

**PORTSMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on Wednesday 16 November 2011 at  
4.00 pm in St Mary's Church, Fratton, Portsmouth.

**Present**

**Group A Representatives**

Peter Davies, The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical  
Churches (In the Chair)  
Mrs Ephrat Miller, Baha'i Faith (Vice-Chair)  
Ruth Guyer, Judaism  
Syed Aminul Haque, Islam  
Marilyn Leggett, The Salvation Army  
Geoff Wheeler, Baptist Union

**Group B Representatives**

Emily Fletcher, Church of England  
Reverend Juliet Straw, Church of England  
Brian Hay, Church of England

**Group C Representatives**

John Spiegelhalter, Teachers' Liaison Panel  
Patrick Quirke, Secondary Teacher Representative  
Beverley Millsom, Special School Representative  
Christine Liddle, Primary School Representative  
Gemma Self, Early Years Representative

**Group D Representatives**

Councillor David Horne  
Taki Jaffer

**Co-opted Representative**

Sue Ganter

**Officers in Attendance**

David Picton-Jones, Local Authority Representative  
Teresa Deasy, Democratic Services

**32 Moment for Quiet Reflection (AI 1)**

Taki Jaffer read an interfaith prayer for peace and SACRE members joined him in a minute's silence.

**33 Apologies for Absence (AI 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Sue Vigar-Taylor, Councillor Lynne Stagg and Maria Cole.

**34 New Representatives (AI 3)**

The chair introduced David Picton-Jones, the new local authority representative to the SACRE. John Spiegelhalter reported that he would be representing the Teachers' Liaison Panel at future meetings and not Siôn Reynolds.

**35 Minutes – 22 June 2011 (AI 4)**

(TAKE IN MINUTES)

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2011 be approved as a correct record.**

**36 Matters Arising (AI 5)**

**(a) Minute number 24(c) – SACRE Revised Constitution**

(TAKE IN REVISED SACRE CONSTITUTION)

SACRE members approved the revised constitution but suggested that reference to the word "chairman" should read "chair".

**RESOLVED that, subject to the above minor amendment, the revised SACRE constitution be approved.**

**(b) Minute number 25 – Faith and the BIG Society Conference: South East of England's Annual Conference on 11 April 2011**

Renuka Vyas was not present at the meeting and this report was deferred until the next meeting.

**ACTION**

**Teresa Deasy to contact Renuka Vyas.**

**(c) Minute number 27 – School Visits**

John Spiegelhalter referred to the school visit undertaken by Peter Davies to Redwood Park School. He noted that the RE lesson was based on a Judeo-Christian explanation of the creation and asked whether children would be introduced to other faith beliefs about the creation. Beverley Millsom explained that the study of other faiths would come later during the school year.

### **37 Annual Report (SACRE Newsletter) (AI 6)**

(TAKE IN DRAFT NEWSLETTER)

Ephrat Miller thanked all SACRE members for their contributions to the newsletter. She added that there were some photos of the RE week exhibition to be included when available.

Brian Hay asked about the distribution of the newsletter. SACRE members discussed this matter and it was agreed that the newsletter would be distributed to the following: schools, places of worship as set out in the SACRE directory, libraries, Portsmouth Learning.net, city councillors, the Portsmouth City Council website, NASACRE, Portsmouth University teacher training and the University of Chichester teacher training, the Hampshire and Southampton SACREs. It was agreed that the newsletter should be sent electronically wherever possible, with hard copies being available when requested.

SACRE members thanked Ephrat for her work on behalf of the council.

### **38 School Visits and how they are carried out (AI 7)**

David Picton-Jones tabled a list of suggestions for discussions with pupils when SACRE members visit schools to observe RE learning.

(TAKE IN DOCUMENT)

Patrick Quirke referred back to the minutes of the last meeting under minute number 24 on page 13 relating to the situation where an academy failed to teach RE. He stated that the SACRE's duty would be to report an academy to the Department for Education if they failed to teach the locally agreed RE syllabus and not strictly if they failed to teach RE.

Patrick commented that there were two issues: (1) provision for RE teaching and (2) teaching it properly. The "Living Difference" is all about concepts. He explained that a course was being held to assist teachers in the teaching of RE. He gave details of the course and suggested that it would be useful for RE teachers to attend and to make contacts.

Taki Jaffer referred to the eighth bullet point in David Picton-Jones' list. He commented that it would be very difficult for SACRE members to ascertain whether RE had helped the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, as this was a very subjective matter. David Picton-Jones commented that perhaps this had identified a training need for SACRE members and was a possibility for the future.

It was agreed that SACRE members should make their school visits based on last year's school visit pack. The list of visits to be undertaken had been compiled by Georgina Mulhall and it was agreed that members would proceed with this programme.

## **ACTION**

- (1) SACRE members to arrange their own school visits and to notify the clerk so that a report can be made at the next meeting.**
- (2) David Picton-Jones to revise the school visits pack.**

Ephrat Miller left at 5.00 pm.

### **39 Research Work into Teaching RE at Key Stages 3-5 (AI 8)**

Patrick Quirke gave a PowerPoint presentation on his research into teaching RE in Portsmouth. He explained that he had been teaching 20 years in Portsmouth schools. He was the head of RE at Miltoncross School. He had some experience at primary level but had taught mostly in secondary schools. He was currently doing his doctorate and thought it would be useful to share some of his research with the SACRE.

Patrick pointed out that the Portsmouth SACRE was very good at assisting in the teaching of RE at primary level. However, the SACRE did not really know what was going on in secondary schools with regard to teaching RE. There was concern as to whether RE as a subject was being adequately delivered at secondary level and whether the agreed syllabus was being followed. King Richard School planned to drop RE altogether at key stage 3. At Springfield School RE was being taught as part of a round robin subject with one hour per week of RE. Patrick commented that teachers had to make RE more reasonable to teach at key stage 3.

Patrick explained "Living Difference" was concept based. However, there was a problem with concept based teaching. He explained that a person's own understanding of God could inhibit their understanding of other faiths. He was investigating whether the conceptual cycle was appropriate for Portsmouth. In order to obtain a realistic view of how RE is taught in Portsmouth it was necessary to get a wider sample. Therefore, he was looking at schools outside the local authority's remit.

Patrick explained that he would be presenting an initial report on his research to SACRE in November 2012. His thesis and report would be completed in June 2013 and it would be published in the British Journal of RE in the autumn edition of 2013.

SACRE members thanked Patrick for his presentation and expressed keen interest in his research. The chair proposed to write to Patrick to express SACRE's support for his research and expressing the wish that the report would benefit the teaching of RE in Portsmouth.

#### **40 SACRE Networking Meetings (AI 9)**

The chair reported that the SACRE networking meetings previously held with representatives of the Hampshire, Southampton, Bournemouth, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth SACREs had been discontinued. The meetings had taken place over a three year period and had proved to be very useful as a networking exercise and for the sharing of good practice. He expressed his disappointment that the meetings had been discontinued.

#### **ACTION**

- (1) The chair to write to chairs of the other SACREs who had participated in the networking meetings to ask if there was any interest in reviving them.**
- (2) The chair to report at the next meeting.**

Patrick Quirke mentioned that Patricia Hannam of Hampshire County Council worked with the Hampshire SACRE and was very keen to work with Portsmouth SACRE.

#### **41 Financial Report (AI 10)**

David Picton-Jones circulated a financial report.

#### **(TAKE IN FINANCIAL REPORT)**

David Picton-Jones reported that the SACRE had spent a total of £5,738 during the last financial year. Only £50 had been spent since April this year.

Patrick Quirke reported that a training course was taking place on Friday 9 December, an inset day at the City of Portsmouth Girls' Training Centre. The title of the course is "Teaching Strategies for RE at GCSE". Participants included Dr Ruth Mantin of Chichester University, Patricia Hannam, the RE adviser for Hampshire County Council, Sarah Handley of Portsmouth College and the heads of RE at the Portsmouth secondary schools. There was an opportunity for SACRE members to attend to get to know the teachers and how RE was taught. The chair of the SACRE would be attending this course.

The cost of the course was £26 to include tea, coffee and lunch and the course would run from 9.00 am to 3.30 pm.

David Picton-Jones went on to say that this year's budget for the SACRE was £6,300. Beverley Millsom said that her three day supply teaching had yet to be financially accounted for.

SACRE members agreed that it would be useful for Patricia Hannam to assist with the Portsmouth SACRE and it was agreed that SACRE funds be used to pay for her to attend meetings.

## **42 RE Twilights (AI 11)**

Beverley Millsom reported that the September RE twilights had been very well attended. The next session was planned for 18 January. It was hoped to arrange a visit to the Jami Mosque on this occasion.

For the 23<sup>rd</sup> May meeting SACRE members would be asked to attend and speak about their particular faiths. Beverley added that she was hoping to invite some members of different faith groups listed in the SACRE faith directory.

The chair, on behalf of the SACRE, expressed his thanks to Beverley for her work on the twilights.

## **43 RE Boxes (AI 12)**

Sue Vigar-Taylor had sent her apologies for this meeting. In an email she stated that she had contacted staff at the City Museum about reviewing the RE boxes and how often they were used. She had stated that she would send out a report to be circulated with the minutes of this meeting.

## **44 Any Other Business (AI 13)**

### **(a) Portsmouth Music Services**

Beverley Millsom extended an invitation to SACRE members to attend the Portsmouth Music Service's concert on 1 December at 10.30 am in Portsmouth Cathedral.

### **ACTION**

**Beverley Millsom to email Teresa Deasy with further details to circulate to SACRE members.**

### **(b) English Baccalaureate**

Taki Jaffer commented that the fact that RE was not included as a subject in the English Baccalaureate was of concern to SACREs. He suggested that the SACRE should make representations to the DFE about this matter. Patrick Quirke agreed to set up a mechanism to obtain more information. It was agreed that this should be on the agenda for the next meeting.

## **45 Dates for Future Meetings (AI 14)**

Members noted the dates for the next meetings:

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

Teresa Deasy agreed to contact Georgina Mulhall at Flying Bull Primary School to ask if it would be appropriate for SACRE to hold its next meeting at the school.

The meeting concluded at 6.00 pm.

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22 November 2011  
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