

**OXFORDSHIRE
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**Minutes of the Oxfordshire SACRE Meeting
Held online, Tuesday 9th June 2020 at 4.00 pm**

Present: Committee A: World Faiths, Christian Denominations
M = Member Giles Beck (SD)
SD = Standing Deputy Sarah Montagu
Sheikh Ramzy

Committee B: Church of England
Helen Norman
Christine Price-Smith

Committee C: Teacher representatives

Committee D: Local Authority
Cllr Bob Johnston
Charles Mathew

Co-opted Members
Shahin Bekhradnia
Nigel Fancourt
Arzhia Habibi (SD)

Visitors
Natasha Robinson

In attendance: Helen Batten (Clerk)
Bill Moore (Advisor to SACRE)
Jane Ratcliffe (Local Authority)

Apologies: Steve Beegoo (Committee A)
Ruth Cohen (Committee C)
Lex George (Committee C)
Kim James (Local Authority)
Fraser Nelson (Committee A)
Chandra Vadivale/Sathya Vadivale (Committee A)
Stephen Vickers/Helina Taghavi (Co-opted)
Carol Worthington (Committee B)

1 Introduction

- CM welcomed everybody to the meeting and introductions were completed for visitors.
- Apologies tendered were accepted.

2 Minutes of 4th March & matters arising

(a) Minutes which had been circulated were approved without amendment.

(b) Matters arising: BM provided the following updates:

- **NATRE Regional Ambassador:** Establishment of teacher networks are continuing, although activities have been affected by Covid.
- **SACRE constitution:** Work in ongoing and a draft proposal will be circulated for discussion by the November meeting.
- **Agreed syllabus:** A recent meeting between BM, CM and OCC discussed current pressures on schools due to Covid and concluded that it is not appropriate to try to continue this work as planned, and it is therefore recommended to defer publication of the new syllabus until 2022. SACRE agreed this course of action, and will consider activities to prepare for this work.

3 **SACRE strategic plan update**

- CM provided an update on agreed funding from OCC. Members welcomed this indication of support for the work of SACRE.
- BM recommended that it will be beneficial for SACRE to understand more about schools' current RE offers and to identify any establishments where provision may not be adequate. The first step would be review website information, which would then prompt further enquiries. Schools will receive courtesy notification that this will be happening, but they will not be asked to do anything different.
- Members discussed how this activity will link into SIAMS inspections of church schools CPS advised that it would be useful for SACRE to see how SIAMS inspections cover RE provision across the range of church schools, and it was agreed to make reports available as part of the review process.
- Members also considered whether SACRE should look at how RE is used to support mental health and wellbeing as schools cope with Covid issues. BM advised that whilst SACRE is very concerned about these aspects, it is important not to place additional pressure on schools. A range of ways will be used to provide support to children and RE can be part of this, however it is more likely that these activities will be delivered via the PSHE curriculum. JR confirmed that a dedicated area on the OCC schools intranet includes many resources and links to support recovery work, and further information can be added to this.
- Members agreed to contact schools, look at available SIAMS reports and website information and feedback to SACRE as discussed.
Action: BM & JR will progress necessary actions.

4 **Agreed syllabus**

BM recommended completion of some preparatory work to enable the review to move forward next year. Following some discussion it was agreed that group representatives should consider the key concepts of their belief and how these should be included in the syllabus.

Action: BM will circulate a framework and timeline for the agreed preparatory work.

5 **Annual report 2018-19:** The draft report was discussed:

Standards & quality of provision of RE

- It was suggested that it would be preferable to focus on the data that is available from schools rather than the difficulties in obtaining information.

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- It was agreed that the 'questions to address' are helpful and that the development of networks will be crucial to moving these considerations forward over the next 1 – 2 years. JR emphasised the importance of involving schools in creation of the new syllabus, to ensure they are encouraged and confident about teaching RE. For information, BM will circulate material that has informed this section of the report.
- More needs to be understood about the under-achievement in RE shown by GCSE results, and whether it mirrors that of other subjects in Oxfordshire. Whilst RE is about a lot more than exams, SACRE does need to support schools to maximise achievement.
- It is anticipated that the review of SIAMS and website information will help to clarify which aspects of the syllabus schools are most confident in using, and where additional support may be needed.

Managing SACRE & the partnership with the LA & other key stakeholders

- More emphasis should be placed on the role of Ofsted in supporting the work of SACREs.
- Whilst the report is retrospective, it will also be helpful to mention more recent developments in work with OCC and other bodies.

Actions: Members will provide any further comments to BM by 12th June.

BM will circulate

BM will finalise the report for distribution to SACRE, all Oxfordshire schools, NASACRE and the Department of Education.

6 Local and national updates

- The NASACRE annual conference was cancelled due to Covid and will not take place until 2021.
- BM reported that the RE Advisors' Association conference was also cancelled although activities are continuing on line as far as possible. A bid for funding has been made, which will enable the development of non-statutory frameworks for religion and world views 2021-24 to support agreed syllabus conferences in the development of an appropriate syllabus for use in academies.

7 Meeting dates 2020- 21

Meeting dates were confirmed as follows:

- Tuesday 10th November 2020
- Wednesday 3rd March 2021
- Tuesday 8th June 2021

Meetings will start at 4.00 pm unless otherwise notified, venues to be confirmed.

This would have been Steve Beegoo's final meeting before standing down and, on behalf of all members, CM acknowledged his significant contribution to the work of SACRE over a number of years and thanked him for his enthusiasm and commitment.

CM then thanked everyone for their attendance and input and closed the meeting 5:35 pm.