

NATIONAL BOARD OF RELIGIOUS INSPECTORS AND ADVISERS



NBRIA Executive Notes: Tuesday 18 October from 11.00, FCJ House, London NW1 1TA

Those Present

Deborah Fox (Chair), Peter Ward (Vice Chair), Paul Barber (Director CES), Maggie Duggan (Treasurer), Claire Hetherington (Primary Advisers), Dcn Paul Mannings (Secretary & Secondary Advisers), Philip Robinson (CES Religious Education Adviser)

Our Guest Today: Dr Mark Nash

Apologies

Rt Rev Bishop Philip Egan (President), Amanda Crowley (Westminster), Bernard Stuart (Board of Studies), Wendy White (Wales)

Deborah began with prayer and reflection on this the Feast of St Luke.

NBRIA Website

After due discussion that included the expertise of Dr Mark Nash, it was decided to instead explore the setting up of a NBRIA *SharePoint* that is properly organised and licenced for log-in use by NBRIA members. We shall begin with Microsoft 365 Business Basic with a view to setting up a draft site.

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-365/business/compare-all-microsoft-365-business-products?&activetab=tab:primaryr2>

AGM 2022

The date is booked for a live meeting at Don Bosco House, Coleshill on Thursday 1 December from 11.00. Philip is to invite Karen Towe to provide the keynote address. Business will include the presentation of the draft revised NBRIA Constitution for approval. There will be elections for the honorary NBRIA posts of Chair and Treasurer. Paul M will ensure the preparation of the event and the sending of advance meeting materials.

NBRIA Conference 2023

This is scheduled for Monday to Friday, 27-31 March 2023. After consideration of costings, it was agreed that Rome will be the venue, using Palazzola as our base. The aim now is to establish the price per person (exclusive of individual travel arrangements. Paul M will make the provisional booking and request a contract agreement. Deborah will write to members to make an expression of interest. We shall need in the region of 25 delegates to make it viable. The theme for the week will focus in the main on personal spirituality, with invited guest speakers, from Rome, still to be finalised. Executive members will be kept aware of progress.

Recruitment (and retention) of Religious Education Teachers and Leaders

It is worth noting that most Catholic school vacancies do not require 'practising Catholic' so it is necessary to analyse the total supply and demand for teachers and leaders of religious education. Currently there is in excess of 70 vacancies in all schools' so the Catholic demand is a significant proportion of the total demand.

Data from [1] TES [2] DfE [3] eteach

147	individual advertisements
34	Catholic school advertisements
30	re/re-advertisements in total
4	Catholic re-advertisements
116	individual posts advertised
30	individual Catholic posts advertised
86	other than Catholic posts advertised
36	HoD/SL advertisements
5	HoD/SL re-advertisements
31	individual HoD/SL advertisements
23	individual other than RC HoD/SL advertisements
8	individual RC HoD/SL advertisements
5	deputy HoD/SL advertisements
3	RC deputy HoD/SL advertisements
2	other than RC deputy HoD/SL advertisements

2021 total number of state funded secondary schools per DfE	3473	=100%
2021 total number of state funded Catholic secondary schools per CES	321	= 9%
2021 total number of state funded non-Catholic secondary schools	3152	

Data analysis which ignores provision for small number of independent schools

86 other than Catholic school advertisements is **2.6%** of all such schools advertising
34 Catholic school advertisements is **10.6%** of all Catholic schools advertising
Thus demand for Catholic posts is **400%** greater than in other schools

86 other than Catholic school advertisements is **74%** of total
34 Catholic school advertisements is **26%** of total

23 individual other than RC HoD/SL advertisements is **0.7%** of those schools
8 RC HoD/SL advertisements is **2.5%** of Catholic schools

Thus demand for Catholic HoD/SL is **350%** greater than in other school

Further Comment

1. 1 Significant number of the advertised vacancies, including Catholic vacancies, were advertised in the Summer Term and have reappeared in the Autumn term.
2. 2 Most Catholic advertisements do not specify a requirement to be Catholic although most (but not all) subject leaders/heads of department posts make that stipulation.

Several points follow from this.

- A. 3 There is a single 'market' for Religious Education teachers so the Catholic community has an interest in ensuring the greatest number of prospective teachers and security in the on-going provision of nationwide ITT provision.
- B. DfE target numbers for ITT RE recruitment is steadily drifting downwards and yet the target numbers are not achieved – hence the increasing shortage of RE teachers
- C. DfE market review of ITT provision currently underway is threatening the provision of sufficient RE ITT places in sufficient locations across the country.
- D. DfE confidence in school-centred ITT presumes there is expertise in Religious Education pedagogy and content in those schools and ITT networks, but is it and what if it is not?
- E. TT Core Content Framework and Early Career Framework criteria require that all RE teachers are equipped to teach in all types of schools.
- F. This means that RE ECTs entering our Catholic schools have no specialist knowledge or understanding of Catholic Religious Education.
- G. That deficit must be made good if Catholic schools are to continue to provide authentic Catholic Religious Education if teachers in Catholic schools are qualified to teach the Religious Education Directory 2022
- H. Schools and academies, MATs and dioceses are exploring all manner of ways of addressing the present shortfall but will they provide a reliable on-going source?
- I. Secure on-going provision of qualified secondary teachers of Catholic Religious Education is essential for the future of Catholic secondary schools but present evidence suggests that may be problematic.

NBRIA – Working together with CES, DSCs, DREs and more ...

Already we are sharing information and resources between the regional hubs. Executives are asked to bring updates from the hubs to our next meeting with a view to sharing that information at diocesan level.

NBRIA Constitution

After much effort by Paul Barber, Deborah Fox and Peter Ward alongside a thorough process of consultation, there is now a substantive document to present to the AGM. Those in attendance will need reminding about the opportunities already provided to have had their say. There will be three questions asked in preparation for voting:

1. Does NBRIA seek formal recognition as a CIO?
2. If the answer is affirmative, are we ready to accept this draft as our Constitution?
3. Are we ready to incorporate any changes within the document that may be required by the charity commissioners?

In today's meeting we studied the content clause by clause. Its format is largely based on the generic model required by the CIO, with relevant amendment relevant to NBRIA. There was consideration of relevant terminology such as the use of the word *adviser* which might more accurately be replaced by *diocesan office/education officer*. We considered distinctions between associate and voting membership. Within the section on Inspection there is the need to include reference to the grades of inspectors and of course the national coordinator of inspectors. *Provinces* need to be replaced by *regional hubs*. Will there be a limit to the number of trustees?

Finance

Balance in account: As at 30th September 2022, there was a balance of £14, 359.13 in the bank. However, there are outstanding invoices yet to be paid (all have been followed up but payment not yet received).

NBRIA Conference, April 2022, York There is one outstanding invoice.

Secondary Advisers Conference, May 2022 There are three outstanding invoices paid.

Sage Accounting: As of September 2022, the NBRIA accounts are now run on Sage software, with information back dated to 1st January 2022. This is helping to make the running of this account much easier.

However, this would be even more efficient if the NBRIA Account was managed through an online account. Amy Majhu (School Finance & Business Adviser) has suggested the following:

To open a new NBRIA Bank Account with Lloyds Bank for Online Banking, and, once open, to close the existing NatWest Account, for which we do not have access to online banking. This will enable more timely accounts, without waiting for a bank statement and will allow for online banking transactions (with two signatories, out of three possible signatories, currently there are two signatories, but only one is required to sign to issue a cheque), when suppliers prefer electronic payment, rather than via cheque.

Other than regular bank charges, there are no additional charges.

Membership:

Invoices have yet to be issued for 2022 membership year.

Catholic Schools Inspectorate

Diocese have begun preparing for inspection, with one having already started. There have been eighteen training sessions with more already arranged. There are shortages of inspectors in some dioceses. The CES legal service has provided guidelines for the payment of incurred expenses by inspectors. The CSI website is up to date and password protected as

appropriate. Jane Goring has been appointed as *Project Lead* and is currently employed for two days a week. Currently this role is about broadly overseeing the diocesan coordinators and the process for quality assurance. CSI is working to establish a democratic system of NBRIA representation.

Following the piloting there have been some minor changes to *Progress* grade descriptors. There is also greater clarity about the role of the *Lead Inspector*. Also, in terms of clarity, the descriptor for *Outstanding* has now been modified to the extent that it will hopefully remove the possibility for schools' disputes.

Religious Education Directory

The final text has been prepared for presentation to the Bishops' Department on 31 October 2022. Hopefully they will sign it off not least because we want our schools to get on with their preparation by using a branded and worthy document. For that reason, we are urging our dioceses to wait for its release and not circulate anything until then. The proposed launch date is 25 January, Feast of the Conversion of St Paul. Executive expressed its thanks to Philip for this continued *huge work!*

Prayer and Liturgy Directory

This is the post consultation stage that included an excellent exposition at our annual conference as well as circulation to DSCs and DREs. Fr Peter McGrail and Martin Foster continue to finalise the revised draft for presentation to the bishops at their Spring 2023 meeting. The tone of the document has changed considerably and is certainly more school aware. There is a progression from prayer to its practical expression. A careful programme of CPD has been set up via the hubs for Summer 2023 to present training materials that can then be taken into the schools.

Wales

We need to assist in ensuring that Catholic schools are well represented on SACREs to uphold their rights and so withstand prescriptive governmental interference. Under the existing Estyn framework our denominational rights are secure. Will this remain so? What about in those Catholic schools wherein we teach our Religious Education alongside the Agreed Syllabus for those pupils and parents wishing to follow that pathway? With regards to the new GCSE where is the consultation process for the new GCSE? It cannot be found on any website. One item of good news is the fact that 10/10 RSE is now available for all Catholic schools in Wales.

Catholic Project

Pat Peel is Chair of the Catholic Project, with responsibility for *Come and See*. Paul M is Chair of the Group for *People of God – Called to Serve*. For *Come and See*, primary advisers are currently conducting a survey of its content to identify stronger points that can be retained in its revision. For *People of God*, there is a writing group consisting of practitioners whose aim is to replace the existing theological notes with those of the RED and to restructure teaching content as necessary. Executive is to consider either retaining a Catholic Project representative or co-opting representation at meetings as required.

SACREs Overall: A group of people across dioceses have met a few times now to highlight the need for Catholic representation on the SACREs in our diocesan LAs. Certain groups are

particularly organised in SACREs e.g. Humanists UK. NBRIA is providing a focus for advice to dioceses and their SACRE reps. PW has spoken to SACRE reps in dioceses to offer direct support and is available if needed. To note: If a diocese doesn't have a SACRE Coordinator, it is definitely useful to have one.

Professional Groups:

Primary

Primary Advisers have met remotely for the Autumn and Spring term meetings of last academic year, but enjoyed meeting together for our residential conference at Hinsley Hall in July. The uplifting, reflective input on Day One was from Jo Boyce, CJM Music who also spoke about her online resource, Teach Us to Pray, an accessible and practical guide to Prayer & Liturgy for Catholic Schools. Our evening Mass was enhanced by Jo's music and advisers were able to thank and wish Fr Des a happy retirement. Retirement presentations were also made to two former colleagues who had retired during Covid. On Day two we received updates from Philip Robinson and Nancy Walbank on the RE Directory. Philip also brought advisers up to date on the Directory of Prayer and Liturgy and CSI. Advisers expressed their thanks to him.

The Catholic Project group has been reconstituted and Pat Peel, Liverpool is the Chair, following Fr Des' retirement. Schools will be consulted on their opinions on the strengths of Come and See to take forward. The process of writing will be consultative and involve pilots with schools to ensure practitioners are involved in developing resources. The scheme will follow the branch structure of the model RED curriculum.

Advisers received updates from Bethany Friery, CAFOD and Claire Collieran, Missio and recorded their thanks to both agencies for the high quality teaching and collective worship resources produced. The session ended with a sharing of resources and good practice.

Dates for the diary for this year:-

Thursday 19 October 2022 via Zoom

Thursday 10 February 2023 Coleshill

Thursday-Friday 6-7 July 2023 (Residential at Hinsley Hall)

Secondary

Our most recent meeting was on 6 October and full minutes are available. The sections of this report relating to CSI, RED, Prayer & Liturgy, the national Working Party on Religious Education Teacher Recruitment and Retention, and SACREs have been removed in favour of the updates provided elsewhere in these minutes. Other key items were:

CAFOD Updates: The CPD for chaplains this year is monthly and based around principles of CST. It is live, but available afterwards and one principle of CST explored each month: is this format useful?

GCSE & A Level Update: Results input link and letter for schools has been sent today and 4th Nov is the deadline. All centres are to be encouraged input their data by that deadline.

Post 16 Core Religious Education Consultation Report: Whereas schools did not like it, they were positive about the name change to 'core' Religious Education but the imposition of a branch structure was an issue for centres. A 14-19 approach to the RED makes more sense.

There is excellent core RE practice already, but this is inconsistent nationally. A 14-19 working party will be convened after 31st October. The question was raised again about UCAS points. There is an accredited course used in Wales that attracts points for Level 3

Religious Education Council: The REC is promoting the vision of the Commission on Religious Education: promotion of world views can go ahead as it has gained traction within the Religious Education community.

Checklist for external speakers: The CES has recently updated the checklist for external speakers which is available on the website ([Checklist for External Speakers to Schools \(catholiceducation.org.uk\)](http://catholiceducation.org.uk)). The checklist complements the updated DfE guidance on maintaining political impartiality in schools.

Secondary advisers were unanimous in their gratitude to Philip and to Nancy for their continued work in consolidating the RED.

The next meeting is on 26 January.

Items for Action

1. **Sharepoint:** Prepare a draft model
2. **AGM:** Continued action on all points, keeping Executive informed
3. **NBRIA Conference:** Continued action on all points, keeping Executive informed
4. **Finance:** To open a new NBRIA Bank Account with Lloyds Bank for Online Banking, and, once open, to close the existing NatWest Account.
5. **Recruitment and Retention:** To remain as an agenda item
6. **NBRIA working and sharing with other groups:** To remain an agenda item
7. **Catholic Project:** Executive is to consider either retaining a Catholic Project representative or co-opting representation at meetings as required.

Meeting Closed at 13.40

Date of Next Meetings:

- Tuesday, 24 January, 10-12, Online
- Monday, 19 June 13.00-15.30 Online

