

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 on Thursday, 9 November 2023.

PRESENT: Mr Manion (Chairman), Ms Burke, Mr Jeffrey, Ms Hawkes, Mrs Paddison-Chapman and Mr Paul.

PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Ms Brownfield, Mr Baldock, Miss Walters, Mrs Wigg, Ms Ralph, Mrs Elapatha, Mrs Lawson, Ms Hamilton, Miss Bostock.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Smith-Orr (Consultant Advisor), Mr Clapson (Democratic Services Officer) and Miss Reynolds (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

78. Apologies for Absence/Substitutes

(Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Miss Bostock, Ms Curtis, Mrs Elapatha, Ms Hawkes, Miss Pope and Ms Watson.

79. Declarations of Interests

(Item 2)

Mr Jeffrey declared that he was a member of the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education and was the Parish Secretary for a Catholic Church.

Mr Manion declared that he was a church warden and was the County representative on the Diocesan Board of Education.

Item 3: Election of Vice Chair and Appointment of Group A Spokesperson

Members agreed that the Vice Chair would be Mrs Paddison-Chapman.

Group A chose Mrs Paddison-Chapman to represent them as their spokesperson.

80. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 15 June 2023

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023 were correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chair.

Item 5 Development Plans 2022-2023 and 2023-2024

1. Mrs Smith-Orr introduced the Development Plans that allowed members to see what actions had taken place and what was planned for the future. She encouraged Members to contact her with suggestion for actions that could be added to the plan.
2. During consideration of the item it was noted that:
 - Analysis of exam results as part of the Annual Report was an item in the Plan, however, the Department for Education did not release the data last year and it was likely that the data would be available this year as well.
 - It could help to identify items carried over from the previous years if they were written in italics.
 - Courses for school governors were important and Ms Smith-Ore was looking to co-ordinate these with course providers.
 - There could be a foot note as a reminder to start reviewing the 2028 syllabus in plenty of time.
 - The Collective Worship Guidance document was reviewed a couple of years ago, it was good to review this regularly.
 - Mrs Smith-Ore and Mr Clapson would confirm arrangements to allow SACRE members to attend National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) training events.
3. RESOLVED that the update was noted.

Item 6 Budget Update

1. Mrs Smith-Orr presented the budget update.
2. During consideration of the item the following was noted:
 - Some budget would be spent on providing a virtual event for RE co-ordinators that would take place in Spring.
 - Last years budget would be included in future reports for comparison purposes.
 - Kent SACRE's budget compared favourably with other SACRE's, some of whom had no dedicated budget at all.
3. RESOLVED that the budget update be noted.

84. RE Advisor - Verbal update and Census Update

(Item 7)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr provided an overview of the 2021 Census responses about religious belief. She highlighted that overall more people identified themselves as religious than not religious in Kent, and 46% of responders either did not wish to answer the question or indicated that they did not identify with any religion.

2. During consideration of the item, the following points were noted:

- The Kent Syllabus was a good reflection of the faiths identified in Kent through the 2021 Census.
- Minority groups could be under represented in the Census as their response rates were often lower than other groups.
- The Kent Syllabus was strong, and schools had a legal requirement to teach religious education, however, some schools did not give the subject enough priority. A lack of understanding of beliefs and world views could contribute to racism, antisemitism and a lack of respect for others.
- Teachers using RE Today lesson plans taught a wide spread of different beliefs. Often beliefs and world views were not taught in isolation, instead students looked at the similarities and differences between them.
- There was a national shortage of specialist Religious Education teachers, specialist Religious Education teachers could draw the subject out into the wider school curriculum.
- Some academies used the Kent Syllabus however, the exact number was unknown. Kent County Council seemed to support the transition of schools to academies; the Chair agreed to ask the Cabinet Member for Education to encourage these academies to adopt the Kent Syllabus.
- The National Interfaith Website was a very good resource for teachers.
- It was very difficult to track exactly what was being taught in schools, there were reports of some inconsistency in monitoring by Ofsted.

3. RESOLVED that the update was noted.

Update on Local Network Groups

(Item 8)

1. Mrs Smith-Orr said that she and Mrs Hawes held a network meeting for secondary schools during the summer term. There had been a good discussion and another meeting would be held in the future. She added that the local RE Co-ordinator Groups seemed to be gaining momentum and next term there would be a Kent wide meeting to discuss how schools were finding working to the Kent Syllabus.
2. Ms Brownfield advised that she was planning a group meeting on 14 November.
3. Mr Shepherd said that the meetings had gone well and the number of people attending the meetings was increasing. They discussed practices and shared experiences of what worked and did not work. It was a great way of networking with other teachers.
4. RESOLVED that the update be noted.

WIRE Award – Victoria Road Primary *(Item 9)*

1. It was agreed that the submission was a good example of how to approach multi-faith teaching. Mr Jeffrey and Dr Smith offered to present the award to the school.

2. A number of schools were in the process of collating evidence for submission, and schools could find out how to apply for the award on the KELSI webpage.

87. Films for Schools

(Item 10)

1. Mr Clapson provided a follow up to the update provided at the last meeting. He noted that it had become clear that it would be more complicated than first expected for KCC to host the films, however fortunately the Canterbury Diocese has agreed to continue to hold them for the time being. A note would be added to the SACRE webpage on the KELSI site, directing teachers who wished to access the films to contact Mrs Smith-Ore, who would share a link to the films.
2. Members viewed some publicly available educational films hosted by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education, Pennine Learning, and some podcasts from REConnecting Lincolnshire. It was agreed that the resources could be helpful for teachers, and links to these resources could be added to the SACRE webpage. However, it was important to be aware that when linking to external websites, there was a risk that the information on those websites could change at any time, there would be a need to monitor the links to ensure they remained appropriate.
3. Mr Clapson agreed to send Mrs Grant a copy of the SACRE films for school's consent form.

11 - Draft Annual Report 2022/23

(Item 11)

1. Mrs Smith-Ore advised that the annual report would be submitted to NASACRA by the end of the year. She would be in contact with the Chair to review the draft and include his introduction. The finalised Annual Report would be included on the agenda of the next meeting.

12. Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

No other items were considered.