

North Yorkshire County Council
Children and Young People’s Service

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Minutes of a meeting held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 26th January 2021

NOTE: The four Groups represented on SACRE met in their Groups immediately prior to the meeting to consider the matters on which a vote was to be taken (Minute Nos. 222 and 223).

PRESENT (THAT IS, THOSE WHO JOINED THE DISCUSSION):

Group A: Christian Denominations and such other religious denominations as, in the Authority’s opinion, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area:

Helen Sellers (Baptist) – Chair

Professor John Adams (Humanist), Chris Devanny (Catholic), Bill Kimberling (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints), Nasr Moussa Emam (Muslim) Mohinder Singh Chana (Sikhism)

Group B: Church of England: Reverend Simone Bennett and Margaret Gibson

Group C: Teachers Associations: Tara Askew, Judy Clarke, Rosemary Laverack and Douglas Rice-Bowen

Group D: Local Authority: County Councillors Janet Jefferson, Andrew Lee, Patrick Mulligan and Annabel Wilkinson

Officers: Adrian Clarke (Principal Education Advisor - Support), Daniel Harry (Democratic Services Manager), Patrick Duffy (Senior Democratic Services Officer – Clerk to SACRE), Heather Russell (Senior Education Advisor); and Olivia Seymour (Professional Religious Education Advisor)

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217	<p>WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>For the benefit of any people viewing the broadcast, the Chair advised that the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) is a Statutory Committee established by the Local Authority.</p> <p>Its main function is to advise and support the Local Authority on matters related to religious education, which follows the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and on Collective Worship in schools.</p> <p>The papers for this meeting had been published in advance on the County Council’s website.</p>	
218	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies were received from County Councillor Robert Heseltine.</p>	

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219	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
220	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2020 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to the reference to <i>The Church of St. Jesus of Latter-Day Saints</i> being amended to <i>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints</i>.</p>	Clerk
221	<p>MATTERS ARISING:</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
222	<p>RECORDING OF INDIVIDUAL ATTENDANCE AT SACRE MEETINGS</p> <p>Considered –</p> <p>A report by the Clerk.</p> <p>Patrick Duffy introduced this report and highlighted the following:-</p> <p>The Section in the Annual Report concerning recording of attendance at meetings during the year, will be informed by the Committee’s decision on this report.</p> <p>Following a discussion at the last meeting, he had contacted Members to outline various options as to how individual attendance might be recorded, together with the option that it not be recorded.</p> <p>Of the four Members who responded, three were in favour of individual attendance being recorded in the Annual Report. One Member queried why the Committee would want to do this in that if, say, a Member was regularly unable to attend meetings, there are procedures in place to address that and, sometimes, of course, missing a meeting is unavoidable.</p> <p>It seemed sensible to continue to use the vehicle of the Annual Report to record attendance. If Members wished to record individual attendance, the three options outlined were:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - firstly, to continue to record attendance by Group, as is the case now. For example, two <i>Members of Group B, Church of England representatives, attended the January and October meetings;</i> - secondly, that attendance be denoted by the position or organisation of the Member. For instance, <i>the Catholic Member attended x meetings; and</i> - thirdly, that attendance be denoted by individual name and organisation. For example, <i>Douglas Rice-Bowen, Teacher Representative, attended x meetings</i> 	

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	<p>In accordance with the Committee’s Constitution, each of the four Groups that comprises SACRE exercised a vote on this matter.</p> <p>At the Chair’s request, the spokespersons for each Group related their decision:-</p> <p><i>Group A (Christian Denominations and such other religious denominations as, in the Authority’s opinion, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area)</i> – Record attendance by the name and organisation of the individual Member.</p> <p><i>Group B (Church of England Representatives)</i> – Record attendance by role/designation of the Member.</p> <p><i>Group C (Teacher Representatives)</i> – Record attendance as is the case currently i.e. by Group, without names stated.</p> <p>Group D (Local Authority Representatives) - Record attendance as is the case currently i.e. by Group, without names stated.</p> <p>All of the Groups agreed that attendance should be recorded in the Annual Report.</p> <p>Accordingly, it was</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That attendance of Members at meetings of SACRE be recorded in the Annual Report and that the existing practice continue i.e. that attendance be recorded by Group, without individual names being stated.</p>	<p>Clerk ALL TO NOTE</p>
<p>223</p>	<p>DRAFT SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20</p> <p>Considered –</p> <p>The draft Annual Report of SACRE for 2019/2020.</p> <p>Adrian Clarke introduced this Item and acknowledged that Heather Russell and Olivia Seymour had produced the Report.</p> <p>It is a statutory requirement to produce an Annual Report and send it to the Department for Education. However, some elements that would normally be included cannot be on this occasion, given the pandemic.</p> <p>Douglas Rice-Bowen pointed out the following elements that required amendment:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Page 6, second bullet point: This should read <i>Among arts, humanities or social science subjects...</i> - Page 10 insert a full stop after <i>principal religions</i> <p>In response to a question from Douglas Rice-Bowen, Olivia Seymour provided the background to “knowledge organisers” and</p>	

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	<p>advised that this will be examined in terms of advice for Schools that looks at curriculum progression.</p> <p>In response to questions from County Councillor Lee, Olivia Seymour advised that there was no active monitoring of compliance of Collective Worship, due to the pandemic. Nationally, a piece of work is being undertaken that may inform our approach. Ofsted may pick up non-compliance, as part of their Inspections, but the key method will be through monitoring by SACRE.</p> <p>Adrian Clarke added that, as soon as Schools resume, the Directorate will take note of any information from the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) and suggest to SACRE a standard approach to the monitoring of non-compliance of Collective Worship.</p> <p>Douglas Rice-Bowen commented that the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) had established that there is no real appetite from Ofsted to get involved in Collective Worship compliance. One of the problems is the way the legislation is drafted. Ofsted is more concerned with compliance in the delivery of Religious Education.</p> <p>It was noted that NASACRE are undertaking work on Collective Worship and the legal framework within which it operates. This will assist SACREs.</p> <p>Members thanked officers concerned for the work they had done on the draft Annual Report.</p> <p>In accordance with the Committee's Constitution, each Group that comprises SACRE exercised a vote on this matter.</p> <p>At the Chair's request, the spokespersons for each Group related their decision.</p> <p>Each Group (A; B; C and D) advised that their vote was to approve the Annual Report and, therefore, it was</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Annual Report of North Yorkshire SACRE for 2019/2020 be approved, subject to the minor alterations outlined above.</p>	<p>Principal Education Adviser</p>
<p>224</p>	<p>NORTH YORKSHIRE SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020/2022</p> <p>Considered –</p> <p>A progress report on the above-mentioned document, prepared by the Chair.</p> <p>The Chair pulled out the following elements in particular:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administratively, we have done what we can but SACRE is limited in the contact it can have with schools currently. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are actively seeking to recruit new Members but it is a slow process. - Olivia Seymour will say more about training for Schools, as part of her update, but training for SACRE Members is planned during the April meeting. <p>Nasr Moussa Emam commented that it had been suggested there be a Welcome Pack to recruit new Members – it was similar to a training package. He would be happy to help develop this to encourage members of the community to join SACRE.</p> <p>Olivia Seymour advised that there is an Induction Pack for new Members and she and the Chair speak with new Members so that they can raise any questions and understand what the role entails. The Pack needs further work.</p> <p>Nasr Moussa Emam added that the Pack is more for professionals – what is needed, in his view, is a Pack to encourage members of Faith Communities.</p> <p>The Chair said that this would be considered at the next Liaison Group (which is a discussion between the Chair, Vice Chair and officers).</p> <p>NOTED.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>225</p>	<p>UPDATE BY PROFESSIONAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ADVISER</p> <p>Considered –</p> <p>A report by Olivia Seymour.</p> <p>Olivia drew the Committee’s attention to the following aspects:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaison with Schools is limited due to some of the restrictions that have been in place during the last two terms. - She is working with colleagues in the Children and Young People’s Service Directorate to ensure formal feedback from training sessions. This will be provided for future meetings. - The report outlines the support being given to schools <i>virtually</i>, together with an outline of the work planned, as and when it is appropriate. This includes support for Senior Leaders and Governors. - In liaison with colleagues, she is seeking to put a mechanism in place for monitoring RE in Schools and then examine what other processes might be available, through the School Improvement Service, to enable SACRE to have a rounded picture of the situation regarding RE in North Yorkshire Schools. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two draft questionnaires have been produced for Primary and Secondary Schools (contained at Appendices 3 and 4, respectively, of the report.) These have been developed from examples from other SACRES and made specific to North Yorkshire SACRE and North Yorkshire County Council Schools. - Professor John Adams felt that the questionnaires needed more work, particularly with regard to open-ended questions which, in some cases, would be better replaced by a scaled response and he offered to help work on them. Olivia Seymour explained the difficulty in obtaining Yes/No answers from Schools, as each School shapes their curriculum differently. She would be happy to discuss the questionnaires further with Professor Adams. - In response to a question from County Councillor Annabel Wilkinson, Olivia Seymour confirmed that the free Home Learning resources from NATRE are available to people who choose to educate other than at School. The links to these resources are available on the NATRE and County Council Websites, as well as a template letter for parents that helps parents understand the context of RE in Schools. Adrian Clarke added that these materials can be added to the list of resources available when the Children and Young People's Service Directorate communicates with people who elect to home-educate other than at School. <p>The Chair thanked Olivia for the work that she has done.</p> <p>NOTED.</p>	Professional RE Adviser
226	<p>UPDATE BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</p> <p>Adrian Clarke apologised for the fact that his update was verbal. This was because of the rapidly changing situation faced by Schools. By way of example, 272 pieces of Guidance or Regulation had been issued by the Authority in the Autumn Term. This was a four-fold increase from the same period in the preceding year.</p> <p>He drew Members' attention to the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools had been directed at the beginning of January to move to remote education for the vast majority of pupils, with only vulnerable learners and the children of critical workers attending School. Attendance is higher than during last year's lockdowns, as vulnerable learners now include pupils without access to devices to enable them to learn remotely - A key difference in this lockdown is the duty for Schools to provide between three and five hours a day of teaching dependent on the child's age. It is important to note that this does not mean continuous live teaching for this time. Independent reading, guided reading and writing are included in the time allocation, as they are skills that should continue to be developed. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Anecdotally, it is understood that Collective Worship continues, via video conferencing,- The School Improvement Service has supported Schools with regard to remote learning – firstly, to identify where technology is required it has worked with colleagues in the Stronger Communities and Technology and Change Teams to assess and fill gaps. Secondly, by providing policies and resources to support schools deliver an appropriate curriculum over this half term.- Both ends of national curriculum key stage tests (known as SATS) in Primary Schools and public exams in Secondary Schools, have been cancelled for the forthcoming summer. As a Local Authority, we are responding to the Department for Education consultation on appropriate alternatives for end of school public exams. This includes both GCSE and 'A' levels and will have an impact on the SACRE Annual Report for 2020-2021, which will be brought to Committee next winter.- Much of the Local Authority's RE-specific work has been liaising with Olivia Seymour, as its Professional RE Adviser, with meetings held half-termly to plan and progress work.- Undoubtedly, the continuation of disruption to Schools will continue to affect the Authority's work. However, it is still possible to provide remote training and advice and support to teachers.- Although the pandemic has been hugely disruptive to Schools, the immediate need to be able to communicate in different ways has opened opportunities, which mean that the Directorate is hopeful of collaboration, networking and engagement with School audiences that were otherwise hard to reach.- Almost all training has moved to being provided remotely but there has been strong engagement. The benefits of remote training are, for example, teachers may have had a long drive previously to and from the venue, whilst still managing their teaching commitments. The move is towards a greater variety of courses with fewer numbers of delegates. There is a lot of optimism around this. <p>Nasr Moussa Emam thanked Adrian for his update but asked if it could be provided in writing as there are some concerns about remote learning being expressed by Faith Communities and he would like to help the Authority in this regard.</p> <p>The Chair said she would leave it to Adrian Clarke and Patrick Duffy as to how they wished to deal with the request for the update to be provided in writing.</p> <p>She concluded this Item by thanking Adrian Clark for the update and for all the work that is being undertaken by the Local Authority at this time. SACRE will do whatever it can to support learning throughout the Local Authority.</p>	
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227	<p>OFSTED REPORTS FOR NORTH YORKSHIRE SCHOOLS AND ANY PARTICULAR CONCERNS ARISING FROM THESE</p> <p>Adrian Clarke highlighted the following points:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ofsted Inspections remain suspended due to the continuing pandemic. Inspectors carried out visits in the autumn term to a small number of Schools and letters following visits have been published on the Ofsted website. The letters do not provide any evaluation or graded judgements. Six Schools have been visited. - Remote Inspections of Schools and Further Education Providers began this week, with a particular focus on how well children and learners are being educated remotely. There is no one way in which to remotely educate. Schools have a duty to provide remote education, but to do so in a manner which is appropriate to their school, curriculum and community. - Ofsted will inspect Schools rated 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement', as planned, but will also follow up on complaints raised by parents across all grades of School in order to resolve issues. As these Inspections will not involve an on-site visit, they will be unable to cover the full scope of a Monitoring Inspection. - Ofsted will continue to undertake on-site Inspections if they have immediate concerns – especially about safeguarding; the leadership of a School; or a failure to provide education to children. So far this term, no notifications of Inspections have been received. <p>NOTED.</p>	
228	<p>NASACRE EGM</p> <p>The Chair provided a verbal update.</p> <p>She had attended the EGM on 17th November 2020. The meeting was held via Zoom and was attended by representatives of 48 SACREs.</p> <p>The first half of the meeting comprised an address by the Chair of NASACRE and a Business Meeting. The second part looked at the Westhill Projects (Projects undertaken by a SACRE to promote RE and Collective Worship and to develop resources) completed in the previous year.</p> <p>The Chair of NASACRE highlighted the political to and fro that is necessary to make a SACRE work.</p> <p>The Chair of North Yorkshire SACRE asked how rural schools would be supported through online resources. In response, NASACRE say they will be creating a larger interactive area on their website, where Schools and SACREs can share resources.</p>	

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	<p>NASACRE are involved in discussions about proposed changes to the RE Curriculum and with the RE Council on the Worldview Project. Information will be shared as it becomes available.</p> <p>The idea of Shared Human Experience was considered – looking at how RE and Collective Worship can strengthen community feeling and an understanding of diversity.</p> <p>All of the papers from the EGM are available to view on the NASACRE Website.</p> <p>NOTED.</p>	
229	<p>CORRESPONDENCE</p> <p>The Chair advised the meeting that she had been notified, in November 2019, of a Freedom of Information request that was to be sent to all Local Authorities regarding the funding of their SACRE. This had been received by the Local Authority; and all information requested had been supplied.</p> <p>She also advised Members that Barbara Belsham, the Methodist Representative on the Committee, had resigned this month. She was sorry to lose such a committed Member and had written to Barbara to thank her for her contribution to SACRE.</p> <p>Finally, she reported that this would be the last meeting attended by Margaret Gibson. Margaret was resigning as a Church of England Representative for the Diocese of York. She had served the Committee in two capacities over many years and will be greatly missed. She wished Margaret all the best. Margaret said it had been a pleasure to be on the SACRE and wished the SACRE success in its endeavours.</p>	
230	<p>DATES OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>This will be on Tuesday 20th April 2021 at 2.00 p.m. to be held remotely, via Microsoft Teams</p>	ALL TO NOTE
231	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT</p> <p>On this occasion, there was no other business.</p>	

The meeting concluded at 5.34 p.m.

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