

**PORTSMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on Wednesday, 23 June 2004 at 4.30 pm  
in Conference Room B, Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

**Present**

**Group A Representatives**

Julius Klein, Judaism  
Jean Howarth, The Fellowship of Evangelical Churches  
Christine McMillan, United Reformed Church  
Geoff Wheeler, Baptist Union  
David Hill, Roman Catholic Church  
Sue Vigar-Taylor, Buddhism

**Group B Representatives**

Reverend Oriel Alby

**Group C Representatives**

Georgie Tüzemen  
Katie Moore, Foundation Stage Advisory Teacher

**Group D Representatives**

Councillors Malcolm Hey (Chairman)  
David Stephen Butler

**Co-opted Representatives**

Sue Ganter  
Terry Carter

**Officers in Attendance**

Clive Erricker, Hampshire Area Education Office  
Judith Lowndes, Hampshire Area Education Office  
Mike Johns, Portsmouth LEA  
Teresa Deasy, Democratic Services, Portsmouth City  
Council

**12 Apologies for Absence (AI 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from the following:

Patrick Quirke, Co-opted Representative; Ted Parker, Salvation Army;  
Ros Griffiths; Sandra Gibb, St George's Beneficial School; Mohammed  
Riyami, Islam; Roger Bentote, Teachers Liaison Panel; Ephrat Miller-  
Foroughi, Baha'i Faith; Brian Hay, Church of England; Councillor Leo Madden  
and Councillor Alistair Thompson.

Councillor David Stephen Butler commented that Councillors Madden and Thompson had repeatedly sent their apologies and, as far as he was aware, had not attended any meetings of SACRE. He suggested that they should be contacted and asked whether they were still interested in continuing as members of SACRE.

**Action:**

The Chairman to contact Councillors Leo Madden and Alistair Thompson to discuss this matter.

The Chairman announced that Mohammed Riyami, who was unable to attend today's meeting as he was visiting family in Zanzibar, had recently been awarded the MBE for services to the National Health Service in the Queen's birthday's honours list. Julius Klein suggested that a congratulatory note be sent to Mohammed Riyami on behalf of SACRE.

**Action:**

The Chairman to write a letter of congratulations to Mohammed Riyami.

### **13 Chairman's Correspondence**

The Chairman reported that he had received a letter from David Graham, who had very kindly made the arrangements for the last SACRE meeting to be held at the Immanuel Baptist Church. David had expressed an interest in attending SACRE meetings on a regular basis as an observer on behalf of the Portsmouth Christian Education Council. The Chairman commented that, as SACRE meetings were open to the public, anyone could attend as an observer. It was agreed, therefore, to invite David Graham to attend SACRE meetings as an observer.

SACRE members commented on the lack of observers at meetings and it was felt that this might be due to the inadequate publicity about SACRE. It was pointed out that meetings could be publicised in the School Governors' newsletter, in the magazine entitled "Term Times" and also on the PCC web site. Councillor David Stephen Butler also suggested that members publicise meetings via their own networks.

**Action:**

Mike Johns to liaise with Teresa Deasy to organise publicity for future meetings.

### **14 Minutes - 3 March 2004 (AI 2)**

(TAKE IN MINUTES)

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2004 be agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

(a) The spelling of Christine McMillan's name be corrected and the United Reform Church be amended to read United Reformed Church.

- (b) It is recorded that Councillor David Stephen Butler had asked for action to be taken re the failure by Councillors Madden and Thompson to attend SACRE meetings.
- (c) That the spelling of the word Sikhism be corrected in the list of those present.
- (d) That Ros Griffiths is recorded as present at the meeting.
- (e) In minute 8 references to "interface" be amended to read "interfaith".

## **15 Matters Arising (AI 3)**

### **(a) Minute Number 4b - SACRE budget**

The Chairman reminded members that he would continue to press for additional funds for SACRE. Sue Ganter mentioned that, during discussions with other SACRE representatives at the NASACRE AGM, she had learned that many other SACREs had their own budgets. For example, Barnsley had a budget of £24,000, and they also had a figure of £36,000 set aside for reviewing the syllabus.

#### **Action:**

The Chairman to obtain information on how other SACREs were funded and to report back to the next meeting.

### **(b) Minute Number 6 - Governing Bodies and Statutory Requirement**

Mike Johns reported that he and Clive Erricker had arranged a training course for governors on the requirements regarding collective worship in schools. However, as only five governors had expressed an interest in attending, the course had been postponed. In order to inform governors of the requirements, he would be arranging to provide information in the Governors' Newsletter giving guidelines on the statutory requirement for collective worship and the changes to the Ofsted framework for inspection, and information on the new locally agreed syllabus.

Terry Carter made the point that recommendations to head teachers on the statutory requirements should be recorded in governing body minutes.

## **16 NASACRE Annual General Meeting (AI 4)**

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Sue Ganter had attended the NASACRE AGM on behalf of the Portsmouth SACRE and referred to her report on the meeting. Teacher recruitment had been one of the topics discussed. Schools were advised, when recruiting

new graduates, that they should be targeting not only Theology graduates but also Philosophy and Sociology graduates. Brochures had been produced in order to attract Philosophy and Sociology graduates to RE teaching. Copies of the brochures were circulated at the meeting.

Sue also announced that the Trustees of the Westhill RE Centre would be making £20,000 per annum available for the next two years for SACREs to fund the setting up of new initiatives.

**Action:**

Clive Erricker to investigate the Westhill funds.

**17 SACRE Self-Evaluation and Development Plan (AI 5)**

**(TAKE IN REPORT)**

Clive Erricker reported that many SACREs were undertaking self-evaluation exercises. He commented that the self-evaluation tool, using Ofsted methodology, would enable SACREs to focus on self-evaluation as part of their Education Development Plan. He added that the Southampton and Hampshire SACREs had agreed that this exercise would be useful.

Mike Johns mentioned that the Portsmouth LEA had recently been inspected by Ofsted just before half term. He explained that he had briefed the officers responsible for responding on behalf of SACRE, by referring to the SACRE Annual Report and updating them on the current situation. The self-evaluation approach was used in the setting-up of the Education Development Plan. Ofsted had looked at the performance of the Portsmouth SACRE within the LEA as a whole. The indications were that the LEA would receive a positive report from Ofsted and this would include SACRE.

He recommended therefore, that self-evaluation should be carried out for SACRE itself, and not as a part of the preparation for Ofsted inspections.

David Hill, in his capacity as chairman of Southampton SACRE, advised that the Southampton SACRE had set up cross-group working parties and were planning a series of meetings in September and October to feed into the November SACRE meeting.

Clive Erricker reported that Hampshire had decided to set up a small group, which would meet in September to consider the way forward.

Clive suggested that each SACRE could nominate a small group to identify responses to the questions in the model. SACRE members could deal with one question at each meeting.

SACRE members discussed the suggestions and agreed that a small group composed of representatives from each group should be set -up. The group to be composed as follows:

**Group A representative** - Sue Vigar-Taylor

**Action:**

Teresa Deasy to approach other Group A representatives not present to ask whether they would be interested in serving on this group.

**Group B Representatives** - Oriel Alby or Brian Hay

**Group C Representative** - Georgie Tüzemen

**Group D Representative** - Malcolm Hey

**Co-opted Representative** - Sue Ganter

**18 Monitoring Sub Group Report (AI 6)**

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Judith Lowndes referred to her report indicating that five inspection reports had been scrutinised. She mentioned that no RE lessons had been observed during one of the Ofsted inspections and that the group would be keeping an eye on future reports in case this should become a trend. The Chairman thanked the Monitoring Sub Group for their work and thanked Oriel Alby for offering to chair the Sub Group.

The Chairman referred to 1.6 in the report regarding the monitoring of collective worship in schools. SACRE members discussed at length the legal requirement for collective worship in schools (as distinct from RE). In particular, the difficulties in relation to secondary schools were highlighted.

On a positive note, with regard to primary schools, Georgie Tüzemen announced that there was a considerable amount of good practice. In her capacity as an advanced skills teacher, she would be willing to provide support and guidance to help schools which had difficulty in delivering RE and collective worship. She also suggested that Primary schools with good practice should be identified by SACRE and that good practice should be disseminated to other schools.

SACRE members agreed that this was a good idea for primary schools but difficult to apply at secondary level. It was considered that the problem in providing collective worship at secondary schools was due to the secularisation of society generally. It was, therefore, difficult to introduce collective worship into schools in a society where collective worship is not a familiar concept.

SACRE members were agreed on the need to find out the level of support that schools would need in order to deliver the collective worship requirement.

**Action:**

The Chairman to write to all schools to enquire about the delivery of collective worship and the level of support needed, if any.

## **19 Implementing the Agreed Syllabus (AI 7)**

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Clive Erricker reminded members that the revised agreed syllabus, "Living Difference", had been formally approved and would be launched on 15 July in the Great Hall, Winchester. Linda Elliott, at Hampshire County Council, was dealing with arrangements for the launch. All SACRE members had been invited to attend, and should have received their invitations. The Education portfolio holders/Education Committee members would also be invited to attend.

Mike Johns announced that a teachers inset day would be held on 22 September to launch the new RE syllabus. The venue would be the Dame Judith Professional Centre.

## **20 National Non-Statutory Framework for RE Consultation (AI 8)**

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Clive Erricker announced that the QCA had commissioned A National Non-Statutory Framework for RE, which would be published in September 2004. He stated that consultation would be taking place in June and July and that responses were requested by the end of June/beginning of July. Mike Johns circulated copies of the consultation booklets.

- SACRE members held a general discussion on how to respond.
- David Hill stated that Southampton SACRE had decided that, due to the time constraints, the SACRE had decided to recommend individual responses rather than a general SACRE response.

Clive Erricker reported that Hampshire County Council had responded collectively and explained the points that they had made. In the ensuing discussion, Portsmouth SACRE identified the following points as the basis of their response:

- The two attainment targets were considered to be less effective than one. This response was made on the basis that one attainment target would create greater coherence and ensure that the tendency to learn about rather than learn from religion, identified by Ofsted, was positively addressed
- The terms used in the document need to be more consistent and the relationship between them explained. For example, the use of concepts, themes, beliefs and ideas.
- The document is constructed around the content of religions (what is taught) rather than progression in acquiring the capacity to enquire into, understand and respond to religion.
- The section on 'The Importance of Religious Education' should be

rearranged so that the first paragraph comes first. This would place the emphasis on the pupils' development first and the overall purpose of the subject.

- There is no methodology to ensure coherence and progression in teaching and learning, which means that different outcomes and standards could result from different readings of the Framework.
- In the Foundation Stage there is an overemphasis on stories as the vehicle for learning.

Oriel Alby referred to the statement by the QCA advisor, John Keast, on the success story of RE at GCSE level. At the consultation meeting, which he attended in May, delegates commented that, whilst there had been success in the number of participants in GCSE level RE courses, this had not been reflected in exam results.

It was agreed that the Portsmouth SACRE would write to QCA expressing comments similar to those expressed by members of the Hampshire SACRE in the wording of the letter.

**Action:**

The Chairman to liaise with Clive Erricker.

**21 Date of Next Meeting (AI 9)**

Teresa Deasy announced that she had been in touch with Canon David Hopgood, at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, regarding the decision at the last SACRE meeting to request for the November meeting to be held at the cathedral. Canon Hopgood had agreed to host the next meeting of SACRE, which would be held at Bishop's House, adjacent to St John's Roman Catholic Cathedral on Wednesday, 17 November 2004. The meeting would be preceded by a visit to the Cathedral.

Members enquired whether parking would be available for the meeting.

**Action:**

Teresa Deasy to find out whether parking facilities would be available.

The meeting concluded at 6.25 pm.