At a meeting of SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) held in Room 14, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, SG17 5TQ on Tuesday 2 July 2019 from 4:00pm.

Present: Lucy Chapman (Chair)
Ryan Parker (Vice-Chair)

Group A: Sister Aiden Richards Roman Catholic Church
Tulsi Seva Dasi Hindu Representative

Group B: Ryan Parker Church of England Representative

Group C: Lucy Chapman Lower School Representative
Sister Aiden Richards Sutton Lower School
Kathleen Eldridge Secondary RE Specialist

Group D: Cllr Frank Firth Cllr Charles Gomm
Cllr Brian Saunders Cllr Johnson Tamara
Cllr Mary Walsh Cllr Tracey Stock

Apologies: Nina Leigh Jewish Representative
Tirath Bhavra Sikh Representative

Officers in Attendance: Mr Lat Blaylock RE Today
Miss Maria Brooks Committee Services Officer
Mr Simon Cotton Head of School Improvement
Mr Paul Harpin School Improvement Consultant

1. **Introductions**

Members were invited to introduce themselves to new members of SACRE.

2. **Election of Chair 2019/2020**

Nominations for the Chair of SACRE were sought. Lucy Chapman, Lower School Representative was nominated, seconded and duly elected.

Members thanked Cllr Mrs Doreen Gurney, for her time as Chair of SACRE.

**RESOLVED**

that Lucy Chapman be elected as Chair of SACRE for 2019/20.
3. **Election of Vice Chair 2019/2020**

Nominations for the Vice Chair of SACRE were sought. Ryan Parker, Church of England Representative was nominated, seconded and duly elected.

**RESOLVED**

that Ryan Parker be elected as Vice Chair of SACRE for 2019/20.

4. **Minutes and Matters Arising.**

**RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2019 be approved as a correct record.

**Matters Arising / Actions from SACRE**

**SACRE/18/20 – The SACRE Constitution**

It was noted that a notice had been placed in Central Essentials inviting applications for members of the Central Bedfordshire, SACRE, but that no nominations had been received.

**RESOLVED**

that the Committee Services Officer place a second notice in Central Essentials in September 2019 and that a copy of the notice be provided to Mr Lat Blaylock for distribution to the Primary and Secondary Teacher Network group.

**SACRE/18/25 – SACRE Updates Spring 2019**

It was noted that the previous Chair of SACRE had worked with the School Improvement Consultant to produce a summary paper celebrating the work of SACRE during the last municipal year 2018/19.

**SACRE/18/28 – RE GCSE and A Level Results 2018.**

The School Improvement Consultant provided an update to SACRE on the feedback received from the Teacher network meetings. SACRE noted that from the 35 responses received 34 judged the network sessions as very good. The feedback had been very positive with Teachers proactively identifying the agenda points for the next session.
5. Sikh Celebrations.

Members of SACRE noted the apology received from the Sikh Representative and agreed for this item to be deferred to the next SACRE meeting.

RESOLVED

that the item on Sikh Celebrations be deferred to the next meeting of SACRE.

6. SACRE Updates.

The representative from RE Today provided SACRE with an update for Summer 2019, in particular focusing on the following areas:

1. The responsibility of SACRE and the current position of Central Bedfordshire Council SACRE.
2. NATRE Project ‘Better RE Primary 1000’
3. Plans for the coming year.

Key issues noted were:

1. The duties of SACRE are to advise the LA on such matters concerned with school worship and with Religious Education. These matters might include, for example, the provision of INSET, methods of teaching and choice of materials and the consideration of complaints should the LA so require.
2. SACRE are required to publish an annual report outlining the advice given by SACRE to the Local Authority.
3. In the last year Central Bedfordshire has supported teachers in relation to the Agreed RE Syllabus, which was published in 2018, in collaboration with Luton Borough Council and Bedford Borough Council.
4. SACRE are required to monitor Religious Education in schools, which has proved problematic in the past. However, with the launch of the new Ofsted framework in September 2019 20% of those schools inspected are likely to have a focus on RE. This will provide SACRE with valuable data in the future.
5. Central Bedfordshire has engaged RE Today to work with Central Bedfordshire Council three days a year to provide Religious Education Support to SACRE and to fulfill SACRE duty to provide advice and support to Central Bedfordshire teachers on the Agreed Syllabus.
6. SACRE noted that NATRE had a new project to help schools who recognise the need to improve their RE provision. The project will enable 1000 primary schools to offer ‘Better RE’ which means RE for thinking, creativity, standards and challenge.
7. Reference was made to the number of Primary Schools within Central Bedfordshire who are currently represented at the Teacher Network events and the prospect of targeting those who do not attend through the ‘Better RE’ project.
8. SACRE noted that NATRE has published guidance and support for head teachers, senior leaders and teachers of RE to manage the right of withdrawal in their school.
9. In the 2018 NATRE primary survey, almost 16 per cent of schools surveyed said they had some parents using the right of withdrawal.
10. BBC have created new ‘bitesize’ programmes for RE which is providing good accurate content which can be utilised by Primary and Secondary teachers.
Points and comments included:

- A member of SACRE requested that the Agreed Syllabus be circulated to the Committee.
- The SACRE emphasised the need to continue to raise the profile of the committee within schools which could be achieved through the ‘Better RE’ project.
- The Committee acknowledged that the Teacher Network sessions need to be communicated more widely as currently not capturing all of the teachers within Central Bedfordshire.

RESOLVED

1. that a copy of the Agreed Syllabus be circulated with the minutes.
2. that the further information on the NATRE project ‘Better RE’ be presented at the next SACRE meeting.
3. that the guidance from NATRE on dealing with withdrawal from RE be circulated with the minutes.
   
4. that the new regional ambassador for Religious Education for South Central be invited to a future SACRE meeting.


The SACRE considered the Development Plan setting out areas for development between April 2019 - March 2020 and noted the following:

1. The trend with GSCE and A Level results in Religious Education is showing a fall in the number of students taking this subject however the overall pass rate is generally good.
2. The professional studies group continues to develop at the particular request of Central Bedfordshire teachers.
3. That opportunities will be provided to SACRE Council Members to visit schools in Central Bedfordshire to observe RE lessons and be aware of the challenges and issues faced by teachers.
4. The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day next year will be “Engage and empathise”

Points and comments included:

- A member of SACRE attended the Holocaust Memorial Day this year and found it a positive experience.
- Members of SACRE acknowledged the importance of staying focused on the impact that the Council can have on supporting Central Bedfordshire teachers.

NOTED

the SACRE development plan 2019/20
8. **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Comments from Ofsted Reports.**

The SACRE considered, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural comments (SMSC) for January – March 2019 and noted the following:

1. There were three inspections during this period, two schools in Houghton Regis and one in Dunstable.
2. Watling Lower School’s report highlighted that pupils are accepting of difference and show respect and tolerance towards others. In addition, positive parent feedback was received in relation to children learning about and embracing different cultures.
3. Tithe Farm Primary’s report emphasises that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Points and comments included:

- The SACRE noted the new OFSTED inspection framework which will apply from September 2019, this may result in more specific information in relation to SMSC emerging over the next year.

NOTED the report

9. **Feedback from NASACRE AGM.**

The Head of School Improvement provided an update to SACRE following attendance at the NASACRE AGM.

Key issues noted were:

1. Two main themes emerged from the AGM, the introduction of the new OFSTED framework which will be in place from September 2019 and the need to identify how well Religious Education in schools is being taught.
2. Questions from the AGM included how many schools are teaching RE at the correct standard? Is RE being marginalised at KS4? And how are SACRE obtaining this intelligence?
3. The challenge for SACRE is to ensure a greater level of engagement with Central Bedfordshire schools and the ability to measure the impact that the Committee are having on local schools.
4. The current SACRE pages on the Central Bedfordshire Website are out of date.
5. School governors are a key stakeholder group who maybe unaware of the work of SACRE and the role of the school governor in challenging the curriculum of their school.
6. Research for RE online resource which brings together those who teach and research RE, sharing research reports and encouraging collaboration and new ideas, so that research can have an impact both inside and outside the classroom.
Points and comments included:

- The SACRE acknowledged the need for school governors to receive some training on SACRE and in particular their role.
- The SACRE acknowledged the importance of having a website which would include resources for Schools to access as well as keeping them informed about the work of SACRE.
- Members of SACRE noted the importance of ensuring that the committee fully fill its responsibilities in particular some pockets of schools are not aware of SACRE or are engaging.
- Working with School Improvement Advisers to ensure that schools are delivering RE and are compliant.
- Members of SACRE noted that Central Bedfordshire schools do have the Agreed Syllabus as a reference point, and the committee are working to facilitate training and network meetings for those schools who wish to engage.

RESOLVED

1. that the SACRE landing pages on the CBC website are updated to ensure that the correct membership information for the Committee is reflected.

2. that a school governor training session on SACRE is organised.

3. that the presentation from the NASACRE AGM with particular reference to the RE Research website be circulated with the minutes.

10. Date of Next meeting.

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 5 December 2019, 4:00pm, Priory House, Chicksands.

RESOLVED

that the dates of the SACRE meetings for the next Academic year be agreed and that these are shared with the Committee.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 4:00pm and concluded at 5:17pm)

Chair ..................................................

Dated ..................................................