A large number of responses were part of a campaign by the British Humanist Association.
- Based on the draft proposals, there would be no limited changes at to the GCSE criteria. As a result of the consultation, significant changes had been made to the A level criteria, enabling schools to continue teaching philosophy and ethics alongside the study of religion
- There had been a reintroduction by the Department of bursaries for those training as RE teachers.
- That World Peace Day would be celebrated at Hereford Cathedral on 20 September.

Resolved: That the report be noted

9. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the dates of future meetings were

- 20 November 2015
- 18 March 2016

The meeting ended at 15:10

CHAIRMAN