

Draft Minutes from the South Gloucestershire SACRE meeting
08th July 2021
Online meeting
4.00 pm – 6.00 pm



1 Apologies, membership and introductions

Apologies are noted in the attendance list below. Jane Allinson welcomed everyone to the meeting in her capacity as chair, being the last meeting of the academic year. There was a discussion on terms of office, which hadn't been renewed for a while due to lack of contact people in the Local Authority until our recent excellent support.

HW to work through the appointment process.

It was agreed that we should make a sub committee to talk about membership as part of our general whole constitution review. Jane has been chasing labour membership. Katy suggested approaching particular councillors we know to be potentially interested in our work – this will be taken to the membership sub committee meeting. Jane also talked about the potential of blended Zoom / real life meetings. She asked advice of Katy who didn't know any good reason not to, especially as it was already done in Bristol. Jo put forward support for this blended strategy from the perspective of busy teachers.

Attendees:

Katy Staples, Roger Allinson, Jane Allinson, Hannah Wood, Jo Hachani, Liz Thomas, Mohammed-Nassir Miah, Kath English, Ruth Wallace, Ramila Patel

April Begley tried to log into the meeting but couldn't get in.

Apologies received: Chris John, Chris Selway, Claire Evans, Alex Howard, Andrew Best, Malcolm Strange, Nic Baykaa-Murray, Iris Segal, Mike Riches

Absent: Mike Drew, Ben Stokes, Rich Pellow, Andy Spens

2 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising not on the agenda

It was noted that Leah Osborne had left her teaching post and would be leaving SACRE. We agreed that she will be sorely missed and the SACRE would like to send her a farewell card.

The SACRE agreed that we should draw up clear guidelines for behaviour and protocols of its members. Katy noted that the Bristol SACRE has more a more detailed constitution in this area, so this could be taken to the constitution sub committee.

A website review was mentioned in paragraph 3 of the last meeting's minutes. The SACRE agreed that after the upheaval of Covid, we need to give schools time to rest and restart. Liz suggested that it should be taken to Andrew Best to be included in the Headteachers South Glos Connect newsletter, which might be a good vehicle to launch this. We could include a summary of what schools should have on their website regarding RE provision. Katy agreed to action this with Liz. Kath asked for a recommendation for a good example school website, which Katy offered to find and circulate (Almondsbury is a good example). It was agreed that examples of both a church school and non church school would be good for inclusion.

Chris Selway had proposed some changes to the Agreed Syllabus meeting part of the

minutes. These were discussed with SACRE members along with other noted changes to the minutes. It was also agreed that it would be helpful to have a sight of the minutes from the previous Agreed Syllabus meeting.

HW to circulate revised minutes along with those from the previous Agreed Syllabus meeting.

3 Feedback from working parties :

1. Constitution – next steps ?

The SACRE asked Katy if changes to the constitution need to be approved by the Local Authority. Yes, needs to go through legal team at LA. Jane noted that the SACRE have to remember that we have to act in accordance with LA wishes, and that the constitution working group need to meet again to thrash things out. The SACRE asked Liz about having a governor representative in one of the committees, and she said finding a governor rep at the LA might be a good choice. Liz, Jane and Jo noted that they are all governors who can bring that experience to the SACRE. Jane wondered whether Local Authority governors would be seen as being political. Liz noted that they're on a governor recruitment drive in general. She suggested that the SACRE talk to Maxine and Rachel Huke in Governor Services. Katy noted that the improvement of RE in schools can be effected through governors – training used to be available, so we should check that it still is with Maxine. Jane noted that Adam used to do this, so Katy agreed to email Maxine.

Katy and Jane will set the date for the membership and constitution committees after our main meeting.

2. Long term Agreed Syllabus Research – next steps ?

Jane noted that we need teachers' comments to move forward with our Agreed Syllabus, and we need to embrace change over the coming five years. She asked Katy what she felt we should do to effect this. Katy explained that our January conference would focus on making RE better and the March conference would be information giving online about new syllabus. As the syllabus is essentially already launched, the March conference would be explaining more about updates and changes. Katy noted that she was aware that loss of Adam had given our SACRE a hiatus. However, working with other SACREs has been an exciting challenge of scanning the horizon, debating issues and setting principles. Nassir said that he did a Scheme of Work for Islam section for Bristol SACRE and was to offer it to South Glos as it would just need reformatting. Katy confirmed that the January conference would be the last Friday in January, and that Engineers' House is booked.

4 Update on RE teacher hubs

Katy gave updates on work in the hubs, and will circulate links for the next Zoom meeting. She noted that good networking seems to be growing for RE across the authority.

5 Discussion about Ofsted Research Review

Katy showed film (already circulated) over Zoom and said the ideas were about shifting towards world views rather than religions, as the modern world is far more complicated. This approach affects how we teach and see RE in school settings, and this is reflected in the new Ofsted research review paper (also circulated). KS split members into two groups with the questions “do you agree with the key messages?” and “how should this impact us?”

Breakout 1 –As the teacher in the group, Jo thinks RE is taught very well in a few schools but doesn’t have enough importance in most schools, especially secondary. The subject coverage is very inconsistent. Jane said she was unhappy about amount of teaching time at teacher training colleges, and it was confirmed by Jo that she was very much learning on the job. There is a need to go back into colleges where teachers are trained and make sure teachers are well trained enough. We also need to give schools the tools to support new staff. Jo said she was concerned that talking about World Views may cause blurring between RE and Collective Worship.

Katy explained that breakout group 2 talked about time and HLTAs having an effect on teaching of RE. Kath noted her own use of stereotypes and that we need to keep addressing these, especially when teaching new religions. The group noted that no real importance was placed on RE in schools, and Liz highlighted the importance of RE being brought to teaching hubs.

Jane raised the important issue that teaching colleges were the answer to this, as they give very little RE teaching experience. Katy asked about influence with NQTs, and suggested that we need to ask about this with the people in the LA. Liz suggested also putting things on the South Glos CPD system for teaching.

Jane then wondered what is happening to RE during the lockdown, with big gaps already appearing in learning, and Roger noted things haven’t really changed much in RE teaching since the 60s and 70s. Katy said we as SACRE were there to build the community and networks that teachers can access if they need support. Jo suggested providing help to SLT teams in schools to understand importance and significance of RE as a subject. Jane said that the WIRE award has raised profile of RE so it reaches both pupils and parents in every participating school. Katy said we should put WIRE in newsletters for headteachers. Kath asked if anyone had moved up to Gold WIRE award – Jane said St Barnabas were working on it, but that schools were missing the big events.

6 Feedback from NASACRE conference, including NASACRE’s funding report

Jane was concerned our workshop on the WIRE award has been misrepresented - she asked NASACRE for rewrite which they agreed. Katy noted that this may appear on NASACRE website when it was rebuilt. Jane said she found the conference quite intense. Katy noted that our SACRE was relatively well funded, down to our good work and the good support from the LA.

(Kath left the meeting at 17:30)

Katy also noted that comparison of performance levels of different schools was interesting and she will bring this to the next meeting. There were questions about RE curriculum offer at KS4, and it was noted that we need more secondary reps on our committee. Jane raised Alex's worldview report (circulated with meeting papers) and asked for questions – Kate said that we should note it.

7 RE Conference and Agreed Syllabus Update Launch

RE conference and ASC were discussed earlier in the meeting – they have been split into January and March.

8 Adviser's Report

Jane couldn't see any issues with the report, and was very happy. Katy took over in May - she noted that SACRE having a contract with the diocese rather than with an individual meant there was continuity of service. Katy will be shadowed by Laura Harris from September, who has lots of experience. Katy also noted that she's going down to part time hours in the future.

Meeting closed at 17:40 with thanks to everyone from Jane as Chair. We discussed a blended meeting at Unity Methodist church for the next meeting in November.

Dates of Meetings – 2021/22

Thursday 11 November 2021, 4-6 pm

Thursday 17 March 2022, 4-6 pm

Thursday 07 July 2022, 4-6 pm

(venues TBC)