

Minutes of the meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education held on 15 January 2105 at 6.00pm

Present:

Committee A: Mrs S Lawson, Mrs M Shepherd, Miss A Ahmed (left at 7.00), and Mr P Anderson

Committee B: Rev. J Guest and Mary Taylor (left at 7.15)

Committee C: Mr R Epps, Ms H Gillman and Ms Fawell

Committee D: Councillor Kerin (left at 7.15)

Apologies: Mr A Shodide, Mr Graham, Ms Jellicoe, Mr Griffiths, Mr D Bates and Councillors Gupta and Ojetola

In attendance: Ms D Weston – Associate Adviser for Religious Education
Ms L Lloyd – School Improvement Adviser
Miss K-V Martin – Senior Democratic Services Officer

23. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education, held on 15 October 2014, were approved as a correct record.

24. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business to declare.

25. Declaration of Interests

There were no such interests declared.

26. Update on Membership

The Committee discussed its current Membership, with the Associate Adviser for Religious Education seeking as to whether those Members who had volunteered to seek Hindu and Buddhist representatives.

Councillor Gupta fed back to the Committee explaining that he had tried to find a Hindu Representative to join the Committee however had not been successful. He suggested that the Chair of the Committee could write to the Hindu Community so seek a representative.

Members further discussed the importance of finding a Buddhist Representative as it was felt the Membership should reflect the local population.

27. Thurrock SACRE – Who delivers RE in Thurrock Primary Schools

The Associate Adviser for Religious Education introduced the report to Members of the committee informing them that the report was a follow up, from the previous meeting of SACRE in response to concerns raised by a report from the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE.

Members were notified that responses were being received slowly; however the Associate Adviser for Religious Education was awaiting further replies from Primary Schools within the borough to bring the total to at least 50%. Mrs Shepherd and Mr Epps informed the Committee that both Holy Cross and Lansdowne had replied explaining that they both had teachers giving RE. It was queried as to whether either school used Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) to cover RE lessons and were advised that HLTA were used however it was not always to cover RE lessons.

It was explained to Members of the committee that within a lot schools a teacher's Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time was during an RE lesson, this would be that pupils were being taught by a teacher who may not be trained within Religious Education.

RESOLVED:

That SACRE continue to encourage schools to respond to this request for information about provision for RE until at least 50% of primary schools have responded.

28. Inquiry into Provision for RE in Thurrock Secondary Academies

The Committee were advised that this report was following the previous meeting where Members agreed to write to the Academies to seek which if any provisions of RE were in place.

Members were informed that the Chair of the Committee had written to the six academies within the borough and only one had responded. The Chair read out to Members the letter he had received from William Edwards, the main points of which were:

- In Year 7 RE is taught within the Creative Curriculum programme which commands four hours of curriculum time per week.
- With new staff in the RE department the Head teacher's expectation is that the uptake of GCSE RE will grow in the coming years.
- Whilst the GCSE course is followed by those who opt for it in Yr10, all students receive RE through a series of focus days delivered throughout the year.

- The Head teacher was satisfied that the school meets all the terms of their Funding Agreement relating to Religious Education and as a school they were continually reviewing their curriculum model to ensure it meets the needs of their students and would welcome any support and guidance that SACRE can direct them to from best practice locally or further afield.

Following discussions Members agreed that the Associate Adviser for Religious Education would visit William Edwards to discuss further the provisions they have in place and to telephone the remaining academies who had not responded. Members further agreed that if no responses were received after chasing the academies then to also write to the Governors of academies to seek their views.

RESOLVED That SACRE:

- 1.1 Consider any response from the six academies listed in 2.3 below and respond as appropriate**
- 1.2 Take further action in relation to any academy that has not responded to the letter from the Chair of SACRE selecting from one of the options set out in 3.2 of the report**

29. Thurrock SACRE – Academy Responses to the Local Agreed Syllabus

The Associate Adviser for Religious Education introduced the report to Members of SACRE notifying them that the report was an update from the previous meeting regarding the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus and Academies within Thurrock. Members were notified that the majority of Academies who have a choice to adopt the local Agreed Syllabus for RE have chosen to do so.

It was further explained that SACRE could expect a high level of support during the review of the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus, which had its first meeting on Thursday 15 January 2015.

RESOLVED That SACRE:

- 1.1 Ask all schools to allow their subject leaders to be involved in the Agreed Syllabus working group**
- 1.2 Continue to make its Agreed Syllabus and supporting materials available to all schools in Thurrock whether or not they are academies**

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**