

West Sussex Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

5 November 2012 – At a meeting of the Committee held at County Hall, Chichester

Present:

Derek James (Chairman)	-	Baptist
Jenny Cole	-	Quaker
Rachel Moriarty	-	Diocese of Chichester
Angela Smith	-	Diocese of Chichester
Susan Thompson	-	Diocese of Chichester
Kim Brown	-	Teacher representative
David Sheldon	-	West Sussex County Council
Michael Brown	-	West Sussex County Council

Apologies were received from Peter Griffiths (West Sussex County Council), Bob Smytherman (West Sussex County Council)

Chairman's Welcome and Introductions

88. The Chairman welcomed all members to the meeting.

Members' interests

89. There were none declared.

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2012

90. Resolved – the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 18 June be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman, with the following amendment:

73. To read 'and also to ensure that these *were* appropriately cross-referenced throughout the syllabus'.

Results in Public Examinations

91. The Senior Adviser - Support and Intervention and Religious Education introduced the report and informed the meeting that the analysis of community school and academy pupil attainment was still incomplete as 'value-added' data had yet to be received. Whilst this had not been available in time for this meeting, this would be circulated to SACRE once completed.

92. SACRE noted that there was a formula error in Tables 2 and 3 of the report. In Table 2, the difference between West Sussex and the national average for A*-C in the full course 2012 should read 4.3. In Table 3, the difference between the West Sussex and the national average for A*-C in the short course 2012 should read 7.2.

93. A teacher representative stated that as the data only included pupils sitting GCSEs in year eleven, all pupils sitting exams early were excluded. SACRE agreed that this might provide at least a partial explanation for the slight

decline in higher grades, particularly as able pupils were more likely to sit exams early.

94. SACRE welcomed the improvement in A-level results and highlighted the nine students achieving A*. SACRE requested that the Cabinet Member for Education and Schools write to the students and their school's Head Teacher and Chair of Governors to congratulate them on their success.

95. The teacher representatives agreed that a likely reason for the improvements was the high quality of trainee teachers for RE and the large proportion of those trainees with RE degrees.

English Baccalaureate

96. The Senior Advisor introduced the attached information paper outlining the Department for Education's current consultation on the proposed English Baccalaureate Certificate (EBC). The consultation is scheduled to close on 10 December and the Senior Advisor invited SACRE to consider whether it would like to respond.

97. The Senior Advisor stated that RE was not currently included amongst the core EBC subjects and that, in the short term, RE will continue as a GCSE and the government will further consult to consider whether this should be replaced.

98. SACRE expressed concern at the omission of RE from the EBC and it was strongly felt that this would undermine the role of RE as a key element of a rounded education. SACRE also feared that RE teachers, particularly subject specialists would be devalued.

99. Teaching representatives agreed that it would be likely that EBC subjects would dominate timetables and there would therefore be less time available for RE and non-compulsory RE in particular. It would also be more difficult to engage pupils in the subject if it was outside EBC core subjects.

100. SACRE agreed that it should respond to the consultation and that its submission should comprise the following key elements

- Express regret that RE is not included and to state that ideally RE should be included as a standalone element. If this is not possible then it should be included as an option amongst the humanities.
- Emphasise that a 'good' education is not provided solely by current EBC subjects and must include RE.
- To highlight SACRE's concern regarding timetabling, should RE not be an element of the EBC.

101. The Senior Advisor agreed to draft a response for the Chairman's agreement, prior to submission.

Annual Report 2011/12

102. The Senior Advisor introduced the attached report for 2011/12 and informed SACRE that the completion of an annual report was a statutory requirement.

103. SACRE agreed the report, subject to the following corrections:

- Table 2 – ‘percentage of students gaining higher grades and grades A*-G compared to the national picture in RE in full course GCSE’ – to correct the formula in the ‘difference’ cell for 2011 (A*-C).
- Appendix 2 – Incorrectly listed for 2010/11, all content to be updated for 2011/12.
- Appendix 3 – formula error as per Table 2 in the main report.

Agreed Syllabus Revision

104. The Senior Advisor introduced the attached outline of the RE Council’s National RE Subject Review time-scales and informed SACRE that the syllabus revision sub-committee would reconvene in February following the completion of the Review in December/January 2013.

105. The Senior Advisor stated that in the case of any further delays the sub-committee could reconvene following 4 March SACRE. However, given the end of the Council term and subsequent election period this might be more complex and require further consideration.

106. The Senior Advisor agreed to contact all sub-committee members to arrange a tentative February date.

Working with other SACREs

107. The Chairman informed SACRE of a recent meeting hosted by Hampshire County Council for local SACREs. Attendees included West Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Southampton, Bournemouth and Poole. The Chairman also stated that East Sussex have expressed interest in a possible network.

108. SACRE agreed that further engagement in local networks should be based on the perceived benefit to SACRE of collaboration and the capacity of SACRE members and supporting officers.

Date of future meetings

10am, Monday 4 March 2013.

109. The Chairman informed SACRE that the March meeting was the last of the current SACRE and all members wishing to remain on SACRE would need to be re-submitted for membership.

110. The teacher representatives requested that future meetings were not arranged for week’s immediately following school holidays.

Future agenda items

111. RE Quality Mark: Angela Smith to lead.

The meeting closed at 11.40am