

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION (SACRE)**



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
22 January 2018**

Present:

GROUP A

Christian Denominations

Baptists

Chris Davis

Other Religions

Baha'i

Elizabeth Jenkerson

Sikh

Harmeet Singh Brar

GROUP B

The Church of England

Reverend Duncan Jennings

The Church of England

Sam Jordan

Diocesan Education Team

Richard Wharton

GROUP C

National Union of Teachers (NUT)

Jackie Meering

GROUP D

Councillor Sholing Ward

Cllr James Baille

Councillor Harefield Ward

Cllr Valerie Laurent

Group D Substitute

Kate Martin

OTHERS (Non-voting)

South Hampshire Humanists

Mary Wallbank

In attendance

Professional Adviser – Southampton City Council

Alison Philpott

RE Leader – Moorlands Primary School

Sarah Roughton

Meeting Support Officers:

Kaye Cantor

Stephanie Wickenkamp

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES and CHANGES OF MEMBERSHIP

Chair, Jackie Meering welcomed delegates to the meeting. Apologies were noted from the following delegates:

Susanne Dawson	Group A	Christian – United Reformed Church
David Vane	Group A	Other Religions – Buddhist
Anas Al-Korj	Group A	Other Religions - Muslim
Allan King	Group B	Church of England
Councillor John Jordan	Group D	Southampton City Council
Councillor Warwick Payne	Group D	Southampton City Council
Suzanne Dawson	non-voting	Secondary RE network representative

JM noted there were no changes of membership.

Statement from the Chair:

Following the previous meeting, JM sought legal advice from the council regarding the place of Any Other Business items. JM and AP requested delegates to send AOB items to Business Support prior to the meeting. This is to ensure the items are appropriate for the meeting.

ACTION: All delegates to send AOB items to meeting.support@southampton.gov.uk

Meeting Support post meeting note: items for the 4 June meeting need to be received by 21 May to ensure statutory publishing deadlines are met.

JM thanked Moorlands RE lead, Sarah Roughton for hosting the meeting. AP also gave her thanks and noted all the quality and hard work reflected in the display boards.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

EJ declaration as Judge for Westhill NASCARE as per previous meeting. AP confirmed fresh declarations are required only if there are changes.

CD completed a Declaration of Interests form, which was handed to Meeting Support.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING 13 NOVEMBER 2017 AND MATTERS ARISING

JM reviewed the minutes and they were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Matters arising:

(3) Southampton SACRE Annual Report

AP stated the annual report has been completed, along with the 2016 results. AP brought hard copies of the report to the meeting and can send this electronically to members.

AP commented the 2017 data is not included in the report because it has yet to be validated. AP gave some headlines from the 2017 results, commenting that overall percentages compare favourably. The following was noted:

- Some schools have a slight decrease around number of entries.
- Slight increase in 2 schools.

- A few schools are using the short course but these are decreasing in number.
- Full GCSE religious studies on offer.
- Outcomes: A starter C grade, nationally all schools: 71.2%. Southampton: 82%, which is higher than the previous year.
- The 'all schools' entry for RE has strong results.

EJ asked if any schools are at full cohort. AP replied there are 3 schools which have done the full cohort for some time. AP commented that where RE is strong, it is going very well.

EJ noted differences in the GCSE syllabus for this year. AP agreed this will not be the same measure but it is not clear yet where boundaries will sit. AP stated the best comparator is the number of entries rather than outcomes or those passing the subject currently, grading will become 9-1 not A*-G as up to 2017. Grade 4 – pass and grade 5 – strong pass are key indicators – closest to previous system C grade

AP further explained that A level continues to be offered at 3 places in the city. Again outcomes are sitting A* to E good. The comparator is 98.4% nationally and all 3 are at 100%: pupil outcomes are strong.

EJ asked if AP is monitoring which exams are going to be used. AP is a member of a networking group which share training and resources. Some schools may shift exam board after this year's first set of results.

EJ stated she felt through wider discussions some boards are easier than others. AP reported subject Heads actively monitor what the exam boards are doing and the statistics in relation to this. They will have an opinion on suitability. English and Maths adopted this system last year. Most schools are predicting roughly the same results, however until they are released, AP has to go with the guidance to hand. AP commented there is a mixture of different exam boards used in Southampton.

(4) Commission on RE (CoRE) Consultation

It was noted that some delegates made individual replies and JM thanked those who had responded.

The minutes were agreed.

4. ACCORD 2018 AWARDS DISCUSSION

ACCORD Inclusivity Awards submissions close by the end of February 2018. Rev.DJ asked for SACRE members to decide whether they would like to support a submission. Rev.DJ stated the importance of recognising good practice from the school monitoring visits; both he and AP believe there are a number of Southampton schools whose RE practice is exceptionally strong with regards to their Spiritually Moral, Cultural and Social practice (SMCS). Rev.DJ stated that documents will need to be collated for submission. AP highlighted the aspiration of schools being recognised and acknowledged for their hard work.

EJ queried whether the ACCORD award had broadened into other subjects. AP confirmed this.

AP explained that the monitoring group felt there were five schools from the monitoring visits who they would like to support if they wished to make a submission. JM suggested writing to schools who had been nominated. AP commented this was not an approach SACRE had made before but was happy to approach the agreed schools if that was what SACRE wished. Group agreed it was.

Cllr Laurent queried which schools could apply. AP responded that schools could apply based on their RE provision, however the guidance around the ACCORD award includes RE and wider moral cultural development. AP shared an example of a Secondary School who is rebuilding GCSE RE.

Rev.DJ explained that there are exemplary schools that are exceeding in Religious Education, cultural development; their ethos and understanding of values are implemented on a daily basis.

EJ queried whether there was a financial award. AP responded this was dependent upon on the area.

JM explained that schools can be informed that they can take part in these awards following a monitoring visit. AP suggested that the monitoring visit can form part of the submissions.

SJ was positive about Schools applying for the award.

AGREED: All members agreed without a vote.

EJ requested information on which schools will be nominated. AP explained that this can be addressed during the monitoring visits.

ACTION: AP to write to schools that SACRE would support submission for regarding submission for ACCORD 2018 Awards.

5. HOW SCHOOL LEADERS HAVE PROVIDED SUPPORT TO STAFF TEACHING RE

JM welcomed Sarah Roughton to the meeting. SR leads and teaches RE and is a senior leader at Moorlands Primary School.

SR described how a review of the curriculum and syllabus offered an opportunity to combine with Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development. SR is very familiar with the RE syllabus, and works alongside a Key Stage 2 Practitioner to lead the subject. SR noted her confidence, enthusiasm and understanding for teaching staff, wanting them to take control and teach RE. Initially pupil questionnaires were circulated, with interesting responses. A staff questionnaire helped to highlight their concerns about RE teaching. The questionnaire results were used for training CPD twilight sessions with staff, where practical hints and tips were given. SR's next unit of work was to demonstrate with students, explaining the cycle of enquiry as they went along. Teachers were supported with the process.

Then, Teachers and classes chose their units and timing for learning. Some decided on different times and others decided to ask the children. Help was given to design the boards showing the learning they had undertaken using different mediums, including photos, speech bubbles and in one case music.

Their experiences were followed up and shared a few weeks later with a further twilight CPD. Subsequent interviews with the children revealed impact and in some instances this was quite significant. SR checked on the views of staff members who took part; they thought it was really good and some have introduced the learning on a half termly basis, others weekly sessions. They are using it as a spring board for other studies.

This has prompted an overhaul of the curriculum and SMSC is now embedded with the children. The boards were developed with the children choosing the material to be displayed. The staff now have confidence to go with the needs of the children and enable some deep learning within the subject.

SR described the death of a fruit beetle which had been a Year 2 class pet. This coincided with learning on belief, heaven and God. The children talked about this and planned a funeral; the Teacher ran with this, recording the funeral. This allowed teachers the opportunity and confidence to talk about and drive forward learning around what can be uncomfortable things. It was not all about the religious aspect and started from the child's point of view. As a result, there has been knock on effect in other areas of the school, for example, Schools Council.

SR said the most enlightening thing from SMSC investment is that people are not scared of teaching RE. Teachers feed-back on the quality of outcomes improved. Work for moderation has been submitted from RE learning and this has had quite a big impact, which the school wants to maintain.

Children and Teachers enjoyed their experiences and this made it worthwhile. SR stated the school is now self-sufficient and people are happy to participate. Following on from Collective Worship, they are not shying away from the religious or stories aspects and explore this alongside other foundation subjects. An example of this was the Manchester terror attack in the summer.

The children talked about their experiences during a monitoring visit. JM stated it was really lovely to see how this has blossomed across the school. They have come a long way in a short space of time.

AP thanked SR for her presentation and encouraged delegates to look at the boards. Almost a year on, it is good to see that RE is still being modelled, developed and used; SR is passionate about delivering it.

SJ asked if this is being shared more widely and AP has taken pictures of the boards. AP felt this to be a useful model; if people wanted to develop their RE, they could talk to the leaders about their experiences to take forward in their own school. SJ commented this is empowering as SR is someone who could support Teachers with child-led learning.

JM suggested inclusion on panel meetings for secondary schools, with advocacy from primaries to share expertise. This could also apply to other subjects. AP stated there is a big network group on the west side of the city, with around 15 schools; academies also meet. AP would need to check what is in place on the east side of the city. JM thought it worthwhile to have the opportunity to meet, talk and share; professionals can benefit from this.

AP is trying to organise another twilight date for new RE leaders in July for September start. A date will also be identified for assessment in RE; ideally earlier if possible for moderation. JM stated this also depends on money. AP is looking at two twilights as costs will be reduced for schools. AP commented that feedback was strong from primaries last year.

EJ asked if Moorlands provides Philosophy for the children. SR replied, no. EJ asked about the reply when the Teachers talked to children about time commitment. SR stated there was a mixed response from the children. Blocking seemed to work better and a lot of Teachers are still doing this now. This approach also offers flexibility for timetables.

JM thanked SR for speaking and to all those involved for their hard work and wonderful displays.

AGREED: AP to check east side city networking.

6. SOUTHAMPTON CITY MISSION – SUPPORT VISITS TO SCHOOLS

The Your Schools Southampton document was circulated to members.

CD explained that he has led Southampton City Mission for over 24 years and also leads Your Schools Southampton with SJ. CD explained that teams work within 50 schools in and around the city to deliver assemblies and RE days. CD explained that days such as “A Question of Faith” include multiple activities for children to engage with, revolving around a particular theme. CD stated this is from a Christian point of view, and Matt Quinn leads this work.

CD noted there is increasing work during children’s transition from Primary to Secondary school. CD explained that Secondary Schools learn about prayer and reflection spaces.

CD explained that mapping functions were ceased years ago due to funding cuts, however since then Your School Southampton has been resurrected. SJ is employed by Highfield Church and was previously an RE Teacher. Her passion is to support good RE in schools. CD explained that he is part time and works as a pastor of a local Baptist Church.

CD emphasised that relationships need to be built with schools; he commented that few children attend church and places of worship could become forgotten. CD highlighted this applied to all faiths.

CD explained the ratio 95:5 was reported by Scripture Union to be the ratio of children in school compared to at a place in worship. SJ emphasised the importance of reaching children where they are most, as part of education and supporting schools with the Christian element of RE.

SJ stated that the desired outcome would be a citywide network; credible links from the local Christian churches or organisations which would support schools where necessary. CD highlighted that the model itself could be applied to other faith groups.

SJ explained that Your Schools Southampton has a database which informs an interactive map. This was achieved by contacting every Christian church or organisation within the city. There are 141 links between Christian churches and organisations; only nine Southampton schools having no link. SJ noted this will decrease to seven within a month. The quality and frequency of the links are not captured within the database. SJ commented that once a link is in place, it will grow and develop over time. SJ noted the requirement to maintain the database.

SJ highlighted that training can be offered on how to deliver an assembly or RE lessons, with continued support to the network. Networking groups are already in place, such as regular prayer meetings which are attended by people from across the city. SJ provided a couple of examples of how the model has practically helped Primary and Secondary schools network in practical terms.

CD emphasised his passion for storytelling; he hopes that storytelling will be incorporated into training this year. CD highlighted that Your Schools Southampton can bring training into the city which individual churches cannot.

CD explained that Southampton City Mission already works extensively with schools; Your Schools Southampton is the support network behind it. SJ highlighted that Your Schools Southampton is a free service; she and CD are paid by other areas.

AP queried whether people from other churches or other faiths access the training on how to cover an assembly. SJ replied that could be possible, the reference point currently is Christian. The training

sessions focus on good practice principles rather than Christian content.

CD reiterated that the training can be for any denomination. CD explained that the assemblies have many possibilities with regards to delivery and engaging children.

CD offered support to SACRE in development training on how to do a session. JM responded positively. SJ suggested sending over a document along with the minutes of the meeting.

ACTION: SJ to circulate the document at the next meeting.

AP queried whether SJ and CD cover DBS checks and noted this would be required if volunteers are visiting places frequently. SJ confirmed this is completed through the Safeguarding Portal for C of E. AP supported this approach for volunteers who could be in regulated activity.

MW requested clarification on whether this was proselytizing. SJ and CD responded no. SJ believes in the Christian incarnational approach. SJ added it was about blessing and supporting the schools, as well as supporting vulnerable pupils.

AP queried whether the audit could support aspects such as visitors. AP acknowledged that it is not SACRE's role to provide a list of known visitors, however there is overlap of SACRE's role in schools in terms of knowing schools and who is going into them. SJ emphasised the requirement to be able to communicate within an educational way and maintain inclusivity of faiths. AP highlighted the need for schools to be ready to handle any scenarios with visitors. Advice would always be to meet and agree content with any visitor prior to them speaking to children, and also to confirm what the school would not deem to be acceptable. Additionally, to inform parents of visitors. Staff supervising visitors should always be confident to step in if they were unhappy with any visitors' presentation, manner or language.

EJ stated a relatively new aspect of the DBS check – the update service- can be applied for which prevents the need to renew every 30 days. SJ agreed and added that once a certificate of clearance has been issued, you are able to login with a few details and continue for free as a volunteer, or pay £13 annually to update the DBS frequently. AP noted this was effective.

CD reassured that the networks currently in place are with reliable contacts only; safeguarding measures are in place. CD explained people who do not have experience in hosting a particular event requested will not be sent. SJ noted positive feedback from Ofsted whilst presenting an assembly.

ACTION: AP and SJ to discuss the training process of Your Schools Southampton.

7. SACRE SELF-EVALUATION TOOL REVIEW AUDIT

AP stated the audit tool was launched in 2015 and is now 3 years in. There is a 30% return rate. The tool offers a baseline benchmark, where schools can self-evaluate work in terms of developing RE. The audit gives an opportunity to look at British values and evolving Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) themes.

The toolkit needs to be updated and AP proposes to keep the same model and thinks it does not need a radical change. The sections are 'Beginning', 'Developing', 'Established' and 'Advanced'. Schools evidence the sections with RAG ratings. The toolkit is to include governance and assessment.

AP is proposing to re-issue the audit to provide a profile of RE across city. AP felt it timely for all phases to re-evaluate and self re-evaluate for the subject. This will reflect the new syllabus and difference in secondary provision.

AP is planning to form a small working group before Easter to add in the new areas, working to the same framework. EJ suggested a re-think on visits and JM agreed for visitors, as well as visits.

SR explained how the self-evaluation tool was used prior to their monitoring visit and they found it useful; areas were highlighted which were not previously thought about or high priority.

AP stated the tool will be offered to all schools but those who are being monitored will be asked to complete it to help inform the visit. It is helpful for visiting officers to know where the school is sitting with evidence and confidence.

EJ asked how often schools carry out the self-evaluation. AP replied it could be annually and this helps RE leaders to establish priorities for the coming year, for example, training time with staff and resources. Once a thorough evaluation is completed, the data is used for benchmarking evidence.

JM asked for volunteers to form the working group and EJ, SR and HSB accepted.

SJ asked about correlation with what schools fed back last time. JM explained self-evaluation has not yet been looked at in this way because work is still going ahead to imbed the monitoring. The tool-kit will go out after Easter with a request to schools for completion by the end of the school year.

AP explained monitoring visits are in year 3 of 5 and the aim is that all schools receive a visit. AP has received further requests from Head Teachers and AP has got additional time to manage this. The aim is to be back on schedule by the end of this year.

JM stated the monitoring is being developed as the visits go along and hoping this is one of the components that schools will begin to expect. AP raises awareness by talking about the visits at networking events.

JM thanked AP for the update.

8. ACTION PLANNING FOR SEPTEMBER 2017 – JULY 2019

AP asked members to be seated within their working groups to discuss ideas and complete an Action Plan.

AP explained that the Secondary Network are keen to create another Faith Group event following the success of the event at Richard Taunton Sixth Form College; SJ and Anas Al-Korj have discussed how to move this forward.

AP reported that no queries have fallen outside of the advice document remit, other than a request for more faiths to be represented within it. AP suggested organising a meeting to review the document annually.

ACTION: AP to organise a meeting within the Review Cycle to include wider faith perspectives and address queries within the Advice Document.

RW asked which faiths were not covered. AP responded Russian Orthodox and Jewish had been queried.

AP explained that Hampshire are developing their own advice document and suggested sharing the Southampton document. This would enable cross-boundary advice for families that have children attending Southampton and Hampshire schools. AP noted that Portsmouth are doing the same.

ACTION: AP to investigate the possible connection with Hampshire's Advice Document.

AP commented that inter-faith dialogues and understanding will be promoted through the Film Group. JM stated that she will be pitching this. This will be available through the Young Southampton website. AP commented that the films on the website will need to be relabelled by IT for clarity for schools when searching for them.

ACTION: AP to liaise with IT regarding relabelling the Solent University Partnership videos.

SJ queried whether the Collective Worship Advice group will be available to schools. AP confirmed this and explained that the group will draw from resources and address how it should look within Southampton. CD volunteered to join the group.

SJ commented that a member from the Monitoring Group should attend to report on good practice. AP agreed. EJ queried whether there were any legal requirements to address. RW responded that the 1988 Education document explains this.

WORKSHOP: Members worked in their designated groups for the remainder of the meeting and Action Plans were collected.

9. MONITORING GROUP UPDATE – VERBAL FROM GROUP

AP stated 17 schools are scheduled this year for a monitoring updated. Five have deferred to next year; one of these, HT request, had deferred due to having already had a visit.

AP explained 4 Head Teachers have requested monitoring visits since the last SACRE meeting. The Monitoring Group are looking at dates to accommodate these.

AP confirmed that two visits have been carried out this year with the following visits remaining:

- 7 Primary Schools**
- 1 Secondary School**
- 1 Special School**
- 2 Secondary Schools deferred to next year.**

JM confirmed the remit for SACRE is to attend and monitor all schools, including academies and free-school.

- 10. Next Meeting: Monday 4 June 2018**
4pm – 6pm
Committee Room 1, Ground Floor, Civic Centre