



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP.
Telephone 01572 722577 Facsimile 01572 75307 DX28340 Oakham

Minutes of the **MEETING of the RUTLAND SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham on Tuesday, 10th July, 2018 at 4.30 pm

PRESENT:

GROUP A – Representatives of other Churches and Faiths	
Mr Andreas Menzies	The Roman Catholic Church

GROUP B – Church of England Representatives	
Mrs Sara Barrett	Rutland Deanery

GROUP C – Teacher Representatives	
Mrs Megan Davis	National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)

GROUP D – Local Education Authority Representative	
Miss Gale Waller (Chair)	Rutland County Council (Councillor)

Local Education Authority Officers	
Ms Gill Curtis	Head of Learning and Skills, RCC
Mrs Amanda Fitton	SACRE/RE Adviser, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Peterborough and Rutland County Council (Officer)
Mr Kit Silcock	Governance Officer

Co-opted Groups	
Ms Julia Ewans	Humanist

Observer	
Revd James McWhirter	Church of England

APOLOGIES:

GROUP A – Representatives of other Churches and Faiths	
Mrs Julie Barnwell	The Baptist Church

GROUP B – Church of England Representatives	
Mrs Barbara Crellin	Peterborough Diocese
The Revd Dr Peter Holmes	Peterborough Diocese

GROUP C – Teacher Representatives	
Mr Patrick Toner	Uppingham Community College

GROUP D – Local Education Authority Representative	
Mrs Lucy Stephenson (Vice-Chair)	Rutland County Council (Councillor)

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A round of introductions took place for the benefit of Reverend James McWhirter from the Church of England who had an interest in SACRE and was observing the meeting.

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1 RECORD OF MEETING

The record of the meeting of the Rutland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held on 17 April 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

1 MATTERS ARISING

- i. Emails were sent out from the Chair regarding consultation on the future of the 'Opening Prayer'. However Julia Ewans was not included in these emails. It would be made sure that all members of SACRE were included in emails between the group.
- ii. 5 schools in Rutland attended the Agreed Syllabus launch on 3 May 2018.
- iii. Mrs Fitton and Ms Curtis have booked training in partnership with the Rutland Teaching School Alliance. A conference has also been set up to take place on 1 May 2019 at Greetham Valley Golf Club, based around RE within the wider curriculum.
- iv. Due to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel falling on the exam period, Mr Toner was unable to get students to attend the meeting to share thoughts on Religious Education. The Chair noted that at the Scrutiny Panel, it was suggested that students could send their thoughts by video which could be played to the Panel next year, as well as having students speak in person. Julia Eames suggested that media studies students could be tasked with the project. This would be further discussed at the October SACRE meeting.
- v. The new agreed syllabus was currently on the Rutland County Council website and can be found using the following link: <https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/schools-education-and-learning/religious-education/>. Mrs Fitton would send amendments for the agreed syllabus through to Mr Silcock to publish on the website.
- vi. Mrs Fitton had a meeting pencilled in with Ofsted in August regarding religious education and finding out what their views were on the matter. The letter from Rutland SACRE to Ofsted regarding Religious Education in Ofsted reports would be delayed until after the meeting.
- vii. More schools were now attending the Network Meetings, however even more would be welcome.

1 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- i. The Chair and Mrs Lucy Stephenson had made alterations to the Development Plan. A copy of which was included within the agenda.
- ii. In an email to the Chair, Mrs Stephenson had suggested it would be worth including an aim to get Ofsted to ensure they comment explicitly on Religious Education within their reports. There was a need to make sure the subject was treated with the time that it deserved.
- iii. Mr Silcock would look into contacting the Baptist Church, Quakers, and Methodist Church in regards to joining SACRE.
- iv. The Chair had reached out to the Plymouth Brethren, however had no response back.
- v. Mrs Fitton would reach out to a shop in Whissendine that was run by a Hindu family to see if they knew of anyone that would be interested in joining SACRE.
- vi. Ms Curtis noted a need to extend the focus of network meetings to the Secondary schools as well. However, the Secondary school network meetings would need to be done in the early evening after school.
- vii. Ms Curtis and Mrs Fitton noted that there was a good speech made by Amanda Spielman, Ofsted Chief Inspector. The speech mentions the benefits of Religious Education as a subject. The speech in full can be found using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/amanda-spielman-s-speech-to-the-policy-exchange-think-tank>

Below is the specific segment on Religious Education:

“Religious education can contribute a great deal to mutual understanding in a multi-ethnic state. And while it can be quite straightforward to cover the factual information about the rituals and observances and meeting places of different faiths, there is far more that it can do. During my time at Ofqual, the exam regulator, we worked on the new religious studies GCSE, which for the first time is requiring students to study two religions. This means that they study at least one that is not their own, so they arrive at some understanding of the differences between faiths. And religious education also has the potential to develop children’s understanding of the diversity that often exists within as well as between faiths: after all, most faiths actually encompass a spectrum of views, from liberal to conservative.

Religious education done well helps children understand where values overlap and where they diverge, and hence the basis for the tensions that can arise between and sometimes even within faiths. It can help them understand the tensions that can arise between faith and other legally established rights, such as the rights of women and rights relating to sexuality. And done well it allows children to understand how their own faith relates to the wider world, both in terms of attitudes and the prevailing law. Again, this is not about indoctrination, rather about making sure that young people have the knowledge to make their own informed choices.”

- viii. Due to the cost of coaches it was difficult for schools to organise trips to different places of interest.
- ix. It was suggested that people could travel to schools and do virtual tours of religious buildings and talk through what the students that see, which would be more useful than students looking at videos online of places by themselves.

- x. The Chair asked that members bring back further ideas for the development plan for the next meeting in October.

1 AGREED SYLLABUS UPDATE

- i. Mrs Fitton noted that the launch of the Agreed Syllabus had been successful, and had been agreed across the counties involved.
- ii. The Chair noted her hope that the Deanery Synod would consider the new syllabus, and would look at the Rutland SACRE Annual Report which is something they have not done before. This would perhaps be done in January 2019.

1 NASACRE UPDATE

Mrs Fitton noted that the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) Conference had gone well with two very good speakers. There was a vote to increase the cost of membership of NASACRE to £105.

1 TRAINING IN RUTLAND

This item was discussed in 'Matters Arising'.

1 NETWORK MEETINGS

This item was discussed in 'Matters Arising'.

1 OFSTED INSPECTION REPORTS

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i. The group were pleased to see mention of Religion and faith within the report.
- ii. The Chair would draft a letter to Fiona Wilce, headteacher at the primary school and would pass on to Mr Silcock to send out.

1 ANY URGENT BUSINESS

There was no other urgent business.

1 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 30 October 2018 at 4.30pm in the Council Chamber, RCC.

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 5.38 pm.

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