

STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

WEDNESDAY, 10TH MARCH, 2021

Present: Lynda Ford-Horne in the Chair

R Lawrence (Vice-Chairman), C Smith (Vice-Chairman), R Lawton, S Hawksworth, P Thomson, J Kelly, N Coupe, K Barker, T Willis, V Saunders, Cllr B Dion and Cllr M Le Poidevin

38 Opening Reflection

The meeting was opened by Rob Lawton with a period of guided reflection.

39 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Nicola Greene and from Dave Pegg.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Ibrar Mohammed, representative of the Muslim community.

40 Minutes of the meeting on 23rd September 2020

The Minutes were agreed as a correct record.

The Chairman reported that the work on a review of the RE elements of School websites remained suspended during the period of the pandemic but would be recommenced as soon as possible, hopefully before the end of the Summer term.

41 Update on the situation in Schools

The current position within schools in the face of and in response to the pandemic was described and tribute paid to what had been achieved in schools in very difficult circumstances. School closures had been kept to a minimum and lessons learnt during the first lockdown had been applied successfully in the second period with particularly good progress on the way in which remote learning had been delivered. Individual attendance levels had been closely managed to maximise attendance levels and reduce infection. This had enabled high attendance to be achieved as pupils began to return to classes from 8th March. In due course, a workforce report measuring the effect of the pandemic and assessing the impact of issues such as 'long Covid' would be produced. The SACRE recorded their thanks and appreciation to Officers and to staff for what had been achieved and for the support that had been provided to schools.

42 Diversity and Equality

The BCP Council Equalities Officer attended the meeting to speak about the Council's work around engaging with local faith communities with particular emphasis at the present time around encouraging confidence in and take-up of the Covid-19 vaccine programme. Tackling inequality and whilst respecting difference was now a key factor in service delivery. He also described the process of pulling together a faith calendar to enable the Council to have notice of key dates for particular faiths. There was reference to the 'RE-on-line' network's festivals calendar which already existed and was available.

43 Holocaust Memorial Day

The Chairman described how the annual Holocaust Memorial Day student conference had this year been delivered in a virtual environment. The format had enabled more schools to be involved than usual with 12 schools and some 700 pupils taking part and a wider range of settings being involved and able to access the resource and learning material. The event had been recorded and it was hoped that in future years could be delivered simultaneously on a live and a live streamed basis.

44 Updates; Newsletters and Action Plan

The next Newsletter would be out during the first week after Easter and any contributions were invited. The Action Plan continued to be rolled forward providing a schedule for teachers about the support that was available to them.

45 Brief Updates on Conferences

Feedback was provided on the 'Strictly RE' and 'Dillington' Conferences with an emphasis on anti-racism and decolonisation. Items of interest and those which could be worked up into useful resources would be circulated after the meeting.

46 ASC for Syllabus and Teacher Consultation

Initial work was underway on the periodic review of the Curriculum to take effect in September 2022 and a questionnaire to inform the process was in preparation for distribution to schools within the BCP Council area. Contribution from schools was an essential and critical element as was the importance of targeting the questionnaire carefully to maximise the response rate from individual schools. There was agreement that distribution at the end of the May half term would therefore be most appropriate. There were also opportunities to draw on work being undertaken by Dorset and Wiltshire SACREs and to take account of both Teacher and student voice. Volunteers from the BCP SACRE would also be drawn upon to contribute to the process.

47 RE Conference

The annual RE Conference was replaced with a virtual event but, for the next Conference, planning was in its early stages for a hybrid approach involving an on-line core conference but with an opportunity for potentially an outdoor face-to-face networking opportunity during the afternoon. Support for teaching and learning would remain the essential theme. In the meantime, the Salisbury based Conference would take place virtually on 31st March and members of the BCP SACRE were invited to attend at no charge.

48 BCP SACRE Budget

The SACRE was advised that the budget for BCP SACRE was now ring-fenced within the School Improvement department at a level of £4000 plus, additionally, a commitment of up to a further £5000 for the scheduled re-writing of the syllabus.

49 Networks Update

The new role for 'Hub Lead Practitioners' trained by the Diocese was explained in relation to the BCP Council area including their role in engaging more with RE leads as identified through the newly updated contacts list for RE leads in schools. The Practitioners were also beginning to establish a network and, in due, course there was potential to extend this to separate networks for primary and secondary settings. Once again, there was focus on sharing resources and providing mutual support as well as support for those schools where capacity was currently more limited. It was reported that funding from the Salisbury Diocese was

Wednesday, 10th March, 2021

available for training three more Hub leads and anyone interested was invited to indicate accordingly. Details would be circulated within the forthcoming newsletter.

50 Other issues including Reflection for next meeting on 16th June 2021

Sally Hawksworth offered to provide a reflection at the summer term meeting on 16th June.

Duration of the meeting: 4.00 - 5.20 pm

Chairman at the meeting on
Wednesday, 10 March 2021