



Minutes of the meeting of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION held on TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2006 at 10.00 AM

Present: Milton Keynes Council
Councillor Irons (Chair)
Councillor Sandra Clark

ATL
I McGarahan

Bahai Faith
L Rowlands

Bridgebuilder Trust
T Cutting

Greek Orthodox Community
N Beales

Jewish Community
Z Friedman

Methodist Church
M Moffoot

Sikh Society of Milton Keynes
K Obhi

Teachers' Association
P Cope

Officers: J Fageant (Advisor to the SACRE), S Parker (Senior Committee Manager) and J Sloan (Committee Manager)

Also Present: C Brinton-Spail (Bridgebuilder Trust) and K Nenadovic (Bridgebuilder Trust)

Apologies: Councillor Miles, Rev. Dr. Archer, G S Baloch (Sunni Muslim), D Evans (Teachers' Association), B Dalal (Shia Muslim Community), R Davey (Oxford Diocese) and R Padyha (Vishwa Hindu)

20.0

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The SACRE considered the Minutes of its last meeting held on 8 November 2005.

The SACRE noted that the religious education consultancy were continuing although it was expected that Ruth Holmwood would step back from her duties towards the end of Easter. The SACRE also noted that the situation was fluid and would require J Fageant to renegotiate her relationship with the Councils Education Department.

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2005, be agreed as a correct record.

21.0

MAURICE STANTON-SARINGER

The SACRE received an update on Rev. Maurice Stanton-Saringer who had moved to a new Parish south of Reading and joined the Reading SACRE. The Chair informed the SACRE that she would write to Rev. Stanton-Saringer and thank him for his work for Milton Keynes SACRE.

The SACRE discussed the appointment of a new Vice-Chair and the replacement of Rev. Stanton-Saringer as a representative of the Church of England Diocese. The SACRE agreed to consider the appointment of a vice-chair at a later date.

J Fageant to arrange the Diocesan replacement.

22.0

UPDATE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COURSES IN MILTON KEYNES

The SACRE received an update on Religious Education courses noted the following:

1. It was hoped to hold a course a term together with regular twilight lessons.
2. The recent RE co-ordinators course attracted a small attendance, although it was considered a success by attendees.
3. SACRE members could attend these courses and the cost would be met by the SACRE budget.
4. J Fageant hoped to send SACRE Members a programme of courses when it was finalized.

The SACRE also noted that courses had been held at the Winter Hill Centre. T Cutting (Bridgebuilder Trust) stated that the Bridgebuilder Trust Building would be happy to host smaller conferences at competitive rates.

23.0

ADVICE ON COLLECTED WORSHIP

The SACRE discussed the Collective Worship leaflet which offered guidance to support schools in providing collective worship:

1. The SACRE supported the proposal that an electronic version of the leaflet be posted on the Council website as a cheaper and more accessible alternative to a printed leaflet.
2. SACRE also felt that courses could be held in the form of support sessions to raise the profile of the document.

The SACRE noted that the issue of collective worship would be followed up at its next meeting (which would include training, support and exclusivity).

24.0

REPORT ON THE NASACRE CONFERENCE

The SACRE received a report on the NASACRE Conference, which addressed the state of Religious Education (RE), the condition of SACREs, changes to the school inspection system and the responses of SACREs to these changes. The SACRE noted RE was considered well established in schools nationally but would require continued inspection to maintain standards.

The SACRE was informed of the inspection changes including:

1. Every curriculum subject would be inspected each year and would have a specific focus. Her Majesty's Inspectorate would continue to provide these subject reports.
2. Local Authorities would continue to provide 'A', 'AS' and GCSE results.
3. School Self Evaluation (SSE) information could be requested from the Local Education Authority.

The Conference suggested that SACREs consider the following:

1. The data which needed to be gathered.
2. The means by which the data is distributed.
3. Promoting schools participation in information schemes.

A National RE database which required a subscription charge was suggested as an alternative data collection tool. The SACRE requested that further information be sought, specifically on cost and service provision.

The SACRE acknowledged its obligation to monitor RE in Milton Keynes and considered the production of a short electronic report for teachers to complete.

25.0 SACRE SELF EVALUATION

The SACRE noted the following:

1. The results of the Self Evaluation exercise (Annex)
2. The 'developing' grade in the Quality of Teaching and provision for collective worship.
3. The difficulty of accessing information held within schools (J Fageant, Councillor Sandra Clark and Greg Morris to discuss outside the meeting).

26.0 MATTERS ARISING

The SACRE received a report from I McGarahan on the Dissemination Roadshow, which detailed the issues surrounding the Non-Statutory National Framework and the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The SACRE noted the National Framework:

1. Would not supersede any SACRE Agreed Syllabi and intended to assist SACREs in their current form and would support the progressive use of ICT and assessment.
2. Challenged thinking with links to philosophy and citizenship and its connection with today's media and modern world.
3. The QCA would provide guidance and did not intend to create any mandatory schemes. There were no plans to remove local arrangements or introduce a national statutory body.
4. The SACRE noted that despite previous concerns, the Framework and QCA were considered positive and endorsed methods already practised by the Milton Keynes SACRE.

The SACRE expressed concern over the lack of specialist RE teachers and the variable quality of literature published by the QCA.

27.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. NASACRE Subscription Payment to be followed up by Councillor J Irons with D Gamble.
2. Z Friedman would attend the National Jewish SACRE meeting and produce a report.
3. Councillor Sandra Clark announced that her increasing cabinet portfolio meant it was progressively more likely that her attendance at SACRE would be curtailed. The SACRE noted the importance to maintain a link with the LEA.
4. Councillor J Irons thanked Councillor Sandra Clark for her work and attendance at meetings of SACRE.

28.0**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The SACRE considered a venue for its next meeting to and Christ The Sower School was suggested.

RESOLVED -

That the next meeting of the SACRE would be held on Tuesday 6 June at 10.00 AM.

Dates for November 2006 and February 2007 would be arranged outside the meeting.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 11:45 AM