

Notice of Meeting

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Tuesday, 9th June 2015 at 4.00pm
in The Willows Primary School, Newbury

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Jayne Mann, School Appeals Officer on (01635) 519458

e-mail: jmann@westberks.gov.uk



**Agenda - Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education to be held on
Tuesday, 9 June 2015 (continued)**

- To:**
- Group A** Mrs Becky Aboutaj (Muslim), Rev Bev French (Free Churches), Mr David McKay (Buddhist) and Rabbi Zvi Solomons (Jewish)
 - Group B** Revd Mary Harwood (C of E), Mrs Sue Plackett (NAHT), Mrs Maria Pratico (C of E) and Mr Robin Sharples (C of E)
 - Group C** Mr Bernard Eggleton (NASUWT)
 - Group D** Pamela Bale, Billy Drummond, Sheila Ellison and Carol Jackson-Doerge
- School Advisors:** Mrs Jo Fageant and Mr Keith Harvey
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Agenda

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1 Apologies	
2 Minutes To sign and approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of SACRE held on 24 February 2015.	
3 Matters arising from the Minutes	
4 Progress with the six SACREs hub initiative and Joint SACREs Conference	5 - 14
5 NASACRE AGM Feedback	15 - 16
6 Budget	Verbal Report
7 Membership update and continuing issues	Verbal Report
8 Date of next meetings	Report

Andy Day
Head of Strategic Support
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'Crossing the Bridges'

Pan-Berkshire SACREs Hub (Standing Advisory Councils for RE) annual conference 2015

Faith/Belief Communities SACREs RE Teachers Schools



Bringing together schools, SACREs and faith/belief communities to enable better Religious Education.

Teachers of RE and SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on RE) members are warmly invited to a joint pan-Berkshire REConference to explore closer RE working between schools and faith/belief communities.

This conference will explore how we make best use of places of worship across Berkshire, visits and visitors, to enhance children and young people's RE learning.

We will launch the pan-Berkshire RE Hub's first project: 'Crossing the Bridges', explain the outcomes we hope to achieve and invite SACRE and teacher involvement.

Monday 15th June 2015, 4pm-7.30pm

Easthampstead Park Conference Centre (off Peacock Lane),
Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 3DF (for SatNav please use RG40 3DB).

Light Supper included

Each SACRE will fund several members and several teachers, hence no charge to attendees

For further information contact:

Jo Fageant RE Adviser to West Berkshire and Slough SACREs jefconsultancy@hotmail.co.uk

Anne Andrews, RE Adviser to Bracknell and RBWM SACREs Anne.Andrews@oxford.anglican.org

Jan Lever, RE Adviser to Reading and Wokingham SACREs jan@janlevergroup.com

We very much look forward sharing this evening with you, helping you to cross bridges and make new connections, and to launching the first pan-Berkshire hub project with you all.

Programme

3.45pm - Arrival, tea, registration

4.00pm - Welcome, opening reflection

4.15pm - Why do children need this bridge?

4.20pm - Strong bridges already there
(good practice showcase)

5.00pm - Cross the bridge (meet, greet, talk)

5.45pm - What have we discovered so far?

6.00pm - Supper and area discussions

6.30pm - Building new bridges (needs and offerings)

7.00pm - Summary

7.15pm - Launch: new pan-Berkshire RE Hub project

7.25pm - Closing Reflection

7.30pm - Close

To reserve your place please RSVP to

By Email: to Jo Fageant jefconsultancy@hotmail.co.uk

(Only 50 places available - please book by Friday May 22nd 2015)

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Dear

We are writing to invite you to take part in an exciting project being undertaken by the combined Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) right across Berkshire.

We work with teachers in primary and secondary schools in all of the six local authorities. They are aware that one of the best religious education learning experiences for pupils is visiting places of worship especially if they can also meet with someone from the community who can help them understand what they see. For these visits to be as effective as possible it is helpful

- a. For teachers to know information about the place and how a visit will be organised
- b. For those hosting a visit to know what teachers want pupils to learn from their visit.

We want, through some sessions with teachers and also with those who host visits to places of worship, to explore ways in which we can all help each other to make the most of these occasions. For this reason we have arranged two afternoon sessions when people from places of worship can come together to work with us and some teachers to share existing good practice and new ideas. We intend, as a result, to publish a pack of guidance and support material, drawing on all these shared ideas, which will help make future visits the most effective learning experiences they can be.

We would very much value your involvement in this project and invite you to join us for one of the following meetings both of which will take place from 2.00-5.00pm:

Monday 29 June at the Church of Latter Day Saints *address needed* for those in West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham (working with Jan and Jo)

Tuesday 30 June at Taplow Court, Taplow, SL6 0ER for those in Bracknell Forest, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM), and Slough (working with Anne and Jo).

Please reply to Anne Andrews by one of the ways set out below to let us know whether you will be able to join us and which meeting you will attend:

Email: Anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org

Mobile phone: 07884 655097

Returning the reply slip to: Anne Andrews, Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey, Oxford, OX2 0NB

We look forward to working with you

Anne, Jan and Jo

Anne Andrews (Adviser in Bracknell Forest and RBWM)

Jan Lever (Adviser in Reading and Wokingham)

Jo Fageant (Adviser in West Berkshire and Slough)

✂.....

Reply slip

Name:

Religious place of worship:

I will/will not attend the meeting on 29 June in Reading **OR** 30 June at Taplow Court. (*please delete as appropriate*)

Return to Anne Andrews, Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey, Oxford, OX2 0NB

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Developing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE: Regional Expression of Interest (EOI) form

Introduction

This RE Regional Expression of Interest form should be read in conjunction with *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE*, the report and recommendations agreed by the Religious Education Council (REC), the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and Culham St Gabriel's Trust (CSTG). The report gives the background to the regional strategy, and is available on the CSTG website at ...,

Networks of RE practitioners in any region of England or Wales will be able to benefit from the regional strategy by expressing an interest in developing their work and by applying for resources to make their developmental ideas possible.

In the summer term of 2014, up to four regional pilots will invited to exemplify the regional strategy. In the academic year 2014-15, subject to evaluation and review of the pilots, practitioners in all regions of England and Wales may be able to use this Expression of Interest (EOI) form to apply for resources to support regional work in RE.

Background briefing for pilots and applicants

The paper *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE* identifies the following aims for regional hub activity:

- (a) To create informing, connecting, inspiring and energising regional networks of teachers of RE;
- (b) To promote practical wisdom through two-way engagement between RE research and RE pedagogy, leading to improvement in standards of teaching and learning in RE;
- (c) To build capacity of RE leadership locally, regionally and nationally, by developing confidence, expertise and vision.

The paper is clear that regional hubs are definitely not intended to be a new organisation and should not become a new bureaucratic structure.

Pilots and applicants might also find it useful to bear in mind the following practical points that regional networks could think about and address:

- The central focus of regional activity needs to be the RE teacher's needs and intentions in improving teaching and learning.
- Hubs can be started and maintained by any RE partner but need a leader whose time to coordinate the activity is identified, recognised and paid for – a professional partner to 'hold the ring'.
- Hubs can be as small or large as they like. There is no 'right' size. It might help to think of regions as hubs, subdivided into smaller action research sets or action learning networks. Hubs and sets can be territorial but they can also link teachers in schools that are statistical neighbours, members of an academy consortium, partners with the same university, or RE teachers living in the same area.
- Linking teachers locally and nationally through carefully integrated use of social media, such as #Teachmeets, @reonline_tweets, @rethinkREnow and #REchatuk can support and build insights.
- The difference that hubs can make to teachers' capacity could be crucial. Hubs can transcend discussions about 'what works in the classroom' and get to 'why it works' and 'how it can work better'. The action research element of critical questioning and quality assurance can be had through university/school interaction.
- Pedagogical understanding and commitment in teachers needs openness and inclusivity. Hubs may decide to focus on a particular pedagogical model offered by a nearby university; but it is also good to encourage teachers to be versatile pedagogically, and to keep developing their repertoire of different pedagogical models.

The paper *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE* also contains two regional 'scenarios' which give an idea of the diversity of approaches that can be used. On its final

page, in Appendix 5, the paper offers a conceptual diagram of the possible ingredients of regional hub activity.

Before you express an interest in funding

Before applying for resources to help develop a regional strategy for RE, it is strongly advised that applicants take the following three steps:

1. Read the paper *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE* in order to gain a strong shared understanding of the purpose of regional hubs.
2. Contact CSTG Consultants on regional strategy, Alan Brine on alan@cstg.org.uk or Mary Myatt on mary@cstg.org.uk, to organise a meeting or conversation that will help you with your aims.
3. Reflect on the three developmental questions:
 - a. What am I/are we trying to achieve for the improvement of RE?
 - b. How will I/we organise the improvement, and who are the strongest regional partners to work with?
 - c. What are the success measures?

Expression of interest in funding (EOI)

After taking the three steps identified above, please complete this brief EOI form to express an interest in benefiting from Culham St Gabriel's resources to support regional development. Please note, the upper limit for each pilot is £2,000. Projects which require more substantial funding should use the normal individual or corporate grant application process.

Region: Berkshire (SACREs of six unitary authorities working together)
Your name and professional position: Jo Fageant, Adviser to West Berkshire and Slough SACREs Jan Lever, Adviser to Reading and Wokingham SACREs Anne Andrews, Adviser to Bracknell Forest and Windsor/Maidenhead SACREs
Your contact details: Jo Fageant: jefconsultancy@hotmail.co.uk Jan Lever: jan@janlevereducationconsultancy.com Anne Andrews: anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org
If successful, the details on the person or organisation to whom the funding should be sent: <u>Jan Lever Education Consultancy and Training Ltd</u> Tel:01202 377192 or 07973 752250 Web: http://www.janlevereducationconsultancy.com Company Registration No.: 07225363 VAT Registration No.: 169429665 Address: The Cabin, 8 Davenport Close, Upton, Poole, Dorset, UK BH16 5RE

<p>In RE terms, I would describe my region as (delete as appropriate): An area where much is already happening but could be better joined up</p>
<p>Title and brief description of your proposed regional activity for improving RE (maximum 100 words): Improving the educational effectiveness of visits to places of worship. We aim to develop a training seminar for volunteers from faith communities who host visits to places of worship. The session will be run twice, once in each of east and west Berkshire. Invitations will go to a range of faith communities across Berkshire. Members of groups A and B from each of the six participating SACREs will take part so they can develop, along with other visit hosts, as leaders with expertise and vision in supporting school visits. They will also have a role in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of visits.</p>

Next, please complete the questions below, making use of your conversations with CSTG consultants and your reflections on the three developmental questions.

<p>Please write up to 200 words in answer to each of the following three developmental questions:</p>	
<p>What am I/are we trying to achieve for the improvement of RE?</p>	<p>RE advice, local and national, advocates visits to places of worship for pupils of all ages. However, these experiences often miss their potential because teachers and hosts do not understand how they can best contribute to pupils’ learning and progress in RE</p> <p>This initiative aims to improve planning, teaching and evaluation of visits and, hence, learning outcomes. It will grow a group of visit leaders supporting confidence, expertise and vision in their host and teacher colleagues. It will do this by developing with visit hosts and members of SACRE Groups A and B improved understanding of the RE curriculum, particularly as found within the locally agreed syllabus shared by the six participating SACREs. It will explore age appropriate approaches and the development of interactive, pupil-centred presentations and materials. It will consider the necessary liaison between schools and hosts about learning objectives and intended outcomes and support the development of documentation to help this process. The intention is to increase the educational effectiveness of visits. The two sessions will be complemented by meetings funded by SACREs ie RE subject leaders meetings on the same theme in each of the six local authorities and a meeting bringing teachers and hosts together.</p>
<p>How will I/we organise the improvement, and who are the strongest regional partners (individuals, schools, networks or organisations) to work with?</p>	<p>Two sessions, in different locations, will be delivered for potential hosts of visits to places of worship including members of groups A and B from each of the six participating SACREs. These will be led by three advisers who serve these SACREs and lead teachers from the six SACRE funded teacher sessions. Other partners will include the <i>Welcome Days</i> workers at Reading Synagogue; members of <i>RE Inspired</i> who lead visits in East Reading and Wokingham, the Muslim Chair of the Slough SACRE who organises mosque visits and providers of <i>The Jewish Way of Life</i> exhibition.</p> <p>Sessions will provide an opportunity to share expertise already developed amongst the ‘hosts’ and explore new/additional material</p>

	<p>prepared by the advisory/teacher team. They will involve presentations, group discussions and group work to develop shared documentation.</p> <p>In addition, and separately funded there will be: 6 sessions, one in each LA, between April and July on the same theme from teachers' perspectives Days of visits organised for teachers to some of the places of worship in East Berkshire from which hosts have been drawn (similar days have already taken place in Reading for teachers in parts of the west of Berkshire) The production of photographic resources.</p>
<p>What are the success measures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognised increase in confidence and expertise amongst visit hosts (and teachers from the SACRE funded sessions) • Improved clarity of intention between schools and visit hosts about RE learning objectives • The development by the places represented of information which can be shared with schools about facilities within each place and the types of visits possible • The development of a shared request/booking form which includes details negotiated with schools about visits including learning objectives • The development of a shared feedback form to affirm good practice and support continuing improvement. • Evaluation led by Group A and B members of SACREs working with lead teachers demonstrating increased educational effectiveness of visits through improved liaison between schools and hosts. • Alongside this, but separate from it, those attending individual LA meetings for teachers of RE will receive an update on this initiative, exemplars of documentation and contact details helpful in organising visits. This information will be also be made available to other teachers via LA websites. Sessions will also consider the importance of negotiated intentions/objectives of visits that specifically link with the RE curriculum.
<p>Timescale: Dates for the two seminars in the summer term will be set in March, fliers and invitations created before the end of the Easter holiday for distribution at the start of the summer term.</p> <p>Starting date: A planning meeting of the three advisers will take place at the end of April 2015</p> <p>Finishing date: End of July 2015</p>	
<p>Please identify the cost of the activity up to a maximum of £2,000, and break the cost down into specific actions.</p> <p>£800 - Planning meeting with three advisers and development of seminar resources £1200 – Two seminars: Adviser time, venues, refreshments, travel expenses (£600 for each session)</p>	

Once you have completed this EOI form, please send it by email to one of the CSTG consultants, Mary Myatt mary@cstg.org.uk or Alan Brine alan@cstg.org.uk . The trust will then decide on your EOI and respond to it as rapidly as possible.

Agenda Item 5

Charles Clark at the NASACRE AGM 2015

Introduction: Big time of reconsideration for RE. Professor of politics, not a man of faith. Gov doesn't understand well enough the place of religion in public life. SACREs work for links between education and faith communities.

Has authored with Linda Woodhead a book about relationship between religion and schools eg does present legislative framework work now in contemporary context of changed religious life and practices; also role of LAs having been diminished. Started from question about whether the current framework is the right one to promote good RE. RE has never been more important than it is now – just listen to the daily news! Students can't be prepared to live in the modern world without an understanding of religions and having a chance to consider their own responses. His experience is that religion has an importance in the lives and thinking of young people.

Questions addressed in the book: (also covers CW, admissions, faith schools etc)

Should RE be a statutory requirement at all? They maintain it is important to retain it because of the need for young people to understand religion and think about it in the formation of themselves. If dropped they think this would be very damaging. Should it be part of the NC? Sceptical that its inclusion would be helpful but it is a question for consideration.

What should the subject be called? RI/RE? Reasonable to have right to withdraw if RI. In Scotland it's Religious and Moral Education. Interesting balance between instruction, formation and education (*this compares with a debate within the National Society about whether the purpose of RE should be evangelism, faith nurture or academic study!!!*)

Should it be right through the school curriculum - to end of sixth form? Their conclusion is that 14-19 curriculum in schools and colleges is in a mess. He had supported the implementation of the Tomlinson Report for a more coherent approach. Real question about whether should be part of all KSs

National or local determination of the structure of the subject? His own family move from Hackney to Norwich highlighted the dislocation of different syllabuses. Not therefore convinced about different content but is convinced about the importance of local SACREs in building link between religion and schools/education. Limited support in some areas means the current situation is not acceptable. Either change or make the current structure work. (*CStG hub initiative potentially undermines SACREs*). IF a national structure, how will local SACREs work? The content should be influential in all schools faith/independent etc. because important that all children have a well-rounded understanding. Delicate situation to manage and very controversial. BUT cannot be off the agenda.

Roles of SACREs if properly resourced? Whether national or local syllabus it should be reviewed every 5-7 years and there should be local debate about how this would be worked out in local context. There should be more engagement between schools and local faith communities to develop understanding (*absolutely our hub project*). He suggests local SACREs should be driving this forward through visitors from communities into schools and students visiting faith communities/places of worship to implement syllabus so it's a breathing living learning. Supports the idea that non-theistic systems of beliefs should be compulsorily part of RE. Community cohesion is important and schools need to be properly resourced to support this and this can be promoted and driven by local SACREs. It should have revised weight of importance. This is particularly important in our society where many people are alienated and frustrated by how issues are not resolved.

For parents who do want their children to have RI, SACREs could help them find and access this.

Need to question the continuing right of withdrawal. Sensitive issue but our contemporary context raises this as a serious issue. However, how this sits with human rights of parents and children makes this very complex.

The status quo is not an acceptable situation. There are too many criticisms of the state of RE in our schools. The 1944 settlement needs to be revisited – relationship of religion and schools. This re-evaluation needs to be addressed early in the life of this new government.

(CC suggests either proving the current system cannot work OR providing sufficient support to ensure SACREs do work. Later discussion also pointed out that to be effective local SACREs need to have decision-making powers as well as funding.)

Post-presentation discussion

- Good idea to approach local MP. CC thinks this area will be increasingly discussed in response to reports coming out. Need to contact new MPs to highlight APPG and find out how it is going forward without Stephen Lloyd. CC suggests limiting this initially to sharing situation in local community.
- Withdrawal can only be removed when it can be clear to everyone what is being taught. Can't be achieved quickly but important that extremists should not be able to opt their children out in order to avoid them studying a balanced RE curriculum.
- Group structure of SACREs needs to be looked at - Group B v Group A. CC raised issue of Humanist representation. Suggests rigid divides between churches and faiths is not so relevant today. Challenged by how the structure of SACREs could be reformed in a sensible way so this has not been covered in his book.
- If there is a national framework, decisions about implementation need to be made locally reflecting local context.
- CC promised immediate access to electronic copy of his book when it's published.
- Referred to value of a SACRE for every subject.
- Not supportive of inclusion of Humanists due to reduction in church attendance. Not just focused on Humanists but a wide range of religious and non-religious faith systems and beliefs should be included because fluidity between is more likely these days and children have these broad interests.
- Name of the subject – just 'religious' is not enough these days but no simple answer about what it should be.
- CPD is very important to make sure teachers have relevant and up to date understanding.
- Mismatch between RE and insisting on CW – CC's book raises issues about CW and future options.

All italics are my additions – not what CC said