

## **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**HELD ON TUESDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH, 2021 AT 4.30 PM**

**VENUE: REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**Present: -**

### **Local Councillors**

Councillor Farthing  
Councillor Marshall  
Councillor McKeith  
Councillor Williams

### **Christian and Other Denominations**

Matt Moore

### **Church of England**

Caroline Weir  
Stuart Bain

### **Teachers Association**

Natalie Fountain

### **In Attendance**

Cathryn Forbes, Specialist Officer  
Richard Cullen, Lead Support and Intervention Officer  
Paul Wood, Principal Governance Services Officer  
Valerie Blackett, Proposed Humanist Representative

### **SAC140 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillor Hunt. Andrew Barron and Lisa Quinn Britton.

### **SAC 141 Nominations to join the SACRE Membership**

It was AGREED to accept the nominations of the following representatives to join the SACRE Membership:-

Chris May (Humanist) as a Co-opted Member  
Valerie Blackett (Humanist) as a Co-opted Member

Fiona Matthews – Teachers Association  
Jo McShane -Teachers Association

**SAC142 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2019**

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were a true record

**SAC 143 Minutes of the meeting of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 13 January 2021**

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were a true record

**SAC144 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**SAC145 NASACRE Update**

Cathryn Forbes advised the group of the latest update from NASACRE which included details of the Annual Conference in May, a Collective Worship Project, Worldview “journeys”, and a report on the state of Hinduism in Religious Education in UK Schools.

In relation to the Collective Worship project ongoing at the moment, Mrs Forbes suggested that any review be carried out as part of the launch of the new agreed syllabus.

It was AGREED to note the update

**SAC146 Update on Progress of the New Agreed Syllabus**

Richard Cullen advised the group that the Cabinet report had now been completed and was ready to be submitted for approval, with finances already approved.

In response to Mr Bains enquiry as to how training/introductions for schools would be carried out for the implementation of the new agreed syllabus, as it was a departure from the current syllabus, Mr Cullen advised that it was planned to have a virtual conference once Cabinet approval had been given with training envisaged for the back end of September.

Mrs Forbes commented that primary schools would be set up to use the existing syllabus until Christmas for their planning as it was felt it wouldn't be helpful having people running too quickly with this, resulting in questions being asked as to why this had been done. So there would be leeway in terms

of the new syllabus coming online to help the schools and have a crossover between the two.

In response to Ms Weir's enquiry over possible lengths of transitions periods for schools, Mrs Forbes advised that she would like to see a focus on one part of the new syllabus to start off with to allow a sense of how to plan, how to get the resources etc, and a period of time to get to grips with the new syllabus.

Mrs Forbes commented that at any point schools could have OFSTED in, so if we were shifting to a new agreed syllabus in terms of the three I'S, they needed to be comfortable with that as it was slightly different to the practicalities of delivering in the classroom and setting out their schemes of work, they could do this with the old document and they have to be able to do the same with the new document so it would operate on two levels, an understanding of the syllabus and the delivery of the syllabus at a practical level.

It was AGREED to note the update

#### **SAC147      Spring Newsletter**

Mrs Forbes requested the Council's views on the Newsletter which had been circulated previously and that all suggestions/amendments submitted had been carried out.

The Chairman enquired if we still had a group of teachers in place to give their input and views on the syllabus etc, and what resources they needed or did this group need to be revived.

Mrs Forbes advised that we had a regular group of people coming through via the RE Training at the moment so these were asked for comment and there were also two teachers at the presentations that weren't part of SACRE. Mrs Forbes informed that she was more concerned about our secondary schools, which were all academies and tended to use Durham SACRE and their syllabus so there needed to be consideration over continuation with the Primary Schools and she was unaware of what a lot of the secondary schools were doing and what provision they had so it was on her agenda to try and meet with them over this.

It was AGREED to note the Newsletter

#### **SCA 148      R.E Training**

Mrs Forbes updated the group over what had taken place over the year in delivering the Primary DHCE and SMSC.

So far these had taken place over Teams and they have had two twilights, one in December on Christianity and another in March on the teaching of Islam.

There had been two afternoon sessions for RE Leads in primary schools, one on what made an effective RE Lead and one on how you tackle misconceptions and religious bigotry in the classroom, but also in the wider community.

Mrs Forbes advised that schools that have took part so far were Castletown Primary, Broadway Juniors, Barnwell Academy, Hetton Primary, Rickleton Primary, Mill Hill Primary, Barnes Infants, Easington Lane, Heton Lyons, Redby Primary and Academy 360.

Still to come was another twilight on creating communities in RE and how to manage progress and whole school assessments at the beginning of July.

Mrs Forbes advised that she would keep the group updated in terms of where they were with the new agreed syllabus and would also work with Mr Cullen and his colleagues on the CPD and how this should look in September but she was keen to have a couple of bigger sessions just after October half term whereby they look at the new syllabus and how they start to plan for January and then a follow up session at the end of January to see how we move things forward.

Ms Fountain wished to congratulate Mrs Forbes on the work carried out which was most beneficial to the schools.

Ms Weir also thanked Mrs Forbes for all the work put in, especially during these current times, commenting that it was not easy. Ms Weir enquired if there was more scope to create network opportunities via the launch of the new syllabus and teachers may be more open to come into a Sunderland network and that may be a way look at joint planning to compliment the twilight and training that was scheduled.

Mrs Forbes commented that it was certainly something to consider, especially at the launches. It could also be considered to try and trailblaze this in the summer newsletter that would be coming out. Mrs Forbes also commented that she would like to see a special newsletter in September that launched the new syllabus and inviting people along initially to form a network and talk to us about how they felt working with a new syllabus.

#### **SCA149      Date and Time of the next meeting**

To be confirmed once new Council Diary had been agreed

(Signed)      Councillor L. Farthing,  
Chairman