

SACRE Committee Meeting
1 February 2024 – 6pm to 7.30pm
Telford College
Minutes

The attendance list can be found [here](#)

1. Welcome and Introduction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair, Jacquie Osmund Smith (JOS), welcomed SACRE members to the meeting, including two colleagues who joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams.
2. Minutes of the last meeting (9 Nov 2023)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that both Shaad Dhillon (SD) and Ian Nicholson (IN) attended the last meeting.
3. Matters arising
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collective Worship: JOS explained that this will be addressed through the action plan (agenda item 7). Membership: JOS continues to seek a Sikh representative. It was noted that Oakengates Gudwara has now moved to Priorslee, with a formal opening next week - JOS is planning to attend and hopes to make some connections.
Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JOS will continue to seek a Sikh representative.
4. Humanist representative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following a court case in Kent, a new directive has been issued requiring SACREs to examine their membership to ensure they broadly reflect their local population. A discussion took place about whether or not Telford & Wrekin SACRE should seek a Humanist representative, although it was noted that there are not believed to be a significant number of Humanists living within Telford. Rebecca Carey (RC) commented that the possible future rebranding of RE to 'World Views' might potentially necessitate SACRE to broaden its membership. RE Coordinators Shaad Dillon (SD) and Jon Rawson (JR) stated that teachers are already asked to include Humanist views as part of world views within their teaching. Proposal: JOS proposed that, if a Humanist applied to join Group A of SACRE, the Committee would be in agreement. Agreement: This was agreed, with the proviso that the Humanist representative is a member of the Humanist Society.
5. NASACRE
<p>Briefing 37 (circulated prior to the meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JOS read out the note within the Briefing re Ofsted and RE and asked colleagues for views.

- There was a general consensus amongst the RE Coordinators that the statements are largely accurate.
- It was also noted that there is a significant shortage of RE specialists.
- Cllr Eileen Callear (EC) mentioned a debating session she had witnessed at St George's CE Primary School, where the children were engaged in debating some very interesting topics and appeared very passionate and invested. It would be useful to try and build on this and potentially include in the action plan.
- RC asked what RE 'looks like' in our faith schools and how SACRE might help to raise the profile and quality of RE in a similar way in our non-faith schools.
 - Faith schools receive a [SIAMS](#) (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) every five years and a framework within which to work.
 - Non-faith schools have more flexibility about how they use curriculum time and experience less scrutiny of RE.
 - In the secondary phase RE is often delivered by other subject specialists.
 - The KS4 RE curriculum is a complex subject which requires a secure foundation in English language, but has a clear framework.
 - RE is a statutory subject in maintained schools, but quality assurance (QA) and consistency are key issues.
- The group discussed how SACRE can more proactively support schools, perhaps through SACRE members visiting schools in a QA role. This will need to form part of the SACRE action plan.
- It was noted that QA is financially intensive and capacity is often an issue. However, SACRE comprises a diverse group of (largely) volunteers, who may be able to spare time to perform this role, but would require training and support, and clarity regarding statutory RE requirements.
- RC suggested that a plan needs to be formulated, encompassing SACRE's proposal for QA linked to the evaluation of the RE syllabus, and then taken to the various networks – i.e. the Telford Education Strategic Partnership Board, the Headteacher Forums etc. RC will discuss this idea further with Simon Wellman, Director of Education and Skills, and also examine whether any internal resources could be used to support this process.
- RC suggested that SACRE could use part of its budget, albeit limited, to provide a programme of CPD throughout the year, possibly covering different faiths, which colleagues could dip into as appropriate. These sessions, which would be provided online, could possibly be recorded and uploaded on to the SACRE website to create a bank of resources.
- Cathy Landau (CL) added that the Jewish Board of Deputies are finalising a bank of resources which should be available by the end of May.
- Cllrs Eileen Callear (EC) and Shirley Reynolds (SR) supported the idea of a bank of online resources and also suggested tapping into social media.
- David Rolfe (DR) reflected on a radio programme he had heard recently in which young people were speaking animatedly about RE and world views. RE is one subject where young people can engage in an open and lively debate and air their opinions and it is important to ensure this is preserved.

NASACRE Conference

- The [Annual NASACRE Conference and AGM](#) is taking place Monday 20 May 2024 at the Hilton Hotel York and each SACRE is invited to send two delegates at a subsidised cost.
- SD and JR stated that they would like to attend, if they are able to negotiate release from their respective schools.

RE Hubs website

- JOS will examine in more detail and report back to the group.

Action

- **RC will speak with Simon Wellman about developing and presenting a QA proposal to the Partnership Boards and the Headteacher Forums.**
- **SD and JR will speak with their respective headteachers about requesting release for the NASACRE Conference, and then confirm with Clerk (SDy), who will book the places.**

6. Annual report and GCSE examination results 2022-23 – update

- The examination results are not published currently, which means that RC will need to approach each school to obtain the results. It was noted that there is currently no RE 'A' level offer in Telford.
- Following discussion, and in recognition of a period of flux and limited activity, and a lack of examination results data, it was agreed that an annual report will not be published this year.

Actions:

- **RC will contact schools to request their 2022-23 RE examination results.**

7. Self-evaluation tool (action plan)

- RC presented a summary of the key points from the re-drafted SACRE action plan, which has been synthesised to focus on four priorities.
- The group made the following requests and suggestions:
 - **(2) Promoting improvement in the standards, the quality of teaching, and provision in RE:**
 - It was agreed that a report from the RE Coordinators' network (led by JR) needs to be re-instated on the SACRE Committee agenda.
 - Rev Tim Carter (TC) suggested the addition of RAG rating; this was agreed.
 - The need to include or reference other organisations such as the STSA (School Improvement Partners) and the Diocese was highlighted and agreed.
 - **Ofsted:** It was agreed that any references to RE or equality and diversity in school Ofsted inspection reports should be brought to the attention of SACRE.
 - **Evaluating the effectiveness of the syllabus:** The QA process will identify the strength of the syllabus (as well as the quality of provision) and highlight any gaps in readiness for the re-writing the syllabus (*strand 2 will feed into strand 3*).
 - **(4) Collective Worship:**
 - It was noted that collective worship has to be of a broadly Christian nature.
 - A school can apply for a determination to dis-apply from collective worship, depending on the needs of the local community / school community.
 - RC stated that the action plan needs to articulate the definition of collective worship, how it can be delivered and how it will be quality assured.
 - **(5) Contributing to cohesion across the community and the promotion of social and racial harmony:**
 - Councillors EC and SR stated that this is a big piece of work, but very important and working in partnership with the Interfaith Council would be sensible and productive.
 - It would be helpful to identify a couple of key tangible priorities around community cohesion and social cohesion, in consultation with Jas Bedesha (T&W Council's Service Delivery Manager - Safer Stronger Communities).

- TC noted that Lichfield Diocese is developing resources in support of a dementia friendly programme.
- **The way forward for further development of the Action Plan:**
 - It was agreed that the action plan needs to be a working document which will continue to evolve and be reviewed at termly SACRE meetings, with actions added and removed.
 - The action plan will need to be divided into sections with further development work completed outside this meeting.
 - Each SACRE group (A, B, C and D) can focus on aspects of the plan; TC suggested that groups A and B work together for this purpose, and focus on Collective Worship (priority 4).
 - RC and the teaching team will look at priorities 2 and 3.
 - RC and JOS will circulate an electronic copy of the current draft with a proposed way forward for collaborative working.
 - Cllrs EC, SR and RM will liaise with Jas Bedesha to identify priorities around (5) community cohesion.
 - A list of schools and denominations will be created to contribute to the development of a dashboard.
 - As the majority of the development work will potentially be carried out virtually, JOS will send an email to SACRE Committee members to confirm that no one objects to their contact details being shared (within the group).

Actions:

- ***A report from the RE Coordinators' network (led by JR) will be a standing item at future termly SACRE Committee meetings.***
- ***RC / SDy will ensure that any specific references to RE or equality and diversity in school Ofsted inspection reports are brought to the attention of SACRE following the publication of Ofsted reports.***
- ***JOS will circulate an email to the Committee regarding sharing of contact details (as above).***
- ***RC and JOS will circulate an electronic draft of the action plan, requesting further development work to be undertaken (as described above).***
- ***RC / SDy will produce a list of schools and denominations.***

8. Any other business

- There was no further business

9. Date of next meeting

- Thursday 20 June 2024 from 6pm to 7.30pm at Telford College.

Actions:

- ***Clerk, SDy, will inform the PAs of the date of the next meeting.***

Attendance List

Name	Representing	Status
Jacque Osmund Smith	Group A: Baptist Church (Chair)	Attended
Dave Rolfe	Group A: Quaker faith	Attended
Cathy Landau	Group A: Jewish faith	Attended
Rev Tim Carter	Group B: All Saints Church, Wellington	Attended
Diane Whiteley	Group C: Woodlands Primary School	Attended
Shaad Dhillon	Group C: Redhill Primary Academy	Attended
Jon Rawson	Group C: Donnington Wood Junior School	Attended
Ali Bushnell	Group C: Millbrook Primary School	Attended
Cllr Shirley Reynolds	Group D: T&W Council	Attended online
Cllr Eileen Callear	Group D: T&W Council	Attended online
Rebecca Carey	Group D: T&W Council	Attended
In attendance		
Sue Dyson	SACRE Clerk T&W Council	In attendance

Apologies and non-attendance

Name	Representing	Status
<i>Carol Morgan</i>	<i>Group A: Roman Catholic (Diocese of Shrewsbury)</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
<i>Angela Evans</i>	<i>Group A: Methodist / United Reform Church</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
<i>Sajid Younis</i>	<i>Group A: Muslim faith</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
<i>Inderjit Singh Gill</i>	<i>Group A: Sikh (Oakengates Gurdwara)</i>	-
<i>Pardha Saradhy</i>	<i>Group A: Hindu faith</i>	-
<i>Cathy Pocock</i>	<i>Group A: Salvation Army</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>Group A: Free Church</i>	<i>Vacancy</i>
<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>Group A: Humanist</i>	<i>Vacancy</i>
<i>Mark Harrington</i>	<i>Group B: Hereford Board of Education</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
<i>Matthew Welton</i>	<i>Group B: Lichfield Diocese</i>	-
<i>Mary Jennings</i>	<i>Group C: Ercall Wood Academy</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>Group C: NEU</i>	<i>Vacancy</i>
<i>Karl Downes</i>	<i>Group C: NAS/UWT</i>	-
<i>Mandy Dhaliwall</i>	<i>Group C: NAHT (Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge)</i>	<i>Vacancy</i>
<i>Cllr Raj Mehta</i>	<i>Group D: T&W Council</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
<i>Ian Nicholson</i>	<i>Co-opted member: RE Today (National Adviser)</i>	<i>Apologies</i>
<i>Michelle Parker</i>	<i>Co-opted member</i>	<i>Apologies</i>

Appendix 2

NASACRE Briefing 37 – extract

Ofsted and RE

At the end of the Autumn Term, Ofsted published its [Annual Report](#) from the Chief Inspector. This year there were references to individual subjects, including RE: *in schools RE is generally of poor quality. Although it is a statutory subject, schools often consider RE as an afterthought. As a subject on the curriculum, it is undervalued. RE is a complex subject, and the lack of clarity and support from government makes schools' job harder. Some schools steer through these challenges well, but most do not. We found that:*

- *many schools do not meet the statutory requirement to teach RE at all stages*
- *pupils are rarely taught enough substance to prepare them to engage in a complex, multi-religious and multi-secular society (where religion and non-religion play different parts in different people's lives)*
- *too often, schools do not teach topics in the RE curriculum deeply enough for pupils to develop a substantial understanding of the subject matter*
- *non-examined RE is typically not high quality.*

All pupils should develop a broad and secure knowledge of the complexity of religious and non-religious traditions. It will take coordinated effort by stakeholders to improve the quality of RE in schools:

- *schools need high-quality professional development to teach RE well*
- *curriculum publishers need to identify clearly what pupils will learn and when, building on knowledge over time, so that pupils develop a deep knowledge of the chosen religious and non-religious traditions*
- *the government should provide clear expectations about RE provision in schools. Schools should follow these. Current non-statutory guidance for RE*

should be updated and include clear information for schools about the breadth and depth of the syllabus they are expected to teach.

These findings reflect what NASACRE and other RE organisations have been saying for many years, so there are really no surprises! Discuss this document at your next SACRE meeting and consider your response.

The long-awaited Ofsted *RE Subject Report* is due to be published soon, so please ensure that you keep your eyes open for that. We will get a link to it on our new [Noticeboard](#) page as soon after publication as possible.

DRAFT