

## **NASACRE Conference 2022**

Held again this year online. There were about 140 people there. The Main Conference consisted of three sessions each with a keynote speaker and discussion in break-out groups. I also attended two workshops.

### **1. The RE Council - Keynote Speaker Ed Pawson, vice-chair**

Some key Issues for us:

- There were only five applications for Westhill awards this year. We could be applying to help facilitate something we would like to be doing.
- The REC Handbook is in the process of development. It covers topics including a national statement of entitlement, the 'religion and worldviews' approach, an RE quality mark and teacher recruitment. All topics that we are concerned about. The draft handbook is well worth a look through and can be downloaded from:

<https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-handbook-and-nse/>

### **2. 'The substance of the curriculum: high-quality RE and Ofsted's inspection frameworks' Keynote Speaker: HMI Dr Richard Kueh:**

Some key Issues for us:

- Important to encourage depth as well as breadth? Does our curriculum provide scholarliness of the curriculum
- The OFSTED review of Religious Education was published in May 2021. A download and summary is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-publishes-research-review-on-religious-education>
- Too much RE is taught by non-specialist teachers. What can our SACRE do to help and encourage high quality teaching?
- An OFSTED report on the quality of RE teaching is due soon.

### **3. National analysis of SACRE annual reports - Keynote Speaker: Dr David Hampshire**

Some key Issues for us:

- 57 out of 153 SACREs submitted their annual report to NASACRE. We could be both contributing to and learning from them.
- Issues that concerned a lot of SACREs included membership, inquorate meetings and relationships with schools during the pandemic.
- Would it be useful for us to be monitoring standards in RE? For example, are exam results in line with what might be expected? Visiting lessons as observers (to learn not judge)
- How strong are our support networks for schools?
- Very few schools approach their SACRE about collective worship

#### **4. Reviewing Your SACRE Membership - Workshop Leader: Lesley Prior, Adviser to several SACREs**

Some key Issues for us:

- Are members of group A (religious groups other than the CoE) selected from appropriate sponsoring bodies? Do we know of any more sponsoring bodies that could be involved?
- Does Group B (CoE) reflect the diversity of the church – evangelical, traditional etc
- Group C (Teachers etc) could include teachers in academies or university departments, interested people from community groups such as museums, head teachers etc
- Group D could include parents, school governors, council officers as well as councillors.
- Are we content that our membership is as it should be? Is there any group conspicuously missing?
- People with little or no experience of schools might usefully 'buddy up' with another member.

There was also an interesting discussion about difficulties with membership – for example one SACRE has a group in its area who refuse to nominate anyone unless another group is excluded. There was also some concerns about a member using the platform to proselytise. Do we need a 'code of conduct'?

#### **5. Interfaith Encounters. Workshop Leaders: Barking & Dagenham SACRE members**

Some key Issues for us:

- Barking & Dagenham used a Westhill grant to set up dialogues between teachers and faith leaders
- Used an action research approach
- 3 x 2½ hour sessions each covering two faiths
- On Zoom because of the pandemic – ten min intro, breakout rooms in which a small number of teachers could question a faith leader in depth.
- Short plenary for groups to report back
- Involved 60 teachers and 25 faith leaders
- Successful – teachers reported big improvements in subject knowledge and understanding
- Windsor & Maidenhead used a Westhill grant to make short films.