

WEST SUSSEX STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

7TH March 2011 – At a meeting of the Committee held at County Hall,
Chichester/

Present:

Warwick Hellowell (Chairman)	-	West Sussex County Council
Derek James (Vice Chairman)	-	Baptist
David Fetteroll	-	Roman Catholic
Susan Hibberd	-	Quaker
Farhang Tahzib	-	Baha'i
Rachel Moriarty	-	Diocese of Chichester
Mo Shilliday	-	Diocese of Chichester
Angela Smith	-	Diocese of Chichester
Susan Thompson	-	Diocese of Chichester
Rosemary Appleby	-	Teacher representative
Kim Brown	-	Teacher representative
Sheila Kerr	-	Teacher representative
Bob Smytherman	-	West Sussex County Council

In attendance:

Nigel Bloodworth	-	West Sussex County Council
Dorothy Cox	-	West Sussex County Council

Apologies were received from Mohindar Galowalia (Sikh), Dr Patel (Hindu), Lesley Wilkins (Jewish), Malcolm Hawke (Teacher representative), Gordon Parry (Teacher representative), Michael Brown (WSCC), Peter Griffiths (WSCC), David Sheldon (WSCC)

1. Members' interests - none declared.

2. Membership of SACRE

2.1 The Chairman welcomed Sheila Kerr as a new Teacher representative.

3. Apologies for absence – apologies were received as recorded above.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2010

4.1 The minutes were agreed subject to the following amendments:

Item 5, para 2: amend "Resilience Council" to read "RE Council".
Delete "euthanasia, abortion" from second sentence.

4.2 The amendments having been made as agreed, the minutes were signed as an accurate record.

5. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

- 5.1 Members noted the update circulated with the agenda.
- 5.2 The desirability of Youth Cabinet involvement in SACRE (item 5 of the minutes) was agreed in principle. Options included sending SACRE agendas to the Youth Cabinet and inviting contributions, or seeking comment on specific issues. Nigel Bloodworth would discuss further with the County Council's Youth Cabinet Co-ordinator.

Action: Nigel Bloodworth

- 5.3 In relation to the item on professional development (item 7 of the minutes), Nigel Bloodworth briefed the committee on changes within the Learning Service. From 1st April 2011 subject advisers would no longer be provided; although Nigel would still advise SACRE there would be no in-service provision for schools, which would need to access advice from other sources.
- 5.4 SACRE members expressed concern about the future development of religious education in schools and the Agreed Syllabus, and of the implications of increasing numbers of schools moving to academy status. It was agreed that the Chairman should write to the Cabinet Member for Education and Schools expressing SACRE's concerns and seeking clarification of how SACRE could continue to support and influence religious education in schools.

Action: Nigel Bloodworth/Chairman

- 5.5 The committee recorded its thanks to Nigel Bloodworth for his support and looked forward to working with him in the future.

6. Urgent Matters – there were none.

7. REsilience project

- 7.1 Angela Smith advised that secondary schools who wished to take advantage of the support and resources offered by the REsilience programme were required to register by 18th March. She drew attention to the papers circulated with the agenda, which provided examples of the materials available. The response from schools had been disappointing: two from East Sussex had opted in but she was not aware of any West Sussex schools which had registered.
- 7.2 It was agreed that letters should be sent to all secondary schools within West Sussex providing SACRE's endorsement of the programme and encouraging them register. The letter would also draw attention to the implications for future support to religious education of changes in the Learning Service, which might lead schools to consider the programme as an alternative source of resources. A free REsilience Taster Event would be held at Bishop Luffa School on 15th March; details would be circulated to SACRE members, who were asked to draw it to the attention of schools in their area.

Action: Nigel Bloodworth/All

8. Community Cohesion

- 8.1 Following discussion at the November meeting, it had been felt that the paper produced at that meeting contained a number of generalisations in terms of church schools, which the Church of England Committee response (Appendix 5) aimed to address. David Fetteroll confirmed that the Roman Catholic diocese endorsed the response.
- 8.2 In discussion it was felt that it was difficult for SACRE to monitor community cohesion specifically in religious education or collective worship in schools and that much was already being achieved through the curriculum. It was considered that collaboration was essential and that it was important for all schools to be seen to be working together to provide a coherent set of values. The new Ofsted framework from September 2011 might provide some clarity for the schools' community cohesion agenda, but in the meantime it was proposed that schools should be invited to provide examples of local practice in promoting community cohesion. The issue should also be considered in relation to the next review of the Agreed Syllabus.

Action: Nigel Bloodworth

9. Academies

- 9.1 Referring to the report for this item circulated with the agenda, Nigel Bloodworth confirmed that there was no statutory requirement for academies and free schools to provide religious education in the curriculum and a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. The funding agreement between the Department for Education and Academies, however, required those Academies which had not been designated with a religious character to provide religious education in accordance with the requirements for locally agreed syllabuses. The current four West Sussex academies had chosen to follow the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus. The Director of Learning would discuss with Academy sponsors how they wished to relate to the SACRE and it was agreed that further consideration of the matter should await the outcome of those discussions.

10. Spiritual development – inspection reports for West Sussex schools

- 10.1 The SACRE agreed that an annual summary of inspection reports should still be provided.

Action: Nigel Bloodworth

11. National development in Religious Education

- 11.1 The committee considered the implications for religious education of the arrangements for the English Baccalaureate and expressed concern that there was a risk that RE could become marginalised as subjects within the English Baccalaureate would assume greater

priority. There was a campaign to include RE as a Humanities subject although there could be a risk that the subject would lose its identity if integrated.

- 11.2 It was agreed that SACRE'S concerns should be passed to the Department for Education by 8th March, the deadline for comments on the content of the Bacallaureate.

Action: Nigel Bloodworth

12. Any other business

- 12.1 Although the subject was not within the terms of reference of the SACRE it was agreed that a report on transport to denominational schools would be discussed at the November meeting.

13. Dates of future meetings

- 13.1 The next meeting of the West Sussex SACRE would be held on Monday, 20th June 2011 at 10.00 a.m. in County Hall, Chichester.

- 13.2 The two following meetings would be held on:

Monday, 7th November 2011 at 10.00 a.m.
Monday, 5th March 2012 at 10.00 a.m.

The meeting closed at 11.55 a.m.