

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

WEDNESDAY, 20TH APRIL, 2022

A MEETING of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) was held virtually via MICROSOFT TEAMS on WEDNESDAY, 20TH APRIL, 2022, at 4.30 pm.

PRESENT:

Chair – Mr Bob Kiddle (Humanism)
Vice-Chair – Councillor Glynis Smith

Councillor Jane Cox

Mrs Y Teimoori (Baha'I), Mr S Syed (Muslim), Tara Moxon (National Education Union), Danielle Heath (National Education Union), Mr Harvey Kasin (Jewish), Mr Joel Ward and Mr Andy Wright (Church of England)

Also in attendance:-

Lay Blaylock, RE Today (Support to SACRE)
Paul Ruane, Head of Learning Provision
Sameena Choudry, Learning Standards and Effectiveness Officer
Amber Torrington, Governance Officer

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sue Knowles and Tracey Moran, Jemma Gelder, Lucy Saxton and Mary Sivaanbu.

20 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Nominations were sought for the appointment of the Chair of the Committee

RESOLVED that Mr Bob Kiddle be appointed as Chair of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education.

21 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS.

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were made.

22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY

No declarations were made at the meeting.

23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH NOVEMBER, 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th November, 2021 be approved as a true record.

In relation to guidance and information paper being produced by Lat Blaylock on Pupils with SEND and Religious Education, Members were advised that material was still being collated for the National Guidance once this was completed it would be circulated to schools and a copy would be shared with the Committee. It was also noted that this was also an item to be discussed later on the agenda along with school visits.

Discussion took place with regard to walking tours of places of worship and other places relevant to RE for SACRE Members. It was reported that due to difficulties with Covid, this has not been a priority. However, a number of on-line tours were available around the country that can be drawn to the attention of all Doncaster Schools.

24 ACTION ON CPD FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS IN THE COMING YEAR - DISCUSSION

Lat Blaylock reported to Members that a Primary Teachers meeting had taken place today regarding Non-Religious World views in Religious Education, which was well attended. Teachers were asked what their future training needs would be and it was identified that the title for the next meeting would be Ofsted related. It was envisaged that there were 3 Ofsted priorities to be focussed on as follows:-

- Articulate children been able to speak well about RE
- Teachers confidence on subject knowledge; and
- Sequencing of progress

Lat also suggested that there needed to be some training on early years for RE, which would be based on the paper SACRE discussed at its' last time, 'DfE EYFS Requirements and Guidance applied to RE', which was now in its final stages and almost ready for circulation. He wished to state that he was grateful to Doncaster Teachers for their help with the Early Years Guidance that will be published.

Lat went on to suggest that a 90 minute on-line session or that we use the early years as a published item for the work we want to do at one of the future Primary Network Groups. It was envisaged that 3 primary network groups would be planned as follows:-

- Focus of Ofsted
- Early Years RE
- A third topic to be determined.

He reported that there was an issue with Secondary training offer. Lat briefly explained that there were funds available for Primary Network Groups to meet and Secondary Network Groups. However, recruitment for Secondary has not been successful enough to run. He stated that work was continuing to be done to on this but at present there was no clear strategy for making training events for Secondary colleagues work in the coming 3 terms. It was noted that any suggestions on how recruitment can be more effective would be appreciated.

Paul Ruane advised Members that there was a far more active Doncaster Association of Secondary Head Teachers with a number of groups extending from that of which one was Subject Leadership. It was suggested that Lat prepare a paper which could then be shared with the Secondary Heads Group, which may be a way of promoting this issue.

Joel Ward asked whether there was any more feedback on why there was such little uptake from Secondary. He suggested whether there was some form of consultation with Secondary RE teachers required. Lat stated that life in schools had been largely disrupted not just within secondary due to the pandemic and it may be that it has slipped down the priority list. It was hoped that this would improve over the coming months. Lat wished to point out that Doncaster was not alone in failing to recruit at the moment.

Joel Ward mentioned that he had been involved in the past in secondary visits to places of worship with representatives from all faiths which would support the curriculum. He suggested that a question and answer session could be undertaken. The Chair, stated that this would be discussed at Item 10 on the agenda.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) Suggestions for a 3rd Primary Network Group topic be forwarded to Lat; and
- (2) Lat to prepare a paper on recruitment for Secondary Network Groups to be shared with the Secondary Head Groups.

25 SEND AND RE AND ON EYFS AND RE - DISCUSSION

Lat Blaylock introduced Items 7 and 8 together stating that as previously mentioned these were two projects that were being undertaken from last year. He stated that both projects were in similar situations. At the last meeting draft guidance was looked at and it was agreed that the guidance required more of a local flavour and as already stated he was grateful to the early years teachers for their input.

He asked whether the offer of training support should be provided along with the early years material and it was clear that this should be offered, which will be planned into the coming year. He wished to point out that this training offer had been really popular.

In terms of Special Needs (SEND), it maybe that Teachers within special needs schools would also benefit from training, which was unfortunately not something within his competency. However, he knows a trainer who could provide that specialism. He went on to recommend the work of Anne Chrisman, who is an experienced Special Needs Religious Education Practitioner from Redbridge, London, who would be able to work with our special schools, special needs teachers from mainstream schools and RE Specialists who have a concern for their special pupils. It was advised that this would then give us a suite of paper based guidance on the latest Government requirements for Early Years and Special Needs backed by a training offer for schools.

Paul Ruane also suggested that if SACRE wanted to promote a session for Special Needs this could be provided though the SENCO Teachers modelling.

Members acknowledge that with SEND, it was important that the trainer providing that support and guidance has that specialism.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the update be noted; and
- (2) Lat to make contact with Anne Chrisman on the possibility of working with Doncaster and providing training on Special Needs.

26 EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) AND RE- DISCUSSION

Agenda item 8 was discussed alongside Agenda item 7

27 RE TODAY SACRE NATIONAL NEWS UPDATE - SPRING 2022 (LAT BLAYLOCK)

SACRE were provided with the spring update from RE Today, which provided information on a number of areas. Lat Blaylock introduced the item drawing members attention to some key points highlighted within the document:-

Religious Education Research Review

This was published by Ofsted a year ago which included the themes the inspectorate were looking for. The paper provides a number links which SACRE members can explore.

Teacher Survey on Secondary RE and RS

Lat stated that he works for Subject Teacher Association for RE, 'NATRE' and a bi-annual survey is carried out for Primary and then Secondary. The paper contains the survey for Secondary from last year.

Religious Education and the lack of support by Government Funding.

Lat sought members views on whether Doncaster SACRE would like to write to Department for Education (DfE) regarding this issue. This item is looking at encouraging the Government to have a national strategy for religious education. Members were advised that the Government do have strategies for particular subjects and considerable amounts of money were spent. He reported that the RE community were eager to see the Government adopt a strategy inclusive of RE recognising that primary RE is weak because Teachers have a shortage of confidence in subject knowledge and that secondary RE is also weak because Senior School Leaders are struggling to allocate time for the GCSE. He advised that GCSE numbers for both Doncaster and nationally had fallen in the 5 year period.

It was suggested that Lat along with Paul Ruane and Sameena, draft a letter which then could be forwarded to SACRE members for their comments and further suggestions prior to sending to the Department for Education (DfE). It was also proposed that a copy of the letter be forwarded to the Doncaster MP's.

NASACRE Conference 2022

Lat Blaylock stated that the NASACRE Conference would be held on 23rd May 2022 and invited any member of SACRE to attend. There was capacity within the budget to fund for transport.

It was noted that the current intension was for the conference to be held face to face in Birmingham

The following Members would be attending the Conference on behalf of Doncaster SACRE:-

Mr Bob Kiddle and Tara Moxon.

Conference details would be forwarded to attendees outside of the meeting.

In relation to on-line training programme, Lat suggested that if anyone was new to SACRE then it may be worth looking at the training that's on offer.

Lat wished to point out that one of the themes identified with the NATRE Spirited Arts 2022 was running in conjunction with the Jo Cox Foundation which was pleasing to see and he will be promoting that to Doncaster Schools.

The paper also provided further details on on-line training available. If any member of SACRE would like to take up the opportunity of training, they can click on the links and book themselves on. For those that are not supported by NASACRE, then if people could get in touch with Lat, Paul or Sameena this can be arranged.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the update be noted; and
- (2) Details of the NASACRE Conference on 23rd May, 2022, be forwarded to Bob Kiddle and Tara Moxon

28 SCHOOL VISITING - A PROPOSAL

The Chair introduced the paper proposing that Doncaster SACRE aims to compile of list of people who would welcome an invitation to visit schools as a resource for teachers to use in RE, ethics, philosophy or other appropriate lessons and assemblies. He stated that the aim would be to enrich students' religious education and enhance awareness, understanding and tolerance of religious diversity.

A number of SACRE Members shared their previous knowledge and experiences of being involved with school visits, which were mostly positive and would welcome any new proposal going forward.

The Chair proposed that a small group of SACRE members form a sub-committee to consider all relevant implications, research what other SACREs were doing and submit a complete, thought through proposal to a future meeting. It was suggested that the sub-committee could have something to present at the summer term meeting and hopefully look at starting the school visits from September 2022.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The proposal be noted;
- (2) A further copy of the proposal along with guidance be forwarded to SACRE members and those Members wishing to join the sub-committee should contact the Chair;

- (3) The Chair, to set up the Sub-Committee following submission of Members interests in attending; and
- (4) The sub-committee produce a report for the Summer Term SACRE meeting.

29 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education will take place on Thursday, 30th June, 2022 at 4.30 pm

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____