

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

MINUTES of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 18 November 2019.

PRESENT: Mr S C Manion (Chairman), Mrs N Younosi (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Kaur-Cheema, Ms K Burke, Mrs M Duncombe, Mrs J Roddan, Mr W Chambers, Mrs J Grant, Ms F Hawkes, Mr J Paul, Mrs B Naden, Mr I Thomas (Substitute for Mr M J Northey), Mrs G Spragg, Mrs R Swansbury, Miss R Walters and Mrs J Wigg

ALSO PRESENT: Ms Hamilton

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms P Smith-Orr (Consultant Advisor)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

226. Membership

(Item 1)

1. The Chairman welcomed Mrs N Kaur-Cheema as the new representative for the Sikhism community, Mrs J Roddan as the new representative for the Rochester Diocesan Board of Education; and Mrs M Duncombe as the new representative of the Kent Primary Head Teachers Executive.
2. The Chairman also welcomed Mrs S Hamilton in her new capacity as the Deputy Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and confirmed that Mr R Long would be attending SACRE on 3 March 2020 to introduce himself in his new role as the appointed Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.
3. It was RESOLVED that Members noted the changes made to the SACRE Membership.

227. Apologies and Substitutions

(Item 2)

Apologies were received from Mr M Northey, Mrs E Pope, Mr M Belgrove, Mrs N Brownfield and Mr D Daley.

Mr I Thomas attended as a substitute for Mr M Northey.

228. Declaration of Interest

(Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest received.

229. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2019

(Item 4)

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2019 are a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

230. The WIRE

(Item 5)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr presented the revised WIRE Award initiative for schools and informed Members that the application form could be accessed via the KELSI website. Upon completion of the form, schools were instructed to send their application to Mrs Smith-Orr and all submissions would be reviewed at the forthcoming termly SACRE meeting. Mrs Smith-Orr confirmed that she had received 7 applications to date (including Academies) along with a number of expressions of interest. Mrs Smith-Orr informed Members that any teacher could apply to partake in the WIRE Award, however, all activities needed to be completed within a 12-month period.

For further information on the WIRE award for schools, please use the following link:

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/news-and-events/news/primary/widening-inclusivity-in-re>

- (a) In response to the occurrence of activities, Mrs Smith-Orr confirmed that schools were only required to complete an activity once. However, Mrs Smith-Orr reminded Members that the primary purpose of the award was to encourage, and support continued good practice in Religious Education and would advise that schools partake in several opportunities of a certain criteria. Mrs Smith-Orr referred to the WIRE Award document and confirmed that SACRE was happy to award multiple certificates to a school where class teachers were able to evidence that they had met all the criteria individually.
- (b) Mrs Smith-Orr commented that it was too early to anticipate the effectiveness of the WIRE Award and that 12 months of data was required to understand how schools used the award to help deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. However, in the interim, the award would help to raise the profile of RE and the work of SACRE.

2. It was RESOLVED that the update report be noted.

231. Interfaith Week

(Item 6)

1. Mrs Younosi provided an update on the activities that took place during Inter Faith week (Sunday 10 November 2019 – Sunday 17 November 2019) which aimed to build good relationships and working partnerships between people of different faiths and beliefs. Mrs Younosi expressed her disappointment in the cancellation of the County event, 'Interfaith Human Library', which many faith group Members had volunteered to attend, however, commended Mrs Kelvie for the event that took place at Aylesford Secondary School and the collaborative work that had been done with Southbank University to look at the changes in RE. Several Members of the Maidstone multi-faith group attended and discussed their faiths with year 9 and 10 students.
2. Mrs Kaur-Cheema informed SACRE that she had attended the 550th Birth Anniversary of the Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji on Tuesday 12 November 2019, and said that whilst it was well attended, it was largely aimed at the Sikh community rather than an event for the wider community. Furthermore, the event was held on a Tuesday evening which attracted a more mature audience instead of encouraging younger audiences, such as schools, to attend. Mrs Kaur-Cheema also commented on the lack of awareness of the event and noted that Members of SACRE were informed of the celebration through the SACRE Clerk, however, the event was not advertised in the education sector.
3. Mrs Smith-Orr acknowledged that more work needed to be done to encourage attendance from a wider demographic as many events seemed to attract a very specific religion or faith. Mrs Smith-Orr welcomed SACRE's suggestions on how to promote different events to the wider audience and the following were proposed:
 - (a) To name the event as a 'Festival of Faith' and remove any reference to a specific belief
 - (b) Hold an event with a joint purpose i.e. environmental issues, climate change
4. It was RESOLVED that the update report be noted.

232. Kent Agreed Syllabus - Training Event for RE Teachers
(Item 7)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr informed SACRE that following the success of the Teacher Training Event held on 20 March 2019, it was agreed at the February SACRE meeting to hold a further training event in February or March of 2020. To ensure cross-county attendance, Mrs Smith-Orr said that there would be three twilight training events, and these would be held across three different locations in Kent. Mrs Smith-Orr had agreed to lead the training programme

for the three events rather than procure RE Today and welcomed Members comments and suggestions.

2. In response to comments from Members, it was agreed unanimously that SACRE supported the following proposals:
 - (a) The training should be available to both primary and secondary school teachers
 - (b) That the event should be free to attend
 - (c) Those that failed to attend would be charged a cancellation fee
 - (d) Catering would be provided for each training session
 - (e) The facility should be able to accommodate audio/visual systems to support virtual attendance (teachers would need to be sent a Skype invite in advance of the meeting in order for them to virtually join the live webcast)
 - (f) The training should be held at three schools across the county, which were easily accessible via a nearby junction and which had parking facilities (Ashford, Herne Bay, Aylesford)
 - (g) Mrs Smith-Orr to invite school representatives who had undergone a deep dive Ofsted inspection
 - (h) The SACRE clerk to disseminate training dates to the local Members
3. It was RESOLVED that SACRE agreed unanimously to hold a further training event for primary and secondary school teachers.

233. School Website Monitoring

(Item 8)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr informed SACRE that 350 school websites had been monitored in light of recent Ofsted inspections in order for SACRE to produce a clear and well-informed set of guidelines for schools that had failed to meet their statutory duty to clearly promote and/or teach a broad and balanced RE curriculum. Following SACRE's meeting in June, a letter had been sent to Kent Schools informing them that SACRE were undertaking the exercise, however, Mrs Smith-Orr received no responses.
2. In response to comments from Members, it was agreed unanimously that SACRE supported the following actions:
 - (a) To continue with the remainder of school websites that needed to be checked
 - (b) To produce guidance for schools with clear examples of how to make their website Ofsted compliant (i.e. create a banding system 1 to 5 with an example of what each band looked like and what needed to be done to improve the website to ensure that users could easily access the RE curriculum)

- (c) Place the guidance on Kelsi
- (d) Mrs Smith-Orr to send a list of schools to Members who expressed an interest in continuing to partake in the exercise to monitor school websites

3. It was RESOLVED that the update and actions be noted.

234. SACRE Budget

(Item 9)

It was RESOLVED that the budget report be noted.

235. Any Other Business

(Item 10)

1. Representatives of the Maidstone Multi-faith group had expressed an interest in attending the SACRE meetings. The SACRE Clerk confirmed that representatives from different faith groups could attend SACRE either as a guest at the request of the Chairman or as an observer of the meeting and that it would be at the discretion of the Chairman to invite those individuals to speak.
2. Mrs Younosi agreed to liaise with the Maidstone Buddhist representative and invite them to speak at the SACRE meeting on 3 March 2020.

236. Training - Ofsted Inspection

(Item 11)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr presented a series of slides that demonstrated the negative aspects of teachers relying on online educational resources such as Twinkl to help them create lesson plans opposed to expanding their own knowledge on a subject matter. Mrs Smith-Orr also highlighted the negative impact of using online resources opposed to the Kent Agreed Syllabus and provided examples of what Ofsted were looking for in their inspections in order for schools to achieve a 'Good' rating.
2. RESOLVED that the training be received, with thanks.

237. Training - Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

(Item 12)

1. Mrs R Swansbury presented a series of slides that set out the purpose and focus of SIAMS inspections

For further information on SIAMS Inspections, please use the following link:
[Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools \(SIAMS\) - Handbook Sept 2019](#)

2. RESOLVED that the training be received, with thanks.