



Minutes of the meeting of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION held on TUESDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2007 at 10.00 AM

Present: Milton Keynes Council
Councillor Irons (Chair)

Baha'i Faith
L Rowlands

Bridgebuilder Trust
T Cutting

Jewish Community
Z Friedman

Methodist Church
M Moffoot

Sikh Society of Milton Keynes
K Obhi

Sunni Muslim
G S Baloch

Vishwa Hindu
H Padhya

Officers: J Fageant (Advisor to the SACRE) and P Taylor (Committee Manager)

Apologies: N Miles (Milton Keynes Council), Dr. M Archer (Church of England), N Beales (Greek Orthodox Community), P Cope (Teacher's Association), B Dalal (Shia Islamic Mosque / Muslim Community), R Davey (Oxford Diocese), D Evans (National Union of Teachers).

10.0 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2007 be approved as a correct record.

11.0

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The SACRE were informed that, due to a change of employment, T Cutting could no longer serve as a member of the SACRE. Members thanked him for all his efforts in the past. The SACRE requested that relations be maintained with the Bridgebuilder Trust and asked that a replacement representative be appointed.

The SACRE were informed that, due to a change of employment, P Cope could no longer serve as a Member of SACRE. Members thanked him for all his efforts in the past.

The SACRE requested replacement representatives from teacher associations for P Cope and I McGarahan. Members noted that the SACRE constitution stipulated that the Authority appoint a minimum of three school representatives from associations representing teachers. The SACRE requested that representatives be sought from the following teacher associations:

- National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
- National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women's Teachers (NASUWT)
- Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL)
- Professional Association of Teachers (PAT)

[Post meeting note - D Evans represents the National Union of Teachers (NUT)]

The SACRE suggested that attempts should be taken to improve its links with secondary schools.

RESOLVED-

That representatives from associations representing teachers be appointed to the SACRE.

12.0

SACRE REPORT

The SACRE received a verbal update on the Milton Keynes SACRE annual report.

The SACRE considered the examination results for Religious Education (RE) in Milton Keynes. The SACRE noted that not all schools were offering pupils the opportunity to sit an examination in RE. Members were pleased that Walton High, a non-faith school, was submitting a high percentage of pupils for the full RE GCSE course. The SACRE noted that a more accurate evaluation of the standards of RE in Milton Keynes required more detailed information from schools.

Members suggested that schools were having difficulties recruiting specialised RE teachers and that RE courses were being taken by students but not all schools were allowing pupils to sit an examination in the subject. Some schools, such as Stantonbury Campus, offered an integrated curriculum where RE was studied as part of a wider course, such as Citizenship Studies. The SACRE also noted that A and AS Level courses in Philosophy and Ethics may include religious studies modules.

The SACRE requested that J Fageant prepare and publish the Milton Keynes Annual SACRE Report.

RESOLVED –

That the Milton Keynes Annual SACRE Report be published.

14.0

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The SACRE received a verbal update on continuing professional development for teachers of RE and noted the following:

- Discussions concerning the possibility of Milton Keynes jointly organising courses with the Diocese of Oxford were taking place but had encountered problems regarding financial arrangements.
- Courses each term offered the opportunity for RE coordinators to meet each other and share resources and contacts.

The SACRE suggested that Members be informed about courses organised by other authorities. Members also suggested that further discussions take place regarding joint working opportunities with other authorities and the Diocese of Oxford

[Post meeting note – dates of Continuing Professional Development courses:

27 June 2007 – Making Effective Use of Resources in RE

11 October 2007 – Thinking Skills in RE

4 March 2008 – Teaching About and Using Holy Writings in RE]

15.0

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The SACRE received a verbal update on Collective Worship in schools and noted the following

- The Learning and Development directorate had decided that the SACRE did not need to produce a new leaflet on

collective worship as there was already sufficient material in the public domain.

- The Learning and Development directorate had suggested that the SACRE produce an article to inform RE teachers about where information on collective worship could be found.

The SACRE asked for copies of the Wokingham District Council's "Resource Guide for Collective Worship in Schools" to be distributed to Members. Members requested that J Fageant produce an article for schools about resources available for Collective Worship.

RESOLVED –

That J Fageant produce an article for schools about resources available for collective worship.

16.0 PROVISION AND QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN SCHOOLS

The SACRE received a verbal update on the monitoring and provision of RE and Collective Worship in schools and noted the following:

- The Learning and Development directorate did not consider an on-line self evaluation form the best method to monitor the provision of RE in schools. The SACRE was advised that plans were being discussed to enable Jo Fageant to lead a meeting for secondary school heads of RE to explore their self evaluation of their departments.
- The monitoring of collective worship was more difficult because there was incomplete agreement on what collective worship was and what information the SACRE needed to ask for to monitor it.

17.0 SACRE CONFERENCE

The SACRE received a verbal update regarding the NASACRE/QCA conference and noted the following:

- The Department for Education and Skills was keen to strengthen the role of SACRE's in the future.
- The Religious Education Council of England and Wales was undertaking a feasibility study regarding a possible Religious Education Strategy.
- The monitoring role of the SACRE needed to be strengthened.
- SACRE's were in an ideal position to assist community cohesion.

- SACRE's should explore opportunities to work together.
- SACRE's could be more representative of the range of religions, even if not all representatives of religions were full members.

The SACRE requested that copies of the paper “30+ things a good SACRE can do” be circulated to Members and feedback received at the next meeting and incorporated into the SACRE development plan. The SACRE noted that it could contribute to the “Every Child Matters” agenda and resolved to discuss the matter in detail at its next meeting.

The SACRE suggested that headteachers at all secondary schools in Milton Keynes should be contacted to establish what religious education and collective worship activities were taking place as part of Key Stage 4 education.

Members expressed an interest in attending collective worship sessions in schools to find out what was happening and report back to the SACRE.

Members suggested that the SACRE could co-opt Members to make it more representative of the community. Members were particularly keen to recruit Buddhist and Free Church representatives.

RESOLVED –

1. That J Fageant produce a letter to be sent to all secondary schools in Milton Keynes to establish what religious education and collective worship activities were taking place as part of Key Stage 4 education.
2. That an Item on the “Every Child Matters” agenda be included in the agenda for the next meeting of the SACRE.

18.0 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT CHRIST THE SOWER SCHOOL

The SACRE received a verbal report on religious education and collective worship activities at Christ the Sower School.

19.0 FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE SACRE

RESOLVED -

That the next meeting of the SACRE be held at the Granby Mosque on the 5th June 2007

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12:20 AM