

Minutes of the Meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education held on 2 November 2022 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Committee A: Miss R Saul (at 7.00pm), Mr L Trup, Mr A Kariyawasam and Mr T Ojetola

Committee B: Mr P Anderson and Mrs Fry (at 6.39pm)

Committee C: Mrs Pumfrey and Ms Thompson

Committee D: Councillor James Thandi

Apologies: Ms Culloty, Mrs Everett and Councillor Abbas

In attendance: Deborah Weston, Associate Advisor for Religious Education
Andrea Winstone, Strategic Lead for School Effectiveness and SEND
Raj Shina, Committee C Observer
Kenna-Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer

9. Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting were missing from the agenda. The Chair asked that the minutes be added to the agenda for the January meeting.

10. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

11. Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

12. Collective Worship

The Associate Advisor for Religious Education presented the report and in doing so, explained the report was on the agenda at the previous meeting where Members had asked if it was possible to obtain additional copies of collective worship policies in schools to enable them to undertake a monitoring activity.

It was clarified there were very few schools with a collective worship policy and so it was asked that the topic be presented to primary headteachers to seek their views. SACRE Members heard that teachers at the Primary Headteachers Association had had an open discussion at a recent meeting, explaining how difficult it was for them to fulfil this legislative requirement.

Members thanked the Associate Advisor for Religious Education for her report stating they felt it was useful to understand what schools were doing. It was suggested for those schools who didn't have a policy, if it would be worthwhile providing a template policy for them which could be adapted to each school.

During discussions it was commented that schools might welcome some guidance and advice around how collective worship could happen, with ideas and advice around best practice principles. Members spoke about how if there was a model policy that also incorporated some ideas and best practice examples, this would be welcomed by headteachers and schools.

The Associate Advisor for Religious Education commented she had access to model policies and had previously written a guidance document for one of the other SACRE's that she looked after with the examples on having assemblies and acts of worship including year group assemblies.

It was agreed that the Associate Advisor for Religious Education would speak with the schools regarding their collective worship policies.

RESOLVED:

- 1. Consider a sample of policies from Thurrock schools to determine how Collective Worship is offered in local schools in the light of the legal requirements set out in section 3 below.**
- 2. Consider the advice sent to schools previously (Appendix 1) and whether or not any amendments need to be made to the advice in the light of any new evidence**

13. Monitoring Provision for RE in Thurrock Schools

The Associate Advisor for Religious Education introduced the report explaining this was known as the school workforce stage. It was commented that over the years there had been some frustration as sometimes although the data was accurate, the subject was taught under a different title and so often brought up issues when reporting.

It was further explained the hardest part was that it was not the person who was delivering the lessons who inputted the data, instead it was the head of department who input the data into the system and the data was often submitted into the system in a way which didn't pick up Religious Education. And when schools were visited and this was queried, it was found that some of the schools, showing a 0 hour in RE, indeed did teach Religious Education.

SACRE Members were asked to look at the school workforce data within the agenda, which schools submitted to the Department for Education as part of the Annual School Census in November.

Members were advised that both Thames Park and Orsett Health did not as yet have GCSE classes as Year 9 was the top year group.

The Chair observed that it was interesting to see the data within the agenda did not reflect the work being undertaken in schools and commented on the importance of SACRE looking at such data and advising the schools accordingly.

RESOLVED that SACRE:

- 1. Consider the national and local school workforce data for 2022 in Appendix 1**
- 2. Request that the associate adviser invite participants at the syllabus launch event to complete a brief survey – see Appendix 2**
- 3. Ask the LA officer to include the following information in conversations with schools:**
 - **where good practice is identified**
 - **where there is no evidence that the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus are met**
 - **where there looks to be limited or no provision.**

14. Update on National Developments and Opportunities

The Associate Advisor for Religious Education presented the report explaining the document was for information, not only for SACRE but also for Teachers and so the document would be circulated to all schools.

She continued by mentioning a topic she wanted to raise with SACRE Member was the spirited arts competition. It was explained that during Covid it was a difficult to complete however was well received within schools and was encouraging to see students be involved.

It was stated during discussions that the competition could be a great way to assist KS3 and KS4 students with their revision for exams.

RESOLVED that SACRE:

- 1.1 Review the information collected (Appendix 1)**
- 1.2 Evaluate the relevance of each section for RE in Thurrock**
- 1.3 Share the attached update with schools and their governing boards**

15. Work Plan Review and Update for 2022-2023

The Associate Advisor for Religious Education introduced the report which presented an updated work plan.

RESOLVED:

That SACRE review the workplan for 2021-2022 and considered the recommendations for work in 2022-23

16. Any Other Business

Members discussed attendance at future meetings and how these should be held, either face to face, virtual or hybrid.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of SACRE be held virtually with the summer meeting being held face to face.

The meeting finished at 7.45pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**