

**MINUTES of the meeting of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held at Whitecross School, Three Elms Road, Hereford on Friday 21 November 2014 at 2.00 pm**

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

Councillor CNH Attwood, Mrs L Barker, Mrs S Bryant, Councillor EMK Chave, Mrs A Daniel, Mr P Hulme, Miss E James, Mrs A Nugent and Mrs M Williams

**12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs C Ault, Mrs S Catlow-Hawkins, Venerable Tsuilitrim Tenzin Choesang, Ms K Mayglothling, Sr O'Donnell, Miss A Taylor and Ms C Wolfe.

**13. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)**

Mr P Hulme for Mrs C Ault.

**14. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 March 2014 were approved and signed as a correct record.

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

None.

**16. PLANS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 2015**

The feedback from the Primary School RE Conference 2014 and the Secondary School Conference was noted.

The arrangements for the upcoming conferences in 2015 were noted.

**Resolved: that the report be noted**

**17. SACRE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/14**

The SACRE Annual Report for 2013/2014 was noted.

**Resolved: That the Annual Report 2013/14 be approved and a copy be forwarded to NASACRE**

**18. RELIGIOUS STUDIES EXAMINATION RESULTS FOR 2014**

A report on the Religious Studies Exam Results for 2014 was noted.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- That there had been an increase in students taking the full course, and that Herefordshire consistently entered more learners for a full GCSE than the national average.

- That there had been a drop in the numbers taking the short course in 2014, with 260 pupils representing the lowest number that the County had seen since 2009.
- That schools were committed to developing the spiritual moral, social and cultural (SMSC) aspects of education and Ofsted's inspection teams were required to consider the impact of a school's provision as part of the judgement of leadership and management. Herefordshire had been judged as having 80.0% of its schools to be good or better by Ofsted. Due to the interrelationship between leadership and management and the judgement for overall effectiveness, it can be assumed that the quality of SMSC is good or better.

**Resolved:**

**That**

- a) The Religious Studies examination results for 2014 be noted; and;**
- b) The A level results be submitted to the next meeting.**

**19. AGREED SYLLABUS REVIEW**

SACRE considered a report on the RE Agreed Syllabus:

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- That SACRE must consider reviewing its RE Agreed Syllabus after five years. An Agreed Syllabus Conference can be set up to conduct the review. The development of a clear, well-structured agreed syllabus is probably the single most important function of SACRE. Combined with on-going implementation training and resources, a new syllabus offers the possibility of raising achievement in RE in all local schools.
- That Ofsted reports in 2010 and 2013 highlighted the need for syllabuses to; be clear about expected knowledge and understanding about religions and beliefs; support and empower teachers to plan effectively; offer coherent progression across the ages and key stages and support clear and focused assessment and encourage enquiry-based RE. The Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus 2011-2016 had been praised by Ofsted for its quality in meeting these requirements.
- That the RE Council (REC) Review of RE produced the National Curriculum Framework for RE (NCFRE) in October 2013, to run in parallel with National Curriculum changes. The links will enable RE programmes of study to be easily understood and implemented alongside the new orders for National Curriculum subjects such as Science or History.
- That there were three options for SACRE for an Agreed Syllabus Review, and these were laid out in the report and discussed at length.

**Recommendation**

**THAT:**

- a) the report be noted; and;**
- b) Option C in the report be approved as the way forward for a Review of the**

**Agreed Syllabus Review, and be recommended to the Cabinet Member(Young People and Children's Wellbeing).**

**20. UPDATE ON ANY NEW INITIATIVES IN RE**

A report on national RE news was received. The following points were highlighted:

- That national 20,196 national RS A level entries had been recorded, which was 96% up on the number in 2002/03 and that RS A level entries had increased more than any arts, humanity or social science subject in 2014. In line with other subjects the results were generally lower, but the percentage of students achieving A\* at RS A level had increased from 5.4% to 6.8%
- GCSE Results 2014 had seen an increase in full course numbers, but a decrease overall combined with a dramatic fall in short course numbers.
- The draft criteria for new GCSE and A-level examination specifications had been published by the Department for Education on 7 November. Public consultation was open until 5th January. Once amended and approved, these criteria would be sent to exam boards, from which they would develop a range of specifications for teaching from September 2016.
- That the International Day of Peace would be celebrated in Hereford Cathedral on 20 September 2015.

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

**21. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on the 20 March 2015.

The meeting ended at 3.30 pm

**CHAIRMAN**