

Minutes of the meeting of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) held at WALTON HIGH, MILTON KEYNES, on THURSDAY THURSDAY 9 MARCH 2000 at 10.00 am

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

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

Apologies: M Dalal, L Miles, H Padhya and A MacNair Kay

1.0 WELCOME TO VENUE

The Council was welcomed to the school by the Headteacher and was addressed by the Humanities Co-ordinator, Mr Day.

Mr Day gave a presentation on the role of Religious Education in the School, and outlined some of the issues that a new school encountered in addressing its Religious Education Responsibilities. Members had the opportunity to examine the resources provided for teaching Religious education at the school, and to visit rooms where lessons are carried out.

2.0 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 1999, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3.0 SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 1999

The Council considered the draft 1999 Milton Keynes SACRE Annual Report, and noted that it had already been submitted in order to meet the publication deadline. It was further noted that, in order to be complete, the report also needed to include the constitution of SACRE, a list of its membership, and a paragraph on the numbers of children in Milton Keynes who are taking RE at GCSE level.

The Council welcomed the draft.

RESOLVED -

That the draft Annual Report of Milton Keynes SACRE be endorsed, and that the remaining appendices be added by Officers, in consultation with the Chair of SACRE.

4.0 NEWSLETTER FOR SCHOOLS

The SACRE considered a draft Newsletter for Schools prepared by the RE Adviser. The Newsletter was welcomed, and hope expressed that the full range of faith festivals and holidays could be included. The Council also considered other potential additions to the Newsletter such as pen pictures of SACRE members and an update of available resources.

It was agreed that the availability of the QCA's guidance on RE should be advertised widely, and that the LEA should be written to, asking them to send copies to schools.

RESOLVED -

That the Chair of SACRE writes to the Local Education Authority, asking for copies of QCA guidance on Religious Education to be distributed to schools.

6.0 QCA CONFERENCE

The Council considered a report on the QCA's SACRE Conference. It was felt by those attending to have provided useful information and an opportunity to discuss SACRE issues with a wide range of people.

An update was also given on the role of RE in the curriculum following the introduction of 'citizenship', and there appeared to be a greater likelihood that the issue was being addressed, and that RE would not be marginalised in the new curriculum. Concern remained, however, that QCA's Non-Statutory Guidance on RE was not to be sent directly to schools.

RESOLVED -

That the Chair of SACRE writes to the Secretary of State for Education and the Head of the QCA, expressing the SACRE's disappointment that the Non-Statutory Guidance on RE has not been sent directly to all schools.

7.0 NON-STATUTORY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GUIDANCE

The Council considered the non-statutory guidance on Religious Education produced by the QCA, and noted that a covering letter from the Milton Keynes SACRE would be necessary to accompany it.

The SACRE welcomed the document as the first time that clear documents had been produced which supported RE as part of the syllabus and noted that QCA's schemes of work for RE would be sent directly to schools.

8.0 6TH FORM CONFERENCE

The Council considered a proposal to hold a 6th Form Conference on RE with local secondary schools to cut down on administration and costs. It was noted that some local schools had already held such Conferences and **they would be approached for further details and discussion.**

9.0 MILTON KEYNES INTER-FAITH COMMUNITY

The Council received a report on the work of the Milton Keynes Inter-Faith Community. It was agreed that liaison with the group over educational matters should continue.

10.0 BASE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RESOURCES

An oral update was received on the issue of the resources available for teaching RE. It was widely felt that the current base at Ousedale was not adequately serving schools that wished to use RE resources, and agreed that other alternatives should be investigated.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Chair of the SACRE investigates the possibility of the Schools Library service taking over the administration of Religious Education Resources.
2. That Milton Keynes schools be written to and asked about the RE resources which they already possess in order to avoid duplication.

11.0 OFSTED REPORTS ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The Council noted the summary of Ofsted reports on collective worship and Religious Education in Milton Keynes schools, produced following meetings of the Council's Religious Education and Collective Worship Subcommittees in January and February.

The Council also considered future arrangements for analysing Ofsted reports on Collective Worship and Religious Education in Milton Keynes schools. It was agreed that, in future, meetings of Subcommittees could discuss Ofsted reports at the end of the summer term, as this would feed more effectively into the timetable for producing the SACRE's annual report.

RESOLVED –

1. That, in future, Subcommittee meetings held to analyse Ofsted reports would be held at the end of the summer term.

2. That the next meeting of the Collective Worship and Religious Education Subcommittees would be held on 26 June 2000 at 6.00pm in the Civic Offices, Central Milton Keynes.

12.0 BUDGET UPDATE

The Panel discussed the budget situation and noted that there was likely to be a surplus at the end of the financial year. The SACRE agreed that, if possible, any surplus should be used to update RE resources available to schools.

RESOLVED –

That the remainder of the SACRE budget for 2000/01 be used to provide additional Religious Education resources to schools, and that spending be carried out by Officers in consultation with the Chair of SACRE.

13.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of SACRE would be held on Monday 12 June 2000 at 10.00am at a Middle School in Milton Keynes (subject to confirmation of the venue by officers).

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12.07 PM