

ITEM 2

MILTON KEYNES SACRE 9 MARCH 2000

Minutes of the meeting of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) held at ST PAULS ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL, MILTON KEYNES, on THURSDAY 18 NOVEMBER 1999 at 10.00 am

Present: J Irons (Chair), G Bowker, P Cope, T Cutting, D Evans, M Fitch, M Goodall, Z Friedman, H Padhya, L Rowlands, M Stanton-Saringer, Councillors Seymour and Swepston

Officers: J Fageant (RE Consultant), D Sullivan (RE Consultant), T Mabbott (Committee Manager) and J Marshall (Committee Manager)

Apologies: M Dalal, L Miles and A MacNair Kay

1.0 WELCOME TO VENUE

The Council was welcomed to the school by the Headteacher Michael Manley and was addressed by the Head of Religious Education at the school, Mr Kerridge.

Mr Kerridge gave a presentation on the sorts of religious issues which are of greatest importance in a Catholic School. The Council asked questions which led to discussion on the structure and focus of St Pauls in particular.

2.0 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 1999, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3.0 SACRE VACANCY

RESOLVED -

That the Council ask the Committee Manager to write to the Local Education Authority to request nominations for a new panel member to replace S Holdridge.

4.0 INTRODUCTION TO A FAITH COMMUNITY

The Council received two presentations.

- (a) Gill Bowker spoke on the Free Churches providing an insight into the diversity of the Free Churches, the importance of individual faith and the value of being part of a faith community.
- (b) Tim Cutting spoke on the “Bridgebuilder” Trust giving some background on how the Trust was formed, and also explained its aims as communicating Christianity to young people.

RESOLVED -

That Mr Hemant Padhya give a presentation on Hinduism at the next meeting.

5.0 SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

The SACRE noted that it was statutorily required to submit an Annual Report to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) by the end of the calendar year.

It was also noted that a copy should be circulated to the Education Committee for information.

RESOLVED -

That the SACRE Annual Report be drafted by D Sullivan and J Fageant, and circulated to members of the Council for comments within three weeks, in order that it could then be published and sent to the QCA.

6.0 ANALYSIS OF SACRE REPORTS

The Council considered a report from J Fageant “An Analysis of 1998 SACRE Reports”. The report highlighted a number of issues:

- (a) OFSTED reports were used for monitoring purposes by almost all SACREs and so the Council’s perception that there was a lack of clarity in distinguishing between the terms ‘Religious Education’ and ‘Collective Worship’ was of particular concern.
- (b) The introduction of a short GCSE Religious Education course had been extremely successful and had also seemed to give rise to increased uptake of the subject at A-Level.
- (c) It would be useful to look at the ways in which other SACREs enhanced their relationships with schools.
- (d) The model syllabuses and resulting locally agreed syllabuses had helped to raise standards.

The SACRE agreed to revisit its Development Plan and, in particular, to examine how the work of SACRE feeds into the work of other areas of the Council.

RESOLVED -

That a development plan based on that from the previous year be drafted by D Sullivan and J Fageant to be considered at the next meeting. This should highlight the distinctiveness of Religious Education, and examine SACRE's links with other Council committees to try and encourage interaction.

7.0 CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ADVISORS AND INSPECTORS

The Council considered an oral report on the Conference of Religious Education Advisors and Inspectors. It was noted that the Department for Education and Employment and the QCA were considering a number of initiatives which may impact upon SACREs.

The Council expressed its wish to request that J Fageant investigate whether the QCA's schemes of work were to be released straight to schools or whether SACREs would have the opportunity to have a local input.

8.0 TEACHER TRAINING AGENCY SUBJECT MANAGEMENT COURSES

The Council considered a new initiative between the Teacher Training Authority and LEA to set up management courses for primary school subject co-ordinators. The view of the Council was that this was a positive step but it expressed concern that there was likely to be low take up due to lack of funding for supply cover for those who wished to participate.

9.0 REVIEW OF AGREED SYLLABUS

The Council noted that it was necessary to begin a review of the agreed syllabus within five years, and that this raised a number of issues:

- (a) The need to incorporate more non-Christian faiths in the membership of SACRE was noted. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to all religious communities to encourage a diversity of faiths to become involved.
- (b) The need to devise a schedule of work for producing the document and costing was highlighted.
- (c) It was agreed that the Council should purchase 6 booklets from the Christian Education Movement which give guidance on how to update the agreed syllabus. These could be used at the next meeting.
- (d) It was noted that Buckinghamshire County Council would be revising their agreed syllabus before Milton Keynes and thus it would be very useful to look at their draft syllabus for guidance.

10.0 BASE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RESOURCES

An oral report was received from D Sullivan on the topic of the base for RE resources. The view was expressed that the current base was inaccessible and could be better exploited. The Council agreed to ask Mr Sullivan to negotiate on its behalf with De Montfort University to try and secure a room in which these resources could be based and thus be more accessible to teachers, students and other members of the community. It was also thought possible that this could then lead to in service training of teachers in Religious Education.

11.0 OFSTED REPORTS ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The Council noted that there had not been any developments in producing OFSTED reports on Religious Education and Collective Worship, however there had been some guidance for teachers published. It was agreed that the Council should obtain a copy of this.

12.0 BUDGET UPDATE

The Panel discussed the budget situation and noted that it would be useful to catalogue existing resources, and receive an updated report on actual spending at the next meeting.

It was agreed that J Fageant would purchase a copy of a directory of faiths on behalf of SACRE.

13.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of:

- (a) SACRE would be held on Thursday 9 March 2000 at 10.00am at Walton High, Milton Keynes (subject to confirmation of the venue by officers).
- (b) The Religious Education Sub-Committee would be held on 31 January 2000 at 6pm, in room 2 of the Civic Offices.
- (c) The Collective Worship Sub-Committee would be held on 8 February 2000 at 6pm, in room 2 of the Civic Offices.
- (d) An agenda setting meeting for Officers, the Chair and Vice Chair would be held on 17 January 2000 at 1.30 pm in room 4 of the Civic Offices.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12.25 PM