

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held on Tuesday, 28 March 2023 at 4.30 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Group A Representatives - One representative of each of the religions and other bodies listed in the constitution

Evangelical Church - Pastor Chris Thomas

Humanist - Barbara Spiegelhalter

Sikhism - Jaswant Singh-Digpa

Quaker - sarah coote

United Reformed Church - Christine McMillan

Group B Representatives - Church of England

Sue Bowen

Revd Sam Duddles (Chair)

Group C Representatives - Six teachers representing the various key stages and an association recognised by the Authority for the purposes of consultation and negotiation

Rachael Osborne - Primary Headteacher Representative

Beth Smith - Secondary School Representative

Group D Representatives - Four representatives of the Authority, at least two of whom shall be elected members of the Authority

Taki Jaffer

Councillor Asghar Shah

Also in attendance:

Justine Ball, Professional Advisor

Chris May, Hampshire Secondary Teaching and Learning Adviser for RE

Debbie Anderson, Head of School Improvement

Karen Martin, Local Democracy Officer, SACRE Clerk

Izzy Lewis, Deputy Headteacher, St Jude's CE Primary School (Item 1 only)

Victoria Nash, RE Leader, St Jude's CE Primary School (Item 1 only)

1. Welcome and Introductions (AI 1)

The Revd Sam Duddles, SACRE Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Rachael Osborne, Headteacher for making St Jude's CE Primary School available to the SACRE for its meeting.

There was a short presentation by Victoria Nash, RE Leader, St Jude's CE Primary School on 'Making RE Engaging'. She informed the SACRE that St Jude's has developed a bespoke curriculum to cover a wide range of religious viewpoints, linking these to Christian and other festivals across the calendar year and reflect the Locally Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference IV. In the

Summer term there is a focus on Dharmic religions across the school. Living Difference IV allows the school to focus on big questions around faith delivered through creative lessons, visitors, and experiential RE where possible including workshops for all year groups which have been developed with the church. Interfaith Days are planned annually where children investigate a concept in several religious beliefs including through inviting visitors in and taking part in art projects, food tasting, storytelling and music workshops.

Taki Jaffer offered to help the school including making the link between Islam and other religions and he invited Victoria Nash to visit the Mosque in Fareham at next meeting.

2. Moment for Quiet Reflection (AI 2)

The moment for quiet reflection was taken by Rachael Osborne, Headteacher, St Jude's CE Primary School. She explained that she would be leaving St Jude's at the end of term for another headteacher appointment and that there had been several discussions about the forthcoming change of leadership in the school. She read a prayer Year 4 children had written about the challenges this change would bring and their wishes for the future for all the children and staff at the school as well as Mrs Osborne herself.

3. Apologies for Absence (AI 3)

Apologies had been received from Sheikh Fazle Abbas Dattoo (Group A), Revd Ray Goddess (Group A), Kari Laing (Vice Chair) (Group C) and Rachel de la Rue (Group C).

4. Declarations of Members' Interest (AI 4)

There were none.

5. Minutes of the Previous meeting held on 2 November 2022 (AI 5)

It was noted there was some yellow highlighting on bullet points in Item 34 and that this should be removed.

RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2022 as an accurate record, subject to the amendment above.

6. Matters Arising from the minutes (AI 6)

Item 32 - The Chair noted that at the last meeting she had mentioned meeting with Jessi Wilson, CoPS and that there would be a presentation on CoPS under item 10 later in the meeting.

Item 32 iii) - Justine Ball reported that it had not been possible to hold the training session on Living Difference IV, on 8 December as planned and it had now been rescheduled for Monday 17 April 2023 at 10.00am on Teams.

ACTIONS:

- i) Clerk to issue Teams invitation to all SACRE members for the training session on Living Difference IV at 10.00am on Monday 17 April 2023.**

7. Monitoring Group report (AI 7)

Justine Ball, SACRE Professional Advisor, introduced the report which had been circulated with the agenda.

Volunteers for Monitoring Group

Justine Ball reminded members of the SACRE that volunteers willing to join the Monitoring Group would be very welcome and that anyone interested should contact the Clerk.

Portsmouth GCSE results

Chris May, Hampshire Secondary Teaching and Learning Adviser for RE commented there are not many schools with GCSE entries in Portsmouth. He was working closely with one school to build up its RE curriculum and encourage more entries and he hoped there would be greater numbers of RE GCSE entries going forward.

National Campaign to recruit RE specialist teachers

Justine Ball noted that national campaigns to tackle the lack of numbers of RE specialist teachers by the Association of University Lecturers in RE (AULRE) and the National RE Council were gaining traction. Chris May added that a recent webinar for prospective teachers was attended by 100 people, and he hoped that was a reflection that the campaign is beginning to work.

School website monitoring

Justine Ball explained that following a review of LA school websites and the Monitoring Group had an interesting discussion on what could and should be on school websites and noted that they are not required to have all their policies on their website. A lot of positive information about RE was available on many websites and many also referenced progression. There was less information on the right to withdraw, collective workshop and British Values but this is not mandatory.

In response to a question by Pastor Chris Thomas (Group A) about how British Values links to RE, Justine Ball acknowledged they are separate but form part of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development which is an essential part of whole school life. It was explained that all schools are required to promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The Chair commented that she does not like the word

tolerance and prefers encouraging more active interest and engagement in different faiths and beliefs.

It was noted that some websites are harder to navigate than others. Overall, this had been a useful exercise and will be repeated at some stage in the future.

Ofsted Reports

Justine Ball noted that two schools had been inspected recently and one reported that its RE deep dive had been a positive experience.

Survey on RE and Collective Worship

Justine Ball reported that this survey had been sent out just before the last Monitoring Group meeting and aimed to monitor the number of children being withdrawn for parts or all of RE and/ or Collective Worship. It is intended to bring the full results to the next SACRE meeting.

Census 2021 results

Justine Ball reported that a Census 2021 breakdown for religion in Portsmouth had been published in November 2022. This information is being used when visiting RE leaders to ensure that curriculum planning and delivery reflects the locality.

Monitoring Group Terms of Reference (ToR)

Justine Ball informed the SACRE that the ToR had been attached to the agenda with slight suggestions highlighted in red type. The Clerk noted that the ToR had last been agreed in 2017 and it was good practice to review them periodically.

RESOLVED:

- a) **SACRE noted the Monitoring Group meeting report.**
- b) **SACRE requested volunteers to join the Monitoring Group in the Summer term 2023.**
- c) **SACRE approved the Terms of Reference for the Monitoring Group as amended (attached as Appendix A).**

ACTIONS:

- i) ***Volunteers willing to join the SACRE Monitoring Group (3 Teams meetings per year) to contact the Clerk at Karen.Martin2@portsmouthcc.gov.uk***
- ii) ***School Website Monitoring Survey will be undertaken again in the Spring 2024.***
- iii) ***Results of the survey on RE and Collective Worship (including withdrawals) to be brought to the next full SACRE meeting in June 2023.***

Pastor Chris Thomas (Group A) asked for the SACRE's appreciation for all the work of the Monitoring Group to be recorded. This was agreed.

8. Membership and Training report (AI 8)

Justine Ball, Professional Advisor thanked the Clerk for her help in providing information for the report.

Membership Working Group

Justine Ball reported that the list of vacancies was set out in section 4 of the report, and it was recommended that a small working group be established to address this. It was proposed that the 2021 Census results be used to ensure this is reflected in the membership and that adverts be considered. The Clerk noted that the endorsement or nomination of relevant faith groups would need to be sought.

Christine McMillan noted that there was no mechanism for claiming expenses such as travel to meetings, and this may be an impediment for some. It was agreed that there should be a facility to claim reasonable expenses. Chris May, Hampshire Secondary Teaching and Learning Adviser for RE noted that NASACRE states that supply cover was a reasonable expense to encourage teacher participation in SACRE activities. Debbie Anderson, Head of School Improvement agreed to investigate how this could be done. The Chair noted that it could be possible to advertise via the Hive.

Non-attending members

It was agreed that SACRE members who have not attended three meetings be contacted to establish their interest in remaining a member of the Council.

Portsmouth Children's Safeguarding Partnership (PCSP)

A SACRE representative to join this body was sought. No one volunteered in the meeting. A reminder to be sent to all SACRE members.

NASACRE Conference and AGM

Volunteers to attend the conference in London on 22 May 2023 were sought. Reasonable expenses agreed in advance will be paid.

SACRE members were asked to nominate people who have contributed to Portsmouth SACRE as part of the NASACRE 30th anniversary celebrations. Nominations to the Chair or Clerk within by 11 April 2023.

Training opportunities

Justine Ball highlighted the following training opportunities:

- Living Difference IV briefing on 17 April (on Teams)
- "So you've joined your local SACRE" delivered by NASACRE on 26 June 2023 (remote learning)
- Free speaker training by RE Hubs

SACRE Code of Conduct

Justine Ball asked members to read the proposed Code of Conduct attached to the agenda. It was agreed to adopt this subject to the word 'Portsmouth' being inserted as relevant.

RESOLVED to:

- a) **Establish a membership working group to:**
 - i) **Review the 2021 Census (see Appendix A) in relation to ensuring that the membership of the Portsmouth SACRE appropriately reflects the principal religious traditions or beliefs in our area.**
 - ii) **Consider outreach and other methods to attract new faith and education representatives to the SACRE, noting that the Council shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the nominees are a representative of the religion, denomination or association in question.**
 - iii) **Report back to the SACRE on actions and progress to widen representation of the SACRE.**
- b) **Agreed to ask the Clerk to contact SACRE members who have not attended three consecutive meetings.**
- c) **Seek up to two representatives to attend the NASACRE Conference and AGM on 22 May 2023.**
- d) **Agreed to adopt the NASACRE Code of Conduct (amended to include Portsmouth).**

ACTIONS:

- i) *Debbie Anderson, Head of School Improvement to look at the potential for SACRE members to claim reasonable expenses to facilitate meeting attendance.*
- ii) *Members of SACRE to volunteer to form a small, informal Membership Working Group by contacting the Clerk.*
- iii) *Members of SACRE to inform the Clerk if they would like to represent the SACRE on the Portsmouth Children's Safeguarding Partnership (PCSP).*
- iv) *Members of SACRE to let the Clerk know if they wish to attend the NASACRE Conference and AGM on 22 May 2023.*
- v) *Members of SACRE wishing to nominate someone who has had a significant impact on the Portsmouth SACRE to contact the Chair (Revd Sam Duddles) or the Clerk by 11 April 2023.*
- vi) *Clerk to update the Code of Conduct.*

The Clerk can be contacted at Karen.Martin2@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

9. National and Local RE Matters (AI 9)

Justine Ball introduced the item highlighting the following from the report which had been circulated with the agenda. She drew particular attention to Culham St Gabriel's Trust initiatives including its RE leadership programme, promotional films which are useful for parent's evenings etc., a parental survey on RE and REONLINE, a website to teachers.

Justine Ball also informed the SACRE that the National RE Hubs project aims to create a national RE website to link bodies across England and Wales. There are nine regions in England and each will hold events etc. The project has offered free speaker training and further information can be found here [RegionalREHubs training \(natre.org.uk\)](http://natre.org.uk). The Primary RE adviser is the South East lead for this project.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

10. Brief updates or notification of items to be brought to a future meeting (AI 10)

Council of Portsmouth Students (CoPS)

The Chair invited Jessi Wilson, Unloc Programme Facilitator - Leadership Skills and Student Voice and Simran Bansil, Year 8 student at Portsmouth Grammar School and CoPS Diversity Advisor to make a presentation to the SACRE on the work of the Council of Portsmouth Students (CoPS). They informed the SACRE that CoPS is one of the Student Forums facilitated by Unloc, another being the Primary Council of Portsmouth Students (PCoPS) and that the student representatives wholly shape their Forum each academic year. The CoPS Mission statement (developed by young people) is:

"The Council of Portsmouth Students, facilitated by Unloc, is a student forum for young people across the city of Portsmouth to collaboratively work together to drive institution improvement in their community and the city. Our mission is to elevate young people, enhance their learning, and empower them to be in the driving seat of the decisions they make. We want to revolutionise the future of Portsmouth, to improve how things are done, and generate leaders to choose their own pathways and create change for themselves and others."

In Portsmouth, 10 institutions are involved this year with 55 students (Years 7-11) participating across a range of activities including 3 Summits, three Executive Group meetings, one Institution Group Check-In and a Student Voice Celebration Day. In addition, there are five action groups: climate change/ eco-friendly; diversity and inclusion group; life skills and careers; mental health and wellbeing; sexism and stereotypes. Each action group has three priorities and has developed an action plan to deliver on those priorities.

Simran was elected to the post of Diversity Advisor on the Executive Committee and is also a member of the Diversity and Inclusion action group. This group's priorities are: Educating young people on the meaning and impact of using slurs; campaigning for greater diversity and inclusion in school-based resources including books, class handouts and guests; and lobbying for gender neutral toilets and other facilities in all schools. Simran's role as Diversity Adviser includes attending additional meetings outside of CoPS including City Council, Youth Cabinet, SACRE etc and to report the outcomes of these meetings to the Forum.

In answer to a question from Beth Smith, Jessie Wilson said that Mayfield would be welcome to join CoPS; that the programme runs for each academic year and involves buy in. Beth Smith commented that she would follow-up as she could identify several students at the school who would benefit from participating in the programme.

Taki Jaffer (Group D) enquired what had made Simran join CoPS. She replied that she had participated in her school's Middle School Council, Jessi had visited to talk about CoPS and she had been inspired to take part. She had then stood for election as Diversity Advisor, which was a new role this year, and had been elected. In response to a further question from the Chair, Simran explained that the action group aimed to help educate young people about the meaning of slurs, encourage greater diversity and inclusion (including neuro diversity eg. dyslexia) and gender neutral facilities.

Justine Ball (SACRE Advisor) commented that the link between RE and collective worship and general work on diversity was interesting. Jessi Wilson added that CoPS could help by going to young people who are making their GCSE options and ask if they were going to choose RE and if not, why not? They added that young people wanted to be heard, we just need to ask right questions.

Pastor Chris Thomas (Group A) enquired how CoPS is publicised at schools. Jessi Wilson explained that Unloc is in contact with School Councils across the City and that once involved schools get a certificate to display in their reception area.

The Chair thanked Simran and Jessi Wilson for the presentation and all the information provided. Taki Jaffer noted that the next meeting is scheduled to take place at the Mosque and that when it was built 12 years ago it was the most environmentally friendly Mosque in Europe. He invited members of CoPS to attend the meeting or arrange a separate visit.

RESOLVED: To note the information provided to the SACRE.

11. Date and venue of the next meeting and future meeting dates (AI 11)

The next meeting will take place at **4.30pm on Wednesday 14 June 2023 at Al Mahdi Centre, Fontley Road, Fareham, Hampshire PO15 6QR**. Taki Jaffer and Revd. Sam Duddles offered to take people to the meeting.

It was noted that it is intended that all meetings will take place at 4.30pm at a place of worship or school. If no venue is available, meetings will take place remotely on Teams.

SACRE noted the following meeting dates:

Wednesday 1 November 2023 (venue to be confirmed)

Wednesday 20 March 2024 (venue to be confirmed)

Wednesday 12 June 2024 (venue to be confirmed)

Wednesday 6 November 2024 (venue to be confirmed)

ACTIONS:

- i) Any members needing transport to the next meeting at Al Mahdi Centre, Fontley Road, Fareham, Hampshire PO15 6QR to contact Taki Jaffer or Revd. Sam Duddles.*
- ii) All SACRE members to consider offering a venue for future meetings.*

The meeting concluded at 5.55 pm.

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Chair of SACRE