

**MINUTES of the meeting of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Tuesday, 2nd December, 2003 at 2.00 p.m.**

**Present:** Councillor J. Stone (Chairman)

Revd. P. Barlow, Mrs. J. Brown, Dr. D. Goodman, P.E. Harling,  
Ms S McCamley, Mrs A. Mundy, Mr. J. Rendall and Mr M. Rollnick

**In attendance:** Ms. K. Mayglothling

**15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs W.U Atfield.

**16. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

There were no named substitutes.

**17. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Ms S. McCamley, representing the primary teachers sector on Committee 'C' and Councillor P.E. Harling, LEA representative on Committee 'D' who was a previous Chairman of SACRE. He reported that Father M. Donnelly had been appointed as Roman Catholic Church representative (Committee 'A') and Councillor Mrs W.U. Atfield would also represent the Local Education Authority. (Committee 'D').

The Chairman also welcomed four student teachers from The Marches Consortium – School-centred Initial Teacher Training programme, who attended as observers.

**18. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 1st July, 2003 be approved and signed by the Chairman.**

**19. RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

No written questions from members of the public had been received.

**20. RECENT OFSTED INSPECTIONS OF SCHOOLS**

SACRE received a summary of some key points that emerged from the Ofsted inspection of individual schools undertaken during the 2002 – 03 academic year.

The Head of Inspection, Advice and School Performance Service reported that traditionally SACRE received a brief report on individual school Ofsted inspections. He commented that whilst this had proved useful, it remained difficult to obtain an overview of key issues emerging over time, which would help direct the work of SACRE. He proposed that the Ofsted reports be analysed and, depending on the

number of schools inspected, the results be reported at least annually.

The RE Consultant had analysed all the individual school reports from the last academic year and her main findings, based on the reports of twenty one primary and two secondary schools revealed the 'good news' that:

- Most school reports indicated improvement in key aspects, particularly in teaching and learning, since the last inspection.
- RE had improved significantly in the two secondary schools inspected due mainly to the quality of subject leadership.
- The revised Agreed Syllabus had been a spur to improvement, helping schools revise their schemes of work, focus on learning outcomes, and, when these were shared with pupils, raised achievement and increased the value in which the pupils held the subject.

The summary report also highlighted aspects that required further support. Her full report was available to members on request.

The RE Consultant was critical of the judgements made by Ofsted inspectors in some of the reports. She commented that on occasions there seemed to be a confusion in the minds of inspectors between spiritual and cultural development, and between RE and Collective Worship. She highlighted that in one instance, this had led to a report where bad practice had been commended as good.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the proposal to move to an analysis report at least on an annual basis be approved.**

## **21. DIOCESE OF HEREFORD: SECTION 23 INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS**

Mr Rendall reported that unfortunately the Hereford Diocese report on Section 23 inspections had not been finalised and requested that, in view of the previous decision regarding Section 10 inspections, a similar principal be adopted for Section 23 inspections. SACRE agreed with this principal.

The current practice of the Chairman writing to those schools inspected and commenting on their achievement in RE was discussed. It was reported that schools appreciated the letter of support. It also highlighted the subject, particularly as schools did not receive similar letters for other subjects.

**RESOLVED:**

**That**

- (a) Section 23 inspection reports be analysed and the main trends be reported at least on an annual basis.**
- (b) on behalf of SACRE the Chairman continue the current practice of, following the issue of the Ofsted report, writing to schools to comment upon their achievement in RE.**

## **22. UPDATE OF LOCAL EDUCATION MONITORING OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

SACRE were informed of progress being made in monitoring and evaluating the quality of Religious Education in Herefordshire.

The Head of Inspection, Advice and School Performance Service reported that in accordance with the resolution at the meeting on 6th December 2002, the LEA, on behalf of SACRE and its development plan, had contracted the RE Consultant and

Mr M. Carter (retired Primary Inspector and Headteacher) to sample what was happening in the RE subject in around 10% of schools. It was emphasised that this monitoring process was to gather further local information, without subjecting schools to additional inspection pressures.

Mr Carter had so far visited eight schools and his work included a brief report back to the school. His findings so far indicated that the Agreed Syllabus was perceived very positively, particularly the guidance section and the role of the RE Consultant was greatly valued. The annual SACRE Conference was seen as very valuable not only for INSET but also for the networking potential. Values education appeared to be linking well with RE and PSE. However, the challenge of providing pupils with practical experiences of other world faiths was proving problematic.

A number of SACRE members reported that Mr Carter's visit to their individual schools had been well received and very thorough.

The Head of Inspection, Advice and School Performance Service reported that Mr Carter was now writing up the report, which would be presented to the meeting in March for consideration.

**RESOLVED: That the full monitoring report be considered at the March 2004 meeting.**

#### **23. SACRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

SACRE received a report on the Herefordshire – 5th Annual Conference, held on 22nd September, 2003.

The Chairman congratulated the RE Consultant on organising an interesting and enjoyable annual conference which had been well attended. The key-note speaker, Mr. Clive Lawton, had been excellent and the Council of Christians and Jews were thanked for their contribution towards Mr. Lawton's attendance fees.

The RE Consultant reported that her report on the conference entitled "Educating for Religious Diversity" had appeared in Issue 8 of SACRE News, copies of which were issued at the meeting. She reported that comments made in the conference evaluation forms indicated that the event had been very positive; had matched expectations and had been well presented. Minor criticisms had been made about the need for more handouts, general chit-chat approach in workshops and the seating.

The RE Consultant was congratulated on her high profile article in the national publication.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

#### **24. ANNE FRANK EXHIBITION REPORT**

SACRE received a report on the Anne Frank Exhibition.

Mr J. Rendall reported that the exhibition had been a moving experience. 4,500 pupils had attended from 23 Secondary and 38 primary schools from around Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire. Very positive feed back had been received concerning the workshop sessions. He commented that the opportunities for RE had been many and varied and the exhibition would have benefits for RE for many years to come.

He acknowledged the help received from the Herefordshire Jewish Community and the LEA, in particular Neville Meredith, Race Equality Officer and Dennis Longmore, Manager of Pupil, School and Parent Support.

SACRE noted that Neville Meredith intended to compile a post event report on the exhibition.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the Chairman write to Mr Meredith and Mr Longmore to thank them for their valuable assistance with the exhibition.**

## **25. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS**

SACRE received a report on National developments in Religious Education.

The RE Consultant reported that at a meeting of the RE Council on 6th November the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) announced that they had now commissioned the QCA to write a non-statutory Framework for RE. The Framework was expected to be written by Easter 2004, would then be sent out for consultation and was intended to be in place by September 2004. While the emphasis would be on RE, it had also been announced that attention would be given to the issue of Collective Worship in the future.

The RE Consultant reported that she would be attending the NASACRE Annual Conference and highlighted a number of key speakers including Marian Agombar and Barbara Wintersgill.

She also reported that Ofsted's pilot scheme to engage in a sample study of LEA SACREs to provide a basis for further work in this inspection area had commenced. She referred to the article in SACRE News "Being Inspected – a personal view of the process of SACRE inspections" which gave a useful insight into the scheme.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

## **26. RE TRAINING FOR 2004**

SACRE received information on (a) Course Provision; (b) Feedback on termly teachers meetings and (c) Assessment for RE proposals.

(a) Course Provision – the RE Consultant circulated a programme of possible Herefordshire LEA RE courses for 2004-5. SACRE noted that to avoid any unmet expectations through mixed primary/secondary courses, it was intended that development of the secondary sector would be through existing networks. The 'Swap shop' meetings facilitated the spread of good practice between primary and secondary schools.

(b) Feedback on Termly teachers meetings – SACRE noted that two meetings had been held since the last report. Navinda Gill had given a talk on growing up and living as a Sikh. The RE Consultant commented that while teachers had indicated a need for this type of resource, few had attended the meeting. The second meeting had focused on RE: Quest website for supporting teaching of Christianity in the classroom.

(c) Assessment for RE proposals – the RE Consultant suggested that SACRE provide guidance for schools on the assessment of RE. She proposed that a small

working group be formed to look at the development, particularly of the 'I can' statements, to show good practice in RE. She also suggested that a number of teachers could be requested to provide an input to the development work.

**RESOLVED: That the reports be noted and a working group be formed to produce guidance for schools on the assessment of RE.**

**27. UPDATE ON WORK BY THE ADVANCED SKILLS TEACHER**

SACRE received an update on the work of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST).

The Advanced Skills Teacher reported that the Key Stage 3 project, the provision of Year 7 RE lesson plans and material relevant to the lesson, had progressed well and was due to be evaluated. A further report on the project would be made to the next meeting.

The latest 'Swap-shop' meeting had been held at the Bishop of Hereford Bluecoat School where attendees had been shown the latest developments in the RE web sites. She commented that these meetings were seen as a good forum to bring together the different phases of education.

She further reported that the RE Teachers Network was growing. The results of a questionnaire among the network indicated there was an issue regarding the lack of information on the teaching of other religions. However, when an event had been organised, few teachers had attended.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**28. QCA PUBLICATION ON RE AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

SACRE were to have discussed the main findings and issues arising from the QCA publication 'Religious education and collective worship – an analysis of 2002 SACRE reports'. Unfortunately due to the size of the agenda and time pressures it was decided to defer this item to a future meeting.

**29. SCHOOLS' RESPONSE TO THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AGREED SYLLABUS**

SACRE received a report on the outcomes of the questionnaire sent to all schools last term concerning the introduction of the new Religious Education Agreed Syllabus.

The Head of Inspection, Advice and School Performance reported that over half of the schools (approximately 64%) in the County had responded to the questionnaire. Appendix 1 to the report showed an analysis of their responses. He commented that in general, schools response to the introduction of the RE Agreed Syllabus had been very encouraging.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**30. REPRESENTATION OF OTHER FAITHS ON SACRE**

SACRE were invited to consider how to make further progress in the appointment of 'Other Faith' representatives on SACRE.

The Head of Inspection, Advice and School Performance Service reported no direct progress in the appointment of accredited representatives from 'Other Faith' groups

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) TUESDAY,  
2ND DECEMBER, 2003**

(Sikh, Hindu Buddhist, Muslim and Bahá'is) to 'Committee A'. He reminded members to inform him of any useful contact details. He commented that the next step may be to contact the religious bodies directly.

Concerning the co-option of accredited representatives of other belief systems, he reported that contact would be made with the Marches Humanist Group to seek a representative.

**RESOLVED:**

**That**

- (a) the position be noted and the LEA be requested to continue to seek accredited representatives from Other Faith Groups (Sikh, Hindu Buddhist, Muslim and Bahá'is) in Herefordshire to serve on SACRE**
- (b) the LEA be requested to invite an accredited representative from the Marches Humanist Group to be considered for co-option to SACRE.**

**31. REVIEW OF SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

SACRE were invited to review the SACRE Development Plan 2001 – 2004 and consider the development of a further plan.

The RE Consultant reported that a review of the SACRE Development Plan 2001 – 2004 would commence early next term. The outcome of the review would inform the drafting of proposals for the Development Plan 2004 – 2007. She expected that a draft Development Plan 2004 – 2007 would be presented to the next meeting for consideration. She requested that members consider the existing plan and that any comments on specific areas of SACREs work requiring further development be conveyed to her for inclusion in the review.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted and members notify the RE Consultant of any issues for review.**

**32. DRAFT HEREFORDSHIRE SACRE ANNUAL REPORT - ACADEMIC YEAR  
2002/2003**

Comments were invited on the draft SACRE Annual Report for the academic year September 2002 to July 2003 prior to submission to QCA.

The Committee Administrator (Scrutiny) reported that a draft of the SACRE Annual Report had been produced, copies of which had been issued to SACRE members prior to the meeting, and he invited the meeting to comment on the draft.

He proposed that following the inclusion of the Chairman's forward and final proof reading, the report be forwarded to QCA as required.

**RESOLVED: That subject to the inclusion of the Chairman's forward and final proof reading, the SACRE Annual Report for the academic year 2002-2003 be forwarded to QCA.**

**33. PRESENTATION BY THE HEAD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT HAYWOOD  
HIGH SCHOOL**

SACRE received a presentation by Ms Alex Winder, Head of Religious Education at

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) TUESDAY,  
2ND DECEMBER, 2003**

Haywood High School and disused RE issues of concern and their implications for pupils in schools.

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Ms Alex Winder to the meeting.

Ms Winder began by briefly commenting upon her academic background and said she enjoyed teaching and aimed to raise standards by encouragement and promoting high expectations. When she started at Haywood, the School had not had a Head of RE for a few years. However, the school now had a good new scheme of work, which in part, was taught by setting tasks and challenges.

She commented that the South Wye area was perceived as a problem area with few facilities and a lack of easy access to further education. The School had a significant number of challenging or Special Needs pupils on the register. However, in general the pupils wanted to learn.

Ms Winder circulated handouts, which indicated recent exam results; an example work programme for year 9, and two examples of work.

She commented upon the value of getting together with other RE teachers to discuss issues and she valued the support from the LEA in this respect. She also commented that schools needed more enrichment events like the Anne Frank Exhibition.

She outlined a typical busy week of preparation; teaching - various levels of pupil from SEN to the top set – and marking work. Evenings and holidays were often taken up with subject preparation and planning.

Questioned whether SACRE could do more to help she commented that the provision of good training courses helped; the support from the AST was important; the better provision of resources would assist in lesson planning and having time to develop new ideas.

She commented that a huge amount of time was devoted to pastoral work when it was essential to have time to listen to pupil's problems.

The Chairman thanked Ms Winder for her thought provoking presentation and comments.

The meeting ended at 4.02 a.m.

**CHAIRMAN**

