

STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

WEDNESDAY, 18TH JUNE, 2025

Present: Vincent Saunders in the Chair

Councillors L Ford-Horne (Vice-Chair), R Lawton,
S Hawksworth, D Kanamia, D Kenchington,
P Thomson, J Kelly, N Coupe, E Culy, P Ruffle,
K Barker, Cllr R Burton and Cllr M Le Poidevin

Apologies: C Jones and S Jones

33 Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Vincent Saunders be elected Chairman of the Committee for 2025/26.

Voting: Unanimous

34 Election of a Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Burton be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for 2025/26 on a temporary basis.

35 Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Claire Jones and Shelley Jones, who may be able to attend later.

36 Welcome and introductions

The newly elected Chair thanked the Committee for his election and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

37 Opening reflection (NC)

Nicola Coupe gave the opening reflection explaining her own personal Christian faith and love for science. Her work studying Biology and studying ferns, had cemented her belief in God, making her think of wonder and mystery in the World. Considering her upcoming retirement had been a step into the unknown – we are all pilgrims but God has something in mind. We do not know all precious things but there are always greater things, which are affected by our actions. Finished with a prayer for the Earth.

38 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2025, were agreed as a true and correct record. Actions: As the Committee had not seen the annual report, it was asked if it gone through the correct process. It was confirmed that it had and had been checked. A copy would be circulated.

39 Curriculum Review (DR)

The interim report recognised RE roles and considered if there were sufficient people to cover roles in secondary education. There was a recognised turnover, and this needed to be understood. There were national disparities between the RE curriculum. Consideration

should be made as to whether there were specific local needs to consider, which would not be concluded quickly. Autumn 2025 will see final report, date TBC.

It was agreed that support for schools, and meeting local needs, must be debated by all, including those who do not use all networks.

Action VS, GP and DR meet to discuss engagement and support that may be offered.

In response to a question it was advised that Central Government had not decided whether RE would be absorbed into the national curriculum. There was currently a disparity in provision between church and non-church schools. It was felt within the Committee that the message needed to come from the top, that RE is an academic subject, encouraging other life skills. SACRE would continue to monitor this.

40 Action Plan Update (DR and GP)

It was advised that the next newsletter would be published in September 25, and a request was made to supply any items to be included.

Action VS meet with to drill down to what we need to do, to support schools.

41 Filling Vacant SACRE positions

Action VS to scrutinise membership and reach out for more support in areas of need.

42 Hub report including review of BCP area involvement (Compliments and Concerns). (NC)

NC had built a group of teachers with suitable skills, which has gradually increased, two of whom are on this SACRE. EC would take over from NC, following her retirement and both had been working together to achieve a good handover period.

EC introduced herself, advising that she came from a primary education background, coming straight from the classroom environment. She was keen on increasing hubs working together, which was improving, planning to increase both the number of hubs and attendance and make them feel useful for their membership. There had been nine SEND schools at a hub meeting last month, who wished to meet with EC to further action.

43 AOB (to be notified to Chair before the meeting)

Vinny Saunders invited Josh Dubell to attend to speak, to discuss his business Solutions not Sides (SNS), who talk to 14 – 18-year-olds re Palestine and Israel, historic and current events. Young people hear sound bites from social media, which may be negative, but SNS take peace-builders into the classrooms to provide historical overview to both countries and what led them to promote peace now. They talk about conflict resolution. In the last 15 years SNS had not been to the south coast but over the last 18 months they realised this was a global issue which young people are interested in. Planning to come to BCP & Dorset in 2026. Believe this programme will help secondary students, to provide context. Helps young people to realise they have a useful voice. SNS framework: Non-violence; equality for all; reject hatred. There has been an increase of violence in UK following the conflict and this is not wanted by those from the countries. The work of SNS has been backed by the Minister of Education. Link to video and website shared.

44 Dates of future meetings

Action NH to circulate dates of future meetings by email.

VS gave thanks to the previous Chairs and NC, which this SACRE had benefited from greatly, due to all of their wealth of knowledge.

Duration of the meeting: 4.00 - 5.30 pm

Wednesday, 18th June, 2025

Chairman at the meeting on
Wednesday, 18 June 2025