

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

DONCASTER STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

Minutes of the Doncaster SACRE meeting held at
the Civic Office on 26 November 2015
4.30 – 6.30pm

Present: J Gessler, S Norburn, R Iball, J Stephenson, S Syed, B Teimoori, P Kaur, B Gillham, Rev McCready, M McGuigan, P Cassidy, Councillor N Fennelly, Councillor K Rodgers

In attendance: J Duhig (Clerk to SACRE), A O'Mara (Note taker)

Pre meeting: M Winters (Campsmount Academy)

Apologies: K Scovell, N Walker, M Williams, Councillor Hart & Councillor Knowles

Item		Lead
	<p>Pre agenda Item</p> <p>Melanie Winters delivered a presentation to the group detailing the work undertaken as part of her Farmington Fellowship research grant 2014/15. The work involved the exploration of faith stories with a group of pupils to understand their meaning and reinterpret them in today's modern world. Samples of the stories were shared with SACRE and members were given the opportunity to ask questions relating to the learning. SACRE were encouraged to hear of the positive impact of the research and how the children valued the opportunity to "think for themselves". To further develop their skills BG suggested the pupils could produce their own stories.</p>	
1	<p>Apologies and Introductions</p> <p>The apologies noted above were recorded and accepted.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2015</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true record.</p>	KR
3	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Action: Councillor Rodgers to address Item 9 from the minutes of 24 March 2015 relating to links to the Youth Council.</p>	
4	<p>Election of Chair and Vice Chair</p> <p>Councillor Rodgers was re-elected as Chair. Rev T McCready was elected as Vice Chair</p>	JD
5	<p>Membership and Attendance</p> <p>A summary of the current membership was provided. The current constitution was discussed and it was agreed that there was a need to</p>	JD

	<p>review the details of the committee structure. Committee A should accurately reflect the faith position in Doncaster and it was noted that to provide a balance additional Committee B members would be required. Representation on Committee C continues to be a concern which the current twilight session of SACRE has not appeared to remedy.</p> <p>Action: John Duhig to revise the terms of reference/constitution.</p>	
6	<p>Reply from Lord Nash</p> <p>PC summarised the communications between Lord Nash and SACRE since the start of the year. Hard copy correspondence was shared with the group. Doncaster SACRE's concerns with regards to the provision of Religious Education at KS4 and academy influence were noted. The analysis of Annual Reports commissioned by the DfE is welcomed as it will identify common areas of concern from SACREs across the country and bring with it an increased rigour. It is crucial that Doncaster SACRE's annual report accurately identifies its' work and provides a clear focus on areas of concern. A draft of the annual report will be circulated to all members for input. SN queried what proactive interaction we had with our academies. PC outlined a summary of the LA support that had been provided to academies, including use of the locally agreed syllabus, distribution of the e-newsletter, invitations to training events, and the inclusion of SACRE information on the DMBC website. PC confirmed that SACRE's approach is inclusive of all educational settings.</p>	PC
7	<p>Westhill Submission</p> <p>PC expressed her gratitude to BG for his work on the Westhill submission, which was collated in a very tight timeframe. BG shared some thoughts as to how the idea could be further developed, which included increased teacher and pupil involvement and to align more closely to the curriculum. For future submissions it was felt that a working party approach would be beneficial.</p> <p>Action: SACRE- If anyone would like to be involved in progression of the Heritage and Town Trail please contact BG on the email address provided.</p> <p>Action: PC to seek expressions of interest from schools on the next e newsletter.</p>	PC
8	<p>Interfaith Event Hawthorn Primary</p> <p>Eight faiths were represented at the event which involved attendance at the KS1 assembly and question based classroom work in KS2. Four of the representatives were members of SACRE. The event proved to be a very enjoyable and successful experience for all involved. The children engaged well with the visitors and it was an excellent opportunity for self-expression and discussion of moral issues. There were even some thought provoking questions to challenge the group. PC enquired about the capacity of Interfaith to deliver to more schools and the feedback secured on the day indicated those present would be happy to be involved.</p> <p>Action: PC is to include an item in the next E-newsletter to be issued. Expressions of interest to be sought from schools.</p>	BG

	<p>NF also commented that the opportunity to utilise the Youth Council and children in care to deliver/support these sessions could be considered. At secondary level an approach to Pippa Dodgshon from Hall Cross Academy might be recommended. Not only might Pippa be interested in in her own academy being involved, she might act as a link to other interested secondary Headteachers. Interfaith events could be incorporated into “Diversity Days” which are held in some of the secondary settings.</p>	
9	<p>E Newsletters</p> <p>The autumn SACRE e-newsletter and current SACRE briefing correspondence have been shared with representatives. A reminder that full access to the NASACRE site requires log in and password as previously advised.</p> <p>Action: AO to contact NASACRE to ensure our contact details are up to date.</p>	PC
	<p>Items where the public and press may be excluded in accordance with grounds specified in the Local Government Act 1972, as amended</p>	
10	<p>Analysis OfSTED Reports 2014-2015</p> <p>Detailed analysis at primary and secondary level has previously been completed and incorporated into the annual report. On this occasion, in view of the concerns re KS4 provision, the sample was completed purely on secondary settings. A summary of the findings from both the reports and evidence from the schools website was presented. Five academies made up the sample.</p> <p>A number of concerns were highlighted, and despite the fact that religious education provision is a statutory requirement for all pupils (unless withdrawn by their parents) there was some evidence of no teaching of RE beyond Year 9 at one secondary academy. The issue of non-compliance does not appear to have been followed through in the OfSTED report for this academy. When PC sought professional advice it seems that similar instances of non-compliance have been evidenced in Ofsted reports in other LAs. The advice from OfSTED appears to be that they do not operate on a compliance checking model.</p> <p>NF commented that she would be interested to know if the lack of provision in this academy was as a result of parents “opting out” or a decision by the school.</p> <p>JS enquired if we have an obligation to respond to this in our capacity as SACRE. It was suggested that a supportive approach to the academy, highlighting SACRE’s concerns via a letter would be the best course of action. NF suggested Damian Allen, Director should be aware of the situation.</p> <p>Action: PC to draft a letter to be sent from the Chair. Copy letter to be provided to DA.</p>	PC
11	<p>The Way we Work</p> <p>A review of SACRE’s approach and activity was tabled as a point for</p>	JD

	<p>discussion with views being sought from those present. There is evidence of good elements in SACRE's work, and clear similarities on areas of focus when compared to SACRE agendas from other LAs. However, NF commented that there may be the opportunity for a more innovative approach with an "out of the box" perspective rather than assume similarity is desirable. This year and last have clearly been most active for SACRE and BG's efforts were recognised. In terms of improvements moving forward BG suggested an increase in school based activities and KR suggested the need to prove value and worth in line with the recent spending review</p>	
12	<p>Information Exchange</p> <p>Jim Foy is to speak at SACRE's Spring term meeting following the launch of the Faith & Culture Safeguarding Group in October 2015. A view will be sought as to how the group's work might link with SACRE.</p> <p>PC attended the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector launch in November 2015. Information packs detailing the small and large grants programme 2015-2018 were left with the group. Should you require a copy please contact Angela O'Mara (angela.o'mara@doncaster.gov.uk).</p> <p>PC advised that the Inspiring RE Conference is to be held on 4 March 2016. This will be advertised via Professional Learning and the Common Room and an email will be circulated to all schools.</p>	PC
13	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Freedom of Information request submitted to the DfE for RE short course results has now been received. A similar request will also be submitted for 2015's results.</p> <p>Rev Tom advised of an event held during National Interfaith week which explored the topic of Islamophobia. It proved to be of great interest and attendance was significantly higher than usual with approximately 70 people in attendance, including the Civic Mayor.</p> <p>SS confirmed an open day at the Mosque is being planned for May 2016. Any interest, advice or suggestions should be channelled through PC.</p>	KR
14	<p>Date and time of Spring Term Meeting</p> <p>The meeting will be held on 23rd February 2016 at 4.30pm in Room 007A at the Civic Office, Waterdale.</p>	