

**WEST BERKSHIRE
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2019**

**VENUE: THATCHAM BAPTIST CHURCH WHEELERS GREEN WAY THATCHAM
RG19 4YF**

Present:

Group A – Other Faiths Members

Revd David Taylor (Thatcham Baptist Church)

Group B – Church of England Members

Mrs Val Bolan (Church of England) and Mrs Mary Stagg (Church of England)

Group C – Teaching Association Members

Bernard Eggleton (NASUWT) and Clare Hawkins (NASUWT)

Group D – WBC Councillors

Councillor Billy Drummond (WBC), Councillor Tony Linden (WBC), Councillor David Marsh (WBC)

Professional Adviser

David Rees

Guests:

Rachel Manley, Maria Pratico and Rabbi Zvi Solomons

Also Present: Janet Giddings (Appeals Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Peter Argyle (WBC), Mobasshir Mushtaq (Muslim) and Robin Sharples (Church of England)

1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

David Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed apologies were received from: Cllr Peter Argyle, Mobasshir Mushtaq and Robin Sharples.

2 Membership

2.1 Rabbi Zvi Solomons (Group A)

SACRE Members discussed and agreed with Rabbi Zvi Solomons that he should join WB SACRE to represent the Jewish faith. At the meeting on 6 March 2019, Rachel Manley and Maria Pratico were invited to join WB SACRE. An Individual Decision will be signed by Dominic Boeck, Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Young People at West Berkshire Council in December 2019 to formally appoint Rachel Manley, Maria Pratico and Rabbi Zvi Solomons as members of WB SACRE.

3 Election of Chair and Vice Chair for Academic Year 2019/20

3.1 Election of Chair for Academic Year 2019/20

Councillor Billy Drummond nominated David Taylor as Chair. This was seconded by Val Bolan. David Taylor accepted the role.

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - 12 NOVEMBER 2019 - MINUTES

3.2 Election of Vice Chair for Academic Year 2019/20

Councillor Billy Drummond nominated Bernard Eggleton as Vice Chair. This was seconded by Val Bolan. Bernard Eggleton accepted the role.

4 Presentation from Sue Ball on Collective Worship

Sue Ball is the RE and Collective Worship and PSHE/British Values Link Governor at Thatcham Park Primary School. Members were shown the attached powerpoint presentation on Collective Worship. Sue explained that Collective Worship happens daily in schools as part of the school day and is distinct from assemblies. For that reason, Ofsted are likely to observe Collective Worship during their inspections.

Participation from pupils is encouraged and the slide "Call to Worship" was co-created by Year 5 and 6 pupils.

Small groups from local faith primary schools are invited to attend regular sessions at Bucklebury Church to explore RE using hands-on techniques including music, drama, writing and 'laying the table'. It may be possible for these sessions to be expanded to invite children from community schools to attend.

Sue advised that schools should have a Collective Worship Policy which would give clear expectations, particularly from visitors.

Penny Judge from Thatcham Park Primary School introduced a learning tool the school used to teach RE; a class basket. A new theme each term, currently courage, is introduced in assembly on a Monday, the local vicar discusses the theme on a Tuesday, pupils are then given time to reflect on and express their own views. Pupils store items in the basket from home that are relevant to the theme which can be shared with the class. Reverend Mark Bennet is keen for class baskets to be funded in more schools.

David Taylor asked Members if they had any questions for Sue Ball and/or Penny Judge. Maria Pratico asked if the children knew what they were doing. Penny said at this stage they were planting seeds, getting them to think. It was a safe space to share ideas and not be ridiculed. She added that teachers often found it difficult to introduce RE topics so it helped that this was a pupil-led activity.

David Taylor thanked Sue Ball and Penny Judge for their presentation. A copy of the presentation and the handouts distributed at the meeting are attached for information.

5 Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 6 March 2019 and 11 June 2019 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 Actions (not covered elsewhere)

6.1 Examples of SACRE newsletters

David Taylor showed Members a sample newsletter from Bracknell Forest Council. Anne Andrews, Oxford Diocese, was happy to forward a copy to WB SACRE for editing before publication.

Rachel Manley advised the Oxford Diocese Board of Education produced a similar newsletter that was distributed to local schools.

Clare Hawkins and David Rees volunteered to edit the newsletter to include content relevant to West Berkshire. Clare advised she would be attending a SACRE meeting at Bracknell Forest Council on 13 November 2019 where she could find out when the newsletter would be available for editing, and email those dates to Janet Giddings.

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - 12 NOVEMBER 2019 - MINUTES

6.2 RE Undergraduates

Clare Hawkins offered to introduce 5 RE undergraduates to WB SACRE to enrich their studies. David Taylor confirmed the next meeting would take place on 25 February 2020 at the Council Offices in Market Street. Clare said she would invite them to attend.

7 Matters arising from the Minutes

David Taylor had met Donna Fox, Principal Adviser for School Improvement at West Berkshire Council. They agreed WB SACRE should have a presence on the education portal, managed by Vicky Pearce.

David Taylor raised concerns he and Members of SACRE had regarding the non-existence of RE at Park House School. Donna Fox offered to discuss this with the Headteacher, Derek Peale, as they had a good working relationship. Councillor Tony Linden was happy with this progress as RE is a legislative requirement. Councillor David Marsh said Park House School was in his Ward and so offered to make an informal visit to the school where he would casually mention his involvement with SACRE and enquire as to the current provision of RE. Clare Hawkins said she believed the Headteacher genuinely felt RE was covered in the subject Character and Values.

8 Schools

8.1 West Berks RE exam results

Exam results are not published by subject. Janet Giddings will contact secondary schools in West Berkshire to request this information.

8.2 Primary Schools/Network – David Rees

David Rees offered to forward to Members the Minutes of the Primary School Network Meeting held on 8 October 2019. Coincidentally it was arranged on the same day as another RE meeting which was subsequently cancelled.

Members discussed the need for a central online resource for RE teachers.

David Taylor expressed concern that, although they were welcome, meetings held at Thatcham Baptist Church only attracted attendees from schools in the vicinity.

8.3 Secondary Schools/Network – David Taylor/David Rees

A discussion took place about the provision of RE in schools. David Taylor recently visited Trinity School who had recruited 2 new members of staff. RE was offered as an option which meant it wasn't compulsory in Years 10, 11 and 6th Form. A GCSE option was available. Clare Hawkins explained that Progress 8 was a secondary school accountability measurement of a pupil's progress from Year 6 SATs to Year 11 GCSEs. Short courses were not included in Progress 8 scores which could influence a school's decision to include them in the curriculum. David Rees advised the short courses fulfilled the statutory requirement to offer RE.

The Secondary School Network Meeting was held on October 2019 at St Bartholomew's School, Newbury, with 3 attendees. Those present discussed RE GCSE provision, mixed GCSE results and shared experiences. It was felt that children needed to know why they were studying RE.

9 Annual Report - David Taylor

David Taylor presented the Annual SACRE Report 2018-2019. Val Bolan thought the Crossing the Bridges Directory had been put on hold, as discussed at the SACRE

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - 12 NOVEMBER 2019 - MINUTES

meeting in June 2019. David agreed to remove the reference to Val from the text. David Rees added that Crossing the Bridges was 3 years old and that someone needed to take the lead to check contact details and maintain a master copy. Templates were still available for faiths to complete but needed updated once submitted.

Bernard Eggleton said it was important to keep an attendance list for each meeting to ensure compliance with SACRE membership rules.

Val Bolan thanked David Taylor for the report.

Action: Janet Giddings to keep a record of attendance for SACRE meetings.

10 2019-20 Budget and Action Plan Update

David Rees presented the Action Plan, explaining the focus was on:

B. Core Business: Religious Education,

4. Contact primary schools who do not attend networks, to arrange visits by SACRE members.

David said it was important to let schools know what support was available.

5. Continue to work with secondary schools not yet complying with the law, especially Park House School

David Rees acknowledged the work started by David Taylor commenting he had been very proactive.

Online resources were available via NASACRE.

11 Hub

21.2 Real People, Real Faith Video Project update – David Taylor/David Rees

David Taylor advised members the recent Westhill Bid was successful enabling a professionally filmed video project to proceed. Children would have the opportunity to ask faith leaders questions from the syllabus. The project would be launched in July 2020. The bid was highlighted in the recent NASACRE Briefing No. 23.

12 Next Meeting Dates to Agree

22.1 Tuesday 25 February 2020, 4.15pm, West Berkshire Council's Offices

Agreed by Members; venue confirmed as the Committee Room, Ground Floor.

22.2 Tuesday 12 or 19 May 2020, 4.15pm at a primary school?

The preferred date was 19 May 2020. Rachel Manley offered to host the meeting at Yattendon Primary School, RG18 0UR.

13 Any Other Business

Rabbi Zvi Solomons asked if there were plans to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day on 25 January 2020. Clare Hawkins said she was aware of school visits planned to the newly built Holocaust Memorial Centre in London.

Action: Janet Giddings to advise Members of local arrangements.