

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
ST EDWARD'S CHUECH. ROMFORD MARKETPLACE, RM1 3AB  
19 July 2017 (6.00 - 7.30 pm)**

**Present:**

**Representing Christian denominations and other religions (Group A)**

Mrs Christine Seymour (Chairman)  
Mrs Pamela Coles (Vice-Chairman)  
Dr John Lester  
Mr Om Dhir  
Mr Sansar Narwal  
Rabbi Lee Sunderland  
Saddhabaya  
Mr Kevin Walsh  
Mr John Smailes  
Mr Nasir Mubashar  
Mr Barry Smith

**Representing the Church of England (Group B)**

Mrs Stephanie Ellner  
Mrs Sue Freeman

**Representing teachers (Group C)**

Ms Linda Munday

**Representing the Local Authority (Group D)**

Councillor Gillian Ford  
Councillor Stephanie Nunn

Also present:

Julia Diamond-Conway, SACRE professional advisor  
Deborah Weston, SACRE professional advisor  
Anthony Clements, Clerk to SACRE  
Barbara Stanley-Hunt, observer

**1 WELCOME TO AND TOUR OF THE CHURCH**

It was noted that the current Chairman and Vice-Chairman would be standing down at the next meeting of SACRE. Members were asked to consider who wished to stand for these positions.

## **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - IF ANY, TO RECEIVE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Wendy Brice-Thompson, Joshua Chapman and Dilip Patel. Apologies were also received from Jenny Fox, Salvation Army and Dawn Ladbrook, Evangelical Free Church.

## **3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting of SACRE held on 23 March 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

It was noted that the revised terms of reference had been sent to the Council for consideration.

## **4 UPDATE ON SCHOOL ACTIVITY**

A planning network meeting had been held this term which included discussion of an activity for infant school children to tell a religious story. Form teachers had brought along school books to show best practice and the meeting had been held in a supportive atmosphere.

The Quality Mark cost £395 for larger schools to apply for and this was considered to be too expensive for many schools, unless a reduced rate could be obtained. The reduced rate was however only available to smaller schools and those with lower OFSTED ratings for RE. The Quality Mark required a half day assessment and the completing of questionnaires with children covering what they had studied in RE etc. The only Havering school currently holding a Quality Mark for RE was Hall Mead and it was noted that a school in Redbridge had obtained a Quality Mark using the same syllabus as that used in Havering.

A primary teacher had given good feedback following their recent attendance at a free humanism conference and it was noted that the British Humanist Association was now called Humanism UK.

## **5 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The Commission on Religious Education was continuing to gather evidence and representatives had spoken at RE teacher conferences etc. Commissioners were also happy to be invited to visit schools in the borough.

A recent survey on racial and religious discrimination had shown that discrimination had increased. Work did take place with children in RE lessons that should mitigate against this. It was agreed that a link to the

survey would be forwarded via the portal to secondary schools. The full outcomes of the survey could be brought to a future meeting of SACRE.

RE had not been included in the English Baccalaureate syllabus. A response from the Government on this issue had just been released and said that RE must be taught to all pupils to the end of Key Stage 5. It had also been recommended that schools should offer a GCSE in RE. There were however 30,000 fewer entrants for GCSE religious studies nationally this year.

## **6 ANNUAL REPORT**

The annual report of SACRE was agreed and it was also agreed that the clerk should forward the annual report to the National Association of SACREs.

## **7 EXAM DATA**

The group considered data on the number of RE teaching hours offered by schools in each group although it was noted that this data had to be input correctly.

Positive schools in this regard were Coopers and Frances Bardsley whilst questions could be asked of schools including Emerson Park, Redden Court, Royal Liberty and Albany. Specific issues noted from the data included that Drapers appeared to stop teaching the subject at year 9 and that Royal Liberty had a lot of entrants at GCSE but poor results.

It was agreed that SACRE should write to those schools with a full cohort and good results for RE congratulating them on this.

## **8 MONITORING AND REPORTING**

The SACRE professional advisors had met with representatives of the Council's Children's Services directorate in summer 2016. For two years out of every three, SACRE used the monitoring work carried out by Havering's School Improvement Service. SACRE could however do its own monitoring in the third year of the cycle.

Examples of monitoring questionnaires were circulated and it was noted that the Newham questionnaire included methods for a school to judge how effective its RE teaching was.

Monitoring could be undertaken informally by SACRE members visiting schools and information available on school websites could also be monitored, perhaps at a future meeting of SACRE. A monitoring form for Havering could be developed by SACRE, along similar lines and a covering letter from Children's Services could perhaps also be obtained. It was suggested that some questions in the circulated forms could be combined and that schools could be asked about external groups visiting them. Survey

Monkey or similar websites could be used to host the questionnaire for Havering.

It was agreed that the professional advisers would distribute a pilot form for comment and this would be reported back at the spring term meeting of SACRE.

**9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

It was noted that there were training resources on the NASACRE website and that this could be used to update the Havering SACRE handbook.

It was suggested that a Jewish-Christian joint event could be arranged in the form of an exhibition on different religions. This could be expanded to looking at different festivals for a number of religions and beliefs, perhaps in summer 2018. The professional advisers would investigate applying for reward funding for the project. The exhibition could be booked to be shown in different schools and also displayed in e.g. the Queen's Theatre foyer.

Thanks were recorded to Father Mike Power and Stephanie Ellner for their hospitality in allowing SACRE to use the church for the meeting.

**10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be on Thursday 19 October at 6 pm preferably at a venue with a computer suite to facilitate monitoring of RE work shown on school websites.

Future SACRE meeting dates would be:

Tuesday 13 March 2018, 6 pm  
Thursday 12 July 2018, 6 pm

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**Chairman**