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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Date: Tuesday, 11th December, 2018
Place: Caxton Room - Tickfield Centre

Present: Mr K Ryan (Chair)
Councillors B Arscott, M Davidson, N Folkard, D Garston and
A Jones
Mrs T Green, Mr B Werrett, Mr G Licence, Ms Y Bebb

In Attendance: Mr R Harris and Ms F. Neil

Start/End Time: 2.30 - 3.50 pm

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Ware-Lane and Chalk.

Apologies were also received from Ms P. Draycott, Ms L Hopkinson, Ms Y Werrett, Mr S Tinning, Dr N Khoka, Mr T Bharj and Ms J Slater.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

3 SACRE Membership

The Clerk advised that there were three vacancies for the Church of England, 1 vacancy for Roman Catholic and one vacancy for the Salvation Army. There were also a significant number of vacancies within Group C – Associations representing Teachers.

The SACRE discussed the membership in general and suggested that the composition should be reviewed and updated / revised, in line with the general make-up of the Borough.

Resolved:

1. That the Chair, RE Advisor, Clerk and Director of Learning review the membership and composition of the SACRE, (this will include attendance throughout the academic year 2018).

2. That the Clerk further writes to the groups/organisations with vacancies and seek nominations for places.

4 Agreed Syllabus Update and Next Steps

The SACRE received an update from the RE Advisor presenting the locally agreed RE syllabus produced by RE Today and adopted by the Council. The next steps were highlighted which included the launch of the Syllabus on 8th January 2019 at the Tickfield Centre. A copy of the full Syllabus was circulated round at the meeting.

The SACRE discussed the Syllabus and asked a number of questions which the Chair and Re Advisor responded to.

The SACRE noted that all Headteachers and relevant RE providers had been invited to the launch. The Syllabus will also be available as a pdf document which teachers, etc can access and use. It will also be put on the schools learning network.

Resolved:

That an invitation to the launch of the RE Agreed Syllabus produced by RE Today be sent to the SACRE.

5 RE Advisor Update

The SACRE received an update from the RE Advisor covering a range of matters, summarised below:

(a) Exam Results

The SACRE noted that the RE exam results for A-Level, AS-Level and GCSE will be provided to the next meeting. The RE Advisor reminded members that this was an analysis of results and not the sum total of the provision of RE in schools (i.e. via school assemblies, etc).

(b) Religion and Worldviews

The SACRE received and discussed a summary paper of the Commission for RE final report titled 'Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward – A National Plan for RE' which was established to review the legal, educational and policy frameworks for RE and contains a number of recommendations on the way forward.

The SACRE briefly discussed the report with specific focus on the recommendation to change the name of the subject from Religious Education to Religion and Worldviews. Members expressed a number of different views regarding this recommendation but recognised that Religious Education does encompass other beliefs, worldviews and the wide aspects of moral and ethical issues.

The SACRE agreed to revisit the paper and discuss it further at the next meeting.

(c) Right of Withdrawal from RE

The SACRE received and discussed a paper produced on behalf of WASACRE titled 'Guidance on Managing the Right of Withdrawal from Religious Education'.

The SACRE asked a number of questions and noted that there were not significant numbers in Southend of parents/pupils withdrawing from RE.

Resolved:

1. That the RE Advisor updates be noted.

2. That the Commission for RE report titled 'Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward – A National Plan for RE' be discussed further at the next meeting.

6 Any other business

None.

7 Date and time of future meetings

Tuesday 26th February 2019 at 2.30pm - Board Room at Southend & Westcliff Hebrew Congregation, Finchley Road, Westcliff-on-Sea.

25th June 2019 at 2.30pm – Venue to be confirmed (Our Lady of Lourdes suggested).

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