

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

8 November 2021 (6.00pm –6.40pm)

The meeting took place via zoom (video-conferencing platform)

Present:

**Representing Christian denominations and other religious dominations
and beliefs (Group A):**

Wendy Brice-Thompson, Roman Catholic (Chair)
Peter Feinson, Baptist
Dawn Ladbrook, Evangelical Free Church
Dr John Lester, Baha'i faith
Sansar Narwal, Sikh
George Prinn, Humanism
John Smailes, Evangelical Free Church
Barry Smith, United Reform Church
Rabbi Lee Sunderland, Jewish

Representing the Church of England (Group B):

Stephanie Ellner

Representing teachers (Group C):

Clare Beech
Kathryn Everitt

Representing the Local Authority (Group D):

Councillor Judith Holt
Councillor Viddy Persaud

Professional adviser:

Julia Diamond-Conway (JDC)

Michelle Morgan – Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, especially George Prinn who was joining SACRE as a Member of the Humanist Society.

Apologies for absence were received from the following; Jenny Fox, Marlene Wylie, Cllr Dervish, Cllr Frost and Cllr Crowder.

The absence of the following Members was noted; Pastor Aloysius Peter, Kamal Siddiqui, Nasir Mubasher, Om Dhir, Ruth Everett and Terry Riches.

2. NEW OR SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

SACRE Members were advised that Kirsty Fanning had resigned. All wished to share their thanks for her contribution on the committee.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 29 JUNE 2021 AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1. The notes of the meeting held on 29 June 2021 were received and agreed.

3.2. Matters arising from the minutes, not included elsewhere on the agenda, were as follows:

- 3.2.1. **Anti-racist materials (Minute 8, refers):** Ruth Everett was not in attendance and therefore no update was received regarding the sharing of the resources discussed.

4. UPDATE ON SCHOOL ACTIVITY

A report detailing local activities had been provided prior to the meeting.

It was highlighted, that with the resignation of Kirsty Fanning, there were no secondary representatives on the committee. It was agreed that JDC would get in contact with Kirsty to see if she had any colleagues that she might recommend to take her place. Cllr Persaud added that she would also approach her secondary contacts.

ACTION: JDC / Cllr Viddy Persaud

5. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The report on national developments had been provided in advance of the meeting.

The Chair shared an interest in attending the Worldviews virtual training being run by NASACRE that week. The Clerk agreed to send the appropriate information to the Chair.

ACTION: HGS

6. ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report was received. JDC reiterated that the outcomes for 2020-21 were Teacher Assessed Grades which had not yet been validated however the expectation was that there would unlikely be any significant

changes. It was acknowledged that it was difficult to compare Teacher Assessed and Public Examination Grades.

The Chair agreed to send on her foreword to be included in the report.

ACTION: Chair

The report was agreed.

7. WORLDVIEW VIDEO

JDC advised that the Worldviews concept within RE was becoming more influential and that for some, the preference would now be to rename Religious Education to 'Worldviews Education.' Debates regarding this were ongoing and it was anticipated that further resources would be produced by the Religious Education Council.

JDC summarised that there were 2 types of Worldviews; personal and organised (this terminology however may change over time). Your organised Worldview comes from an institution, such as Christian or Muslim, for example Worldviews however personal Worldviews were beliefs and hidden assumptions which shape how an individual would see the World. For example a Muslim child could have a different personal Worldview to another Muslim child despite them sharing the same faith.

JDC advised that there had been a number of reports which had concluded that RE had to be amended in order to reflect the World as it is today; Worldviews teaching would include every child and not just those who practised a Faith. However the Government had advised that there were no current plans to change legislation regarding this.

SACRE Members watched the Theosthink-tank video on the meaning 'Worldviews.'

Thoughts from SACRE Members following the video were as follows:

- Although it was vital to have such debates, these needed to be in addition to the religious practices that a faith has. Such discussions should be aimed at secondary school pupils who were more mature and are able to appreciate more what is going on around them.
- It is important for individuals to look at life through their own eyes and whatever view they subscribe to, they must be able to investigate for themselves and not accept a view without questioning it.

- Worldviews is a more popular term for some as it includes those who are non-religious. Humanism UK had also produced a short document to explain the concept; the link was provided as follows:
<https://humanists.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021-07-05-LD-Non-religious-worldviews.docx>
- Although it was accepted that not everyone had a specific Faith, concern was shared that Worldviews could 'dilute' religion. It was highlighted however that by not discussing 'Worldviews' then this was somewhat 'diluting' the often deeply committed and ethical positions of others who did not have a religion. All agreed that it would be important, should Worldview become more prominent in schools that people with and without Faiths would be respected.
- Ofsted were using the terminology when undertaking Inspections however the current Agreed Syllabus had been confirmed and therefore there would be no changes to its content in the near future.
- Reassurance was given that teachers were already showing respect in their schools for those children with and without religions. The important aspect was to ensure that discussions represented a 'rainbow' of religious and non-religious views and thoughts.

The Chair thanked SACRE Members for their thoughts. JDC stated that Worldviews was a work in progress and that it was not yet clear in what format this would be brought into the classroom in the long term; it was essential that those with and without Faith on SACRE were comfortable with whatever future advice SACRE gives. The role of SACRE was to ensure that whatever the content/terminology, that once confirmed the committee would make sure that they were happy with it and that teachers had the resources available that were compatible with what needed to be taught. It was anticipated that much more information would be published over the next year; SACRE would need to monitor this.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business to discuss.

9. DATES OF MEETINGS IN THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

The following date was noted for the next meeting:

Monday 21 March 2022 at 6pm

Depending on the COVID situation at the time, some SACRE Members suggested that they would like to meet face to face in the spring term; the

potential venue of Romford Evangelical Church was discussed. Dawn Ladbrock would check with the Deacon.

ACTION: D Ladbrock

The meeting closed at 6.40pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

**Chair's
Initials**