

**PORTSMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on Wednesday 22 June 2011 at
4.00 pm at the Learning Resource Centre, Miltoncross School, Portsmouth.

Present

GROUP A REPRESENTATIVES

Peter Davies, the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical
Churches (In the Chair)
Geoff Wheeler, Baptist Union
Ruth Guyer, Judaism
David Lewis, The Religious Society of Friends
Syed Aminul Haque, Islam
Mrs Ephrat Miller-Foroughi, Baha'i Faith

GROUP B REPRESENTATIVES

Emily Fletcher, Church of England

GROUP C REPRESENTATIVES

Roger Bentote, Teachers' Liaison Panel
Patrick Quirke, Secondary Teacher Representative
Beverley Millsom, Special School Representative
Christine Liddle, Primary School Representative

GROUP D REPRESENTATIVES

Councillor David Horne
Maria Cole

CO-OPTED REPRESENTATIVES

Sue Ganter

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mike Johns, Local Authority Representative
Teresa Deasy, Democratic Services

17 Tour of the School

The Headteacher, Mr Neil McLeod and Patrick Quirke took SACRE members on a tour of the school to see the work completed by pupils, the layout of the school and classrooms and particularly the RE classrooms.

18 Moment for Quiet Reflection (AI 1)

The Clerk reported that Taki Jaffer had tendered his apologies for this meeting and so would be unable to lead the moment for quiet reflection. It was agreed that Taki would be asked to lead the moment for quiet reflection at the next meeting of the SACRE.

19 Apologies for Absence (AI 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Sue Vigar-Taylor, Brian Hay, Paula Withers, Councillor Lynne Stagg and Joe Eves.

20 Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair (AI 3)

The SACRE members noted that nominations for the above positions were put forward at the last meeting. However, a vote could not be taken, as the SACRE was not quorate. Peter Davies was nominated for the position of Chair and Ephrat Miller-Foroughi was nominated for the position of Vice Chair.

The clerk reported that she had received no further nominations and asked SACRE members if they would like to make any additional nominations at this meeting. There were no further nominations.

21 Election of Chair (AI 4)

The clerk took the chair for the election. A vote was taken in accordance with the SACRE voting procedure as defined in the Constitution (each representative group A, B, C and D being entitled to one vote.) Peter Davies was unanimously elected as Chair.

22 Election of Vice Chair (AI 5)

Peter Davies resumed the Chair and conducted the election for the Vice Chair in accordance with the SACRE voting procedure, as defined above. Mrs Ephrat Miller-Foroughi was unanimously elected to the position of Vice Chair.

23 Minutes 23 March 2011 (AI 6)

It was pointed out that Sue Vigar-Taylor had been present at the last meeting as she had given a presentation on the Buddhist faith. However, her name had not been included in the list of attendees.

The reference to the City Museum in minute number 5(e) should be amended to read 'Central Library'.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved subject to the above amendments.

24 Matters Arising (AI 7)

(a) Minute No 5(a) – Local Authority Representation on the SACRE

Mike Johns reported that he would be leaving the employ of the City Council in July. He reported that the Vice Chair had written to the Cabinet Member and the Strategic Director for Education requesting clarification of the Local Authority's support to SACRE. The Vice Chair had received a reply from the Strategic Director confirming the Local Authority's duty to provide specialist support to the SACRE. Two new posts of Education Improvement Officers had been created and one of these officers would be responsible for supporting the SACRE. Mike Johns confirmed that the requirement was to recruit two full-time Education Improvement Officers and both of them would have the remit for supporting SACRE.

ACTION

The SACRE Chair to write again to the Strategic Director to ask for the name of the person responsible for providing Local Authority support to SACRE.

(b) Minute No 5(e) – Celebrating RE and display of RE work from Portsmouth Schools in the Central Library on Wednesday 6 April.

The Vice Chair reported that this event had been very successful and members of SACRE had assisted Beverley Millsom in setting up and taking down the display.

(c) Minute No 6 – SACRE Revised Constitution

Roger Bentote reported that he had advised the Teachers' Liaison Panel (TLP) that other teachers had been appointed to the Portsmouth SACRE, in addition to the TLP Representative. The TLP wished to continue representation on the SACRE and was in agreement with SACRE's practice of including other teaching community representatives. It was agreed to amend the constitution to take account of this.

It was also agreed to include a reference to the term of office of the Vice Chair which should be for two years, as was the case with the SACRE Chair.

ACTION

Teresa Deasy and Mike Johns to look at the constitution and bring an amended version to the November meeting of the SACRE.

(d) Minute No 11 – National RE Month

Beverley Millsom mentioned that she had asked Joe Eves, the Council of Portsmouth Students Representative to conduct a survey of school activities during RE week and to report back to SACRE. Joe had agreed to conduct the survey but he had not contacted her to date.

ACTION

Beverley Millsom to contact Mike Fowler.

(e) Minute No 12 – Annual Report

Mike Johns tabled a draft report.

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Mike Johns advised that, in the past, SACRE had been required to submit an annual report to QCDA. However, QCDA as an arm of government would cease to exist in the very near future. At the November meeting of the SACRE it had been agreed that it would be more appropriate for the Portsmouth SACRE to produce a report in the form of an annual newsletter reporting on SACRE's activities and achievements during the year. The newsletter would have to meet PCC's standards but might include such things as school visits, membership, photographs of events, attendances at NASACRE meetings and conferences and items from Headteachers, Heads of RE and Chairs of Governors. Mike suggested SACRE members read his draft report and suggest anything to add for the next meeting in September. It was agreed that written comments should be sent to Ephrat Miller-Foroughi by 31 July. Mike agreed to send an electronic version to Teresa to email to SACRE members.

ACTION

Teresa Deasy to email an electronic version of the tabled report and also electronic versions of minutes and reports to Ephrat.

Patrick Quirke suggested that it would be useful to hear about negative as well as positive aspects regarding the teaching of RE in schools. Members agreed that it was important to have information about weaker schools in order to support them in the teaching of RE.

ACTION

An item on school visits and how they are carried out to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Patrick Quirke made another comment regarding secondary RE teachers' meetings. He said that RE teachers no longer held regular meetings. It was pointed out that meetings were held and included denominational schools but not academies. Academy Schools were not the responsibility of the Local Authority. Patrick mentioned that Miltoncross would be putting in a bid to become an Academy. The funding resulting from Academy status means that RE has to be taught in schools. If an Academy failed to teach RE, it would be the SACRE's duty to report them to the Department for Education.

25 Faith and the BIG Society Conference South East of England's Annual Conference on 11 April 2011 (AI 11)

As Renuka Vyas was not present at the meeting, this item was deferred until the next meeting.

26 Faith and the BIG Society Conference in Portsmouth 28 March 2011 (AI 10)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

The SACRE noted the report but it was pointed out that the Mosque Representative referred to in paragraph 1 was Mr Syed Aminul Haque, who is a member of the SACRE, and was present at this meeting.

27 School Visits (AI 11)

(TAKE IN SCHOOL VISITS LIST)

Ruth Guyer reported that she visited Court Lane Infant School in April at a time very close to Passover. The children had been very well behaved and had completed a lot of work on freedom and slavery in connection with the Israelites escape from Egypt.

Ruth had been very impressed as the children were only 6 years old and as part of the lesson were learning some Hebrew lettering. The teacher was very enthusiastic and the children asked some very pertinent questions.

Peter Davies reported that he had met Beverley Millsom at Redwood Park School. He had received a warm welcome and the children were very happy to talk. The RE lesson was based on a Judaeo-Christian explanation of the creation. The children enjoyed their work and explained to him what they were doing. Peter added that he had enjoyed a sandwich lunch with the group and the children had been very polite and well behaved. He then went to the choir session and had also enjoyed his experience. He expressed his thanks to Beverley Millsom.

28 RE Twilights (AI 12)

Beverley Millsom reported that she had spoken to RE teachers since the meet and greet session which had been held with SACRE members. Unfortunately, not all SACRE faith groups had been represented. She suggested that it might be appropriate for the SACRE to hold an annual meet and greet session for SACRE members and RE teachers.

Ruth Guyer suggested that it might be appropriate to have three normal twilight sessions and to add a fourth session for the meet and greet with SACRE members.

The next twilight session would involve a visit to the Jami Mosque for teachers.

29 RE Boxes (AI 3)

It was reported that some teachers had expressed disappointment that some of the boxes were not available when requested. Therefore, it had been suggested that more faith sets were needed. RE teachers had suggested that it would be helpful to have catalogues on-line at the City Library and Mike Johns had arranged this facility.

Mike Johns reported that subscription letters had gone out to schools and they had been advised to book early for RE boxes for the forthcoming academic year.

The Local Authority representative on the SACRE is the person responsible for the budget.

Ruth Guyer proposed a vote of thanks to Beverley for all her work regarding the RE boxes and the RE twilights.

30 Any Other Business (AI 14)

(a) SACRE Directory of Faiths

Mike Johns advised that the current directory of faiths needed to be updated. Sarah Ludford, his assistant, had sent information currently held to all the faith groups asking them to update it. Sarah would then gather all the information and contact SACRE members by the beginning of July regarding an updated version of the directory of faiths. The new version would be sent out to schools in September.

(b) A Vote of Thanks to Mike Johns

As it was Mike Johns' last meeting, the Chair proposed a vote of thanks to him for his work and support to SACRE over the years.

(c) Roger Bentote, TLP representative

Roger Bentote reported that this would be his last SACRE meeting as he would be retiring. The Teachers' Liaison Panel would be appointing a new representative to the SACRE.

The Chair proposed a vote of thanks to Roger Bentote for his input in SACRE meetings and wished him well for his retirement.

31 Dates for Future Meetings

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 16 November 2011 (St Mary's Church, Fratton).

The following dates were agreed for meetings next year

- Wednesday, 14 March 2012
- Wednesday, 20 June 2012
- Wednesday, 14 November 2012

The meeting concluded at 5.40 pm.

TMD/CB
27 July 2011
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