

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 20th April 2021

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), Bill Kimberling (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) and Mohinder Singh Chana (Sikh)

NOTE: Chris Devanny (Catholic) attended the training that preceded the meeting

Group B: Church of England: Reverend Simone Bennett and Philippa Boulding

Group C: Teachers Associations: Tara Askew, Judy Clarke and Rosemary Laverack

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 and Scrutiny Manager), Patrick Duffy (Senior Democratic Services Officer – Clerk to SACRE), Heather Russell (Senior Educational Advisor); and Olivia Seymour (Professional Religious Education Adviser)

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232	<p>WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The Chair mentioned that Members had just completed a one-hour training session, led by the Professional Religious Education Adviser, with support from Democratic Services. She thanked the officers, on behalf of SACRE, for a useful session.</p> <p>For the benefit of any members of the public or the media viewing this broadcast, the Chair advised that the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education is a Statutory Committee established by the Local Authority.</p> <p>She added that its main function is to advise and support the Local Authority on matters related to religious education for schools that follow the locally Agreed Syllabus and on Collective Worship.</p> <p>Four groups are represented on SACRE:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group A – Christian Denominations and such other religious denominations that reflect the principal religious traditions in the area • Group B – The Church of England 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group C – Teacher and Head Teacher Associations • Group D – The Local Authority <p>The Membership of SACRE is on the back of the Agenda for today's meeting and the papers for this meeting had been published in advance on the County Council's website.</p>	
233	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies were received from County Councillor Robert Heseltine, Chris Devanny (Catholic Faith Group) and Douglas Rice-Bowen (Teacher Representative).</p> <p>NOTE: Nasr Moussa Emam (Muslim Faith Group) was unable to join the meeting, owing to technical difficulties.</p>	
234	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
235	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th January 2021 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.</p>	Clerk
236	<p>MATTERS ARISING:</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
237	<p>TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS</p> <p>Considered –</p> <p>A report by Olivia Seymour, which informed Members of training and support given to schools since the last SACRE meeting.</p> <p>She made the following points, in particular:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A termly Newsletter had been introduced – Members should let her know if there is anything they would like to be included - Training has been <i>virtual</i> this year, due to Covid, but there have been good opportunities to engage with teachers. An outline of the content and the feedback is included in the report - She is working on support for Senior Leaders and Governors, although there are restrictions on what can be done currently - With regard to monitoring of Religious Education, Group C have approved the questionnaires (considered at the last SACRE meeting) for use in schools and she is liaising with the Local Authority as to how best these can be disseminated, so that SACRE can receive more in-depth information on the work of schools 	

	<p>Professor John Adams referred to the fact that the Secondary Schools Network had been cancelled again and asked the Adviser if she had any thoughts why this was so, because, for some fora, virtual meetings have led to an increase in attendance. Olivia Seymour outlined her thoughts, which included the fact that Professional Practice Groups are new. Therefore, the mechanisms used to reach Subject Leads are still being built up. Consultations with teachers will take place to ascertain the most helpful way to put on training and support to meet their needs.</p> <p>Adrian Clarke added that this is not unique to Religious Education; collectively, the Local Authority is looking at how it can best engage with Subject Leads.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Olivia for the huge amount of work that she is doing and said how much she had enjoyed the informative Newsletter.</p> <p>NOTED.</p>	
238	<p>NATIONAL UPDATES: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</p> <p>Considered –</p> <p>A report by Olivia Seymour, which pulled together a number of national conversations that are taking place.</p> <p>She reported that, since preparing the update, it had been announced that the Worldviews Project, exploring Religion and Worldviews and providing support for curriculum design and syllabus writers, is about to start. This will help inform SACRE's consideration of the Agreed Syllabus when it is next produced as, by then, this national piece of work will have been completed.</p> <p>Her report summarised the Major Report into Hinduism in Religious Education in UK Schools. She advised that North Yorkshire is already paying attention to a number of the recommendations. For instance, training has been held, locally and regionally, for Primary School Teachers and is planned for Secondary School Teachers.</p> <p>As Regional Ambassador for Religious Education, she has undertaken work on Regional Events for teachers. In March, there had been the launch of our Curriculum Conversation Series and Dr. Richard Kueh, HMI, had addressed 150 teachers on line about Ofsted and Religious Education. We are fully booked for our other keynoter speaker, Dr. Kathryn Wright who, in June, will be speaking on Religion and Worldviews.</p> <p>A series of Curriculum Workshops are being provided for schools. These are being made available to all SACREs in the Region. This will be a good opportunity for North Yorkshire schools to engage with other schools in the region. Take up has been good.</p> <p>NOTED.</p>	

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NATIONAL UPDATES: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**Considered –**

A report by Olivia Seymour, which advised Members of national updates on Collective Worship, highlighting guidance and advice for schools, including the restrictions they currently face in meeting together.

A piece of work is starting nationally which should help inform SACRE when it updates its Guidance.

Professor Adams commented that there is a fundamental flaw in the Constitution of SACRE as there is provision for Religious Education and for religious indoctrination, which there is no place for in schools. The law says that there should be Collective Worship of mainly or wholly Christian nature, but many schools ignore or modify this.

Olivia Seymour advised that the language is taken from NASACRE documents. There will be opportunities for SACRE to feed into the process and she will keep Members abreast of developments.

Mohinder Singh Chana agreed that Collective Worship cannot be inclusive if there are pupils of different faiths. In these cases, a Determination can be used to cater for their needs.

(NOTE: A Determination is an exemption from the requirement for mainly or broadly Christian Collective Worship. This needs to be made by a Head Teacher and approved by SACRE.)

Reverend Simone Bennett said she did not find the language of religious indoctrination helpful. A number of schools are dominantly represented by non-Christian faiths, who find helpful and enriching ways to work within the law, so that there is integrity for schools and pupils.

Councillor Andrew Lee felt that Collective Worship is valuable and inclusive and that the term religious indoctrination is offensive.

Bill Kimberling commented that Collective Worship can help guard against ignorance by allowing an understanding of different beliefs and respect for these.

The Chair concluded the discussion by stating that SACRE will revisit this when it looks at its Guidance and Policy. There are opportunities to apply for a Determination to have different forms of worship – one of which is Inclusive Worship, which is not of a mainly or broadly Christian nature. She encouraged Members to let her or officers know if they feel there is anything that needs to be included in this on-going conversation.

Professor Adams felt it was not respectful for Members to say his view was offensive. The Chair responded that she felt it was

	<p>Professor Adams' choice of language, rather than his view, that Members may have taken issue with.</p> <p>NOTED</p>	
240	<p>UPDATE BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY</p> <p>Considered –</p> <p>A report by Adrian Clarke, which updated Members on developments from the Local Authority's perspective.</p> <p>He highlighted the following aspects:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All schools had now returned in a phased manner - Attendance levels are generally back to normal levels - Schools are expected to fulfil the curriculum – including all aspects of Religious Education and Collective Worship, in line with Department for Education (DfE) operational guidance under Covid - Ofsted intend to return to a full Inspection Programme from September 2021. SACRE will receive qualitative analyses of Inspections - The Children and Young People's Service Directorate is working with the Professional Adviser and the Chair to ensure that resources are in place for schools to access a Training and Development Programme for the summer - Remote training will continue for the foreseeable future, although the long term aspiration is to return to face-to-face training - The DfE has acknowledged receipt of SACREs Annual Report <p>Olivia Seymour said that Ofsted are planning a report into Religious Education. National messages can be shared with SACRE in due course.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Adrian for his report and said she appreciated the support that the Local Authority is providing to SACRE.</p> <p>NOTED</p>	
241	<p>CORRESPONDENCE</p> <p>The Chair appraised Members of the following three matters:-</p> <p><u>NASACRE AGM on 24th May</u> This will be held remotely. There is one place still available for North Yorkshire SACRE. If anyone is interested, contact the Clerk.</p> <p><u>NASACRE Vacancies on its Executive</u> There are a number of vacancies. Members should refer to the</p>	

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	<p>NASACRE website, or contact the Clerk, if they require help accessing the site.</p> <p>If, after reading the descriptors for the posts, any Members are interested and feel they have the required skills and experience, they should contact the Clerk, who will forward their submission to the Chair and Vice-Chair, as all nominations must be confirmed by the Chair or Vice-Chair.</p> <p><u>Hindu Education Board</u> She had received specific questions from the Board in her role as Chair. As a result she had:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- sent to the Board a summary of SACREs Agreed Syllabus, which illustrates how Hinduism is included; and- informed the Board that we had been actively seeking a Hindu representative for some time and asked if they could help in this regard	
242	DATE OF NEXT MEETING This will be on Tuesday 22 nd June 2021 at 4.00 p.m., to be held remotely, via Microsoft Teams	ALL TO NOTE
243	ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT On this occasion, there was no other business.	

The meeting concluded at 3.40 p.m.

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