

North Yorkshire County Council
Children and Young People's Service
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Minutes of a meeting held at Evolution Business Centre, Northallerton on Thursday, 19th September, 2019

PRESENT:

County Councillors: Robert Heseltine and Annabel Wilkinson

Professor John Adams (Humanist), Mr Robert Brownlow (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), Mrs Judy Clarke (Teacher), Mrs Helen Sellers (Baptist), Mrs Olivia Seymour (Church of England) and Mrs Hannah Spencer (Teacher)

Officers: Mrs Rebecca Swift (Equalities Adviser – Education and Skills – Children and Young People's Service and Mrs Sally Mitchell (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

Action

174.	ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN That Mrs Olivia Seymour be elected Chairman and Mrs Helen Sellers be elected Vice-Chairman of the SACRE for 2019-2020.	
175.	APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from County Councillor Janet Jefferson and Mrs Barbara Belsham (Methodist), Reverend Simone Bennett (Church of England), Mr Mohinder Singh Chana (Sikhism), Mr Nasr Emam (Muslim) and Mrs Margaret Gibson (Church of England).	
176.	MINUTES: RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 th April, 2019 be agreed and signed by the Chairman, as a correct record, subject to the following amendments – i) Minute 167 7 th and 8 th lines – delete the words “various” and “including those” and replace with the words “some of the”; and ii) Minute 169 16 th line – NHT to read “NAHT”	
177.	MATTERS ARISING: i) Minute 167 RE Agreed Syllabus – Professor John Adams expressed disappointment that the finalised RE Syllabus remained strewn with spelling and grammatical errors and other errors, including incorrect verbs and speech. Professor Adams also expressed concern that despite his submission of detailed comments and suggested	

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	<p>amendments to the Syllabus content, only one or two of those suggestions had been incorporated into the final document.</p> <p>The Chairman assured Professor Adams that all his comments had been submitted to RE Today in order for the Syllabus to be amended accordingly, but it appeared that this had, unfortunately, not been done. In mitigation, the Chairman stated that there had been a tight timeframe for finalisation of the Syllabus and its publication to Schools.</p> <p>The Chairman undertook to contact RE Today regarding the matter and it was agreed that a request would also be made for the electronic version of the Syllabus be amended.</p> <p>ii) Membership – Catholic Representative - The Clerk reported that she had received confirmation from the Diocese of Leeds that it had appointed a new Catholic representative member for SACRE. This was Hazel Hornsby, who lived in North Yorkshire and was currently Chaplain to Holy Family Catholic School in Keighley.</p> <p>Buddhist Representative – The Clerk reported that she had received the resignation of Mrs Christina Taylor who had served the last fifteen years as the Buddhist representative on SACRE.</p> <p>Teacher Representative – Rebecca Swift reported that Mrs Sarah Beveridge had asked to take a sabbatical from membership of SACRE for a period of one year, due to pressure of school commitments and this was agreed.</p> <p>Salvationist Representative – Mrs Helen Sellers reported that she had approached the Salvation Army regarding nominating a representative and was awaiting a response.</p> <p>iii) Local Authority Adviser to SACRE – Rebecca Swift – Rebecca Swift advised Members that this was her last meeting as Adviser for SACRE, as following a recent review and re-structure of her service unit within CYPS she had decided to accept voluntary redundancy and would be leaving the Local Authority in December 2019.</p> <p>Members expressed their sadness that they would be losing Rebecca Swift’s valuable expertise and her commitment to SACRE and requested that their gratitude for all her work, particularly over the last eighteen months be noted.</p> <p>Rebecca Swift commented that she was not aware of the person who would be appointed as her replacement as Local Authority Adviser to SACRE and that the Chairman and Clerk would need to approach CYPS for this information, in due course.</p>	<p>OS</p> <p>OS/SAM</p>
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178.	<p>NEW RE AGREED SYLLABUS</p> <p>i) Final Syllabus and supporting resources produced – an overview - Rebecca Swift reported that the new RE Agreed Syllabus had been very well received by schools, highlighted the three key themes for Members and advised that a considerable amount of training had already been undertaken on the contents of the new Syllabus.</p> <p>Rebecca Swift also drew Members’ attention to Page 36 of the Syllabus which was intended as a one page overview which schools could use for lesson planning, but advised that schools could also “buy-in” bespoke teaching units. Page 96 demonstrated what progression in the subject should look like for the end of KS1, KS2 etc. for teachers to be able to check whether a pupil had attained the necessary level.</p> <p>Rebecca Swift referred Members’ to the Additional Resources appendix of what was available to schools.</p> <p>The teacher representatives commented that the new Syllabus was a very useful tool in schools and also assisted teachers in conversations with OFSTED inspectors by giving the correct language.</p> <p>Rebecca Swift asked that her thanks be placed on record to the SACRE Members who had contributed to preparing the Knowledge Organiser on five different Faiths, which had culminated in a one page Summary/Key Facts on that particular Faith.</p> <p>ii) Dissemination Events - Rebecca Swift reported that 150 delegates had attended the Conference/Launch event held on 10th June 2019, with 10 ‘RE Market Place’ stalls present. Rebecca Swift expressed thanks to the SACRE Members who had run the stalls. The feedback from attendees had been very positive with 94% of delegates rating the event as “excellent” and 6% rated it “Good”. Rebecca Swift advised the meeting that she had already delivered 4 half-day training sessions on the new Syllabus to 80 attendees in total, in Northallerton, Harrogate, Selby and Scarborough.</p> <p>Mrs Helen Sellers referred to her report, which had been circulated to Members with the agenda, on an RE Training session on the new Syllabus that she had attended in July, in Harrogate, which had been given by Rebecca Swift. Mrs Sellers assured SACRE that the new RE Agreed Syllabus had been welcomed by those who would be teaching it and greatly appreciated the training opportunities on offer.</p> <p>County Councillor Robert Heseltine queried what real influence North Yorkshire’s SACRE had on what a school chose to do within its curriculum and was reminded by Rebecca Swift that SACRE had sent letters out to certain</p>	
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	<p>schools last year challenging their non-compliance on RE teaching. The Chairman agreed monitoring should be undertaken again and support and advice could be given, whilst appropriately challenging non-compliance, which was part of SACRE's duty.</p> <p>County Councillor Robert Heseltine also enquired what the legal position was regarding monitoring Academy schools and was informed by the Chairman that they do need to comply with the law on teaching RE, but are not bound to follow the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus. Rebecca Swift added that NATRE also monitored school results and if a school had not entered any students for GCSE's for 3 years, NATRE does notify OFSTED.</p> <p>The Chairman suggested that she could produce a summary of the new OFSTED Framework for RE and report on whether any of North Yorkshire's schools had been OFSTED inspected under it.</p> <p>iii) NATRE GCSE and A Level Religious Studies Examination Results 2019 – Rebecca Swift reported that there had been a significant drop in the numbers of students taking RS at GCSE Level, the 42.6% reduction in only 8 years. Rebecca Swift further reported the outcomes for North Yorkshire schools' students and commented that North Yorkshire students were performing better than the national average which was a positive message. Members were advised that the new OFSTED Framework would be looking into Religious Studies and the access of students to RE.</p> <p>Rebecca Swift reported very positive A Level RS results, which were close to the national average, but were still above national average.</p> <p>RESOLVED -</p> <p>That the reports be noted.</p>	
179.	<p>TEACHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2019/20</p> <p>Rebecca Swift advised the meeting that she had several RE Teacher Training Days arranged for 2020 and suggested that any SACRE Member was welcome to attend if they wished to contact her. However, following her departure from the Local Authority at the end of 2019, it was uncertain who would be delivering the training aspect of her role in 2020.</p> <p>Members expressed hope that SACRE would be informed of who would be carrying out the training events in the future. The Chairman stressed that it would be essential to ensure continuation of Rebecca Swift's work with schools and that SACRE needed to consider how SACRE liaises with the Local Authority going forward.</p>	

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	<p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the position be noted.</p>	
<p>180.</p>	<p>SACRE SELF-EVALUATION AND MEMBERS SKILLS AUDIT – IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES FOR 2019/20</p> <p>Considered –</p> <p>North Yorkshire SACRE RETool – Reporting and Evaluating Toolkit document.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that SACRE needs to regularly review its aims and reported that this was last done formally in 2015 and referred to the 4 main sections of the nationally recognised audit toolkit document circulated at the meeting.</p> <p>As it was felt there was insufficient time to discuss the contents of the document in detail, it was agreed that the Chairman would circulate it to all SACRE Members asking for comments to be returned to her by a certain deadline. The Chairman undertook to collate all the responses into a report she would present to the next meeting of SACRE.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the SACRE RETool document be circulated to all Members for comments to be returned to the Chairman and a report be presented to the next meeting for consideration.</p>	<p>OS to prepare report SAM to note agenda item</p>
<p>181.</p>	<p>REVIEW OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY AND SUPPORTING RESOURCES</p> <p>Considered –</p> <p>SACRE Guidance to Schools on Collective Worship 2015.</p> <p>Rebecca Swift circulated the Guidance document which was last produced in 2015 and advised that its contents needed to be reviewed to check whether it was still ‘fit for purpose’.</p> <p>Mrs Helen Sellers shared her experience of reviewing the Bradford Policy via a Power Point presentation at the meeting.</p> <p>In the light of opposing views at the meeting on the relevancy of reviewing the current Guidance and potential contents of any new document, it was agreed that any further discussion on this issue be deferred to a future meeting of SACRE, pending the review of SACRE’s overall objectives going forward.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That a review of SACRE’s Guidance to Schools on Collective Worship be deferred to a future meeting.</p>	

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182.	CORRESPONDENCE: There had been no correspondence received since the last meeting.	
183.	OTHER BUSINESS: SACRE Annual Report 2018-19 Rebecca Swift advised that she did not propose to insert any School Case Studies in the Annual Report for this year because the new RE Syllabus had just been implemented. The Foreword would explain the reason there was no Case Studies and that she intended to have a draft Report for circulation for Members' comments by early November. Consideration of the draft Annual Report would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.	SAM to note for next Agenda
184.	DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS RESOLVED - That the next meetings be held on Thursday, 30th January, 2020 starting at 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm in Northallerton; and on Thursday, 21st May, 2020 starting at 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm in Harrogate.	All to note SAM to arrange

The meeting concluded at 4.10pm

SAM