

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)**

At the meeting of the **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)** held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF on Wednesday, 8 November 2023 at 4.00 pm.

**PRESENT**

C. Seymour  
Chair – in the Chair

**COUNCILLORS**

L. Bowman

N. Morphet

**CHURCH OF ENGLAND REPRESENTATIVES**

P. Rusby

**REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER CHURCHES & FAITHS**

S. Arhad  
S. Dearlove

J. Simpson  
D. Van Der Velde

**OBSERVERS**

R. Cant – Cragside CE Primary School

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

D. Cookson  
R. Little  
C. Weir

Head of School Improvement  
Assistant Democratic Services Officer  
Part Time RE Consultant

**IN ATTENDANCE**

K. Passmore

North East RE Hub

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## 18 INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from A. Duffield, C. Hudson, T. Marley, J. Miller and Councillor Thorne.

## 19 MINUTES

Councillor Seymour noted that while minute 13 mentioned that the working group members would be J. Miller, T. Marley, D. Van Der Velde and Councillor Seymour, however she was unable to attend the meetings.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Northumberland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), held on Wednesday, 28 June 2023 as circulated, were confirmed as a true record.

## 20 AN UPDATE OF CONTACTS WITH SCHOOLS AND TRAINING PROVISION

C. Weir – Part Time RE Consultant, informed members that since the start of the new term, she had been setting up the training schedule for the year with a number of training events scheduled to support the agreed syllabus, including how to plan a series of lessons using the summary sheets for each unit in the syllabus.

Three network meetings had been planned for the 2023-24 year. The first one had taken place in October for Northumberland teachers, where the discussion was around how to incorporate non-religious world views into various units across the syllabus.

Dates of the networking training would be shared with SACRE members.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

## 21 NORTH EAST RE HUB PRESENTATION

K. Passmore – North East RE Hub, gave a brief overview of the RE hubs website, showing members how to get information on school speakers, regional training events, places of interest and local groups. Members noted that the website was open to all and there were free courses available to join.

Members were encouraged to complete the 'Kitemark' training if they did school visits to speak about their worldview; they could also gain a 'Kitemark' for their place of worship, details of which could be found on the RE Hubs website – [www.re-hubs.uk](http://www.re-hubs.uk)

Members thanked Karenza for attending.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

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## 22 GOOD PRACTICE IN RE

R. Cant – Cragside CE Primary School spoke to members around what good practice in RE looks like at Cragside CE Primary School and discussed how they effectively teach RE.

### Knowledge

The school had been focusing on delivering training based on Rosenshine's Principles of instruction which was based on research on how the brain acquires new information and also on the EEF recommendations for metacognition and self-regulated learning strategies, which fed into the planning and teaching of all RE lessons across the school.

Teachers were sent on relevant training delivered by the diocese which had been particularly useful. R. Cant also noted that she regularly attended the RE Networks meetings and shared any updates and training with teaching staff in the school, this had led to in house training on multidisciplinary learning, developing a worldviews approach to teaching RE and beginning to look at the decolonisation of RE.

### Planning

A long term plan with input from all staff had been created to ensure they're following the Northumberland agreed syllabus, ensuring that the units were in a logical and sequential order and that each new unit covered builds on previous learning, with more content being added to the long term plan based on non-religious worldviews.

Teachers were also in the process of decolonising the curriculum and looking for resources where resources had been chosen deliberately to ensure diversity. As part of this the school had recently created an RE library which offered the children access to a wide range of non-fiction and fiction texts to support the teaching of RE, including by showing examples of "real" stories and people of faith.

Teachers planned their own weekly sessions ensuring that there was a balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and social sciences to ensure a breadth of understanding.

### Lessons and Lesson Outcomes

Pupils worked in a range of different ways to explore and find answers to the big question title of each unit – these were broken down into smaller questions for each session, which encouraged pupils to have an enquiring mind and provided a basis for class discussions.

Pupils worked in RE books but also had large floor books which were used to record class-wide discussions, evidencing drama, large pieces of art as well as visits.

Pupils worked in a varied range of ways in the school, with discussions, written work, reading and interpretation of religious texts, visiting places of worship and

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talking to visitors from different faith communities. The aim for teachers was for students to be able to talk confidently about what they believe, what others might believe and that they understood the impact that faith can have on the life of a believer.

The school monitored the teaching by dropping into lessons, looking at work and talking to children to get their perspective. Teachers were given feedback and personalised support to ensure the best possible outcomes for all learners in the school.

Members thanked Roz for the presentation.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

23 **SACRE SELF-EVALUATION TOOL**

D. Cookson noted that there had not been a meeting between himself, C. Weir, C Curtis and Councillor Morphet as proposed in the June 2023 meeting but that will happen within the term and the group would report back to the February meeting.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

24 **DRAFT REC HANDBOOK**

C. Weir explained that the Draft REC handbook was aimed at curriculum and syllabus writers and was for members to note. The final report of the project's outcomes would be published once further research was finalised in 2024. Members noted that for some of the Commission's proposals to be enacted, the outcomes of the REC's report would require a change of statute.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

25 **HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

D. Van Der Velde noted to members that she had been involved in the working group for Holocaust Memorial Day and had attended a meeting planning the event for Northumberland and would report back in the February meeting after the event.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

26 **CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP**

D. Van Der Velde introduced the report to the committee and explained that the constitution working group had been looking at tidying up SACRE's current constitution and asked members to note the current recommendations and encouraged member feedback. D. Van Der Velde thanked members of the working group for their efforts, and it was noted that sadly Ted had stepped down

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from the group due to ill health. SACRE sent their best wishes.

S. Dearlove enquired as to whether Democratic Services could send out the agenda papers 10 working days in advance instead of 5 working days.

D. Cookson explained that once the final report from the working group was written and presented to SACRE in February 2024, the revised constitution would then be required to be looked at by legal before going to full council to be voted and adopted by County Councillors

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

## 27 **NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE ACTION PLAN**

D. Cookson explained that the action plan in the agenda pack was for the 2022-23 academic year and that the action plan for the 2023-24 academic year would be re-written using a report from a SACRE sub-committee from 2022.

D. Cookson noted that he would supply a copy of the original report to members to read it and asked members to send any feedback to him on whether they felt that those actions were still relevant. If agreed, these suggested actions would form part of the 2023-24 academic year action plan.

**Resolved** that this was noted.

## 28 **SACRE ANNUAL REPORT PROGRESS**

D. Cookson explained that the Annual Report was underway and a draft copy would be sent out to members to gather feedback and would be submitted before Christmas.

**Resolved** that this was noted.

## 29 **NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE NEWSLETTER AND RESOURCES WEBPAGE**

Members were reminded of the website link:  
[northumberlandeducation.co.uk/SACRE](http://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/SACRE)

D. Cookson thanked members of the committee that had submitted information for the SACRE newsletter.

**RESOVLED** that this was noted.

## 30 **TRAINING AVAILABLE TO SACRE**

Members were reminded of the NASACRE 2023-24 virtual training programme and asked to inform the Clerk when they attend training so that it could be recorded for the 2023-2024 Annual Report.

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**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

31 **NASACRE ISSUES - ISSUE 36**

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

32 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education would be held on Wednesday, 7 February 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

**CHAIR**.....

**DATE**.....

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