

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

16 May, 2019 (6.00pm – 8.15 pm)

Present:

Representing Christian denominations and other religious dominations and beliefs (Group A):

Dr John Lester, Bah'i faith – Vice Chair
Mr Om Dir, Hindu
Mr Sansar Narwal, Sikh
Mr Tariq Mahmood*
Mr Barry Smith, United Reformed Church
Pastor Aloysuis Peter, Pentecostal Church
Mr Nasir Mubashar, Ahmadiyya Muslim

Representing the Church of England (Group B):

Mrs Marlene Wylie
Mrs Ruth Everett

Representing teachers (Group C):

Mrs Clare Beech
Mrs Kirsty Fanning

Representing the Local Authority (Group D):

Councillor Gillian Ford
Councillor Stephanie Nunn

Co-opted
Wendy Brice-Thompson

Professional advisers:

Julia Diamond-Conway
Deborah Weston*

*indicates for part of meeting

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

John Lester, Vice Chair welcomed all to the meeting and in the absence of the Chair, Stephanie Ellner, John took the Chair.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr K Siddiqui, Saddhabhaya, Mrs Dawn Ladbrook, Mr J Smailes, Mr L Adams, Mrs S Ellner, Ms L Linton, Councillors P Crowder and J Holt.

It was noted that Rabbi L Sutherland, Mrs S Freeman, and Councillor T Lawal were not in attendance but no apologies for absence had been received.

It was noted that Mike Dean, Church of England representative and Linda Munday, Teacher representative had both resigned from SACRE.

2. NEW OR SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

All present introduced themselves. Ruth Everett and Marlene Wylie were welcomed as new members to the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 28 SEPTEMBER, 2018

The notes of the meeting held on 28 September, which was inquorate, were agreed as a true record.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY, 2019 AND MATTERS ARISING

4.1. The notes of the meeting held on 28 February, 2019, which was inquorate, were agreed as a true record.

Wendy Brice-Thompson apologised for her non-attendance but explained that she had been unaware of the meeting taking place

4.2. It was questioned whether the letters of congratulations to schools which had achieved results above the national average had been sent. Julia Diamond-Conway agreed to follow up on this matter.

ACTION: JDC

5. LOCAL UPDATES

The written report from Julia Diamond-Conway was received.

It was noted that the first week back had not been the best time for the Subject Leaders' meeting. The effort made by the RE Co-ordinator at

Ardleigh Green Junior School in preparation for the meeting was gratefully acknowledged.

Units of the syllabus were shared and the exercise will be repeated at a future meeting to identify those units which are hard to teach.

Subject leaders had welcomed the survey on the syllabus and in particular the difficult units such as 2.14 'what do religions say to us when life gets hard'. The next meeting will focus on 2 or 3 units. It was acknowledged that primary children do not generally have a great deal of experience of death which makes the teaching of the issues hard.

Year of beliefs

It was noted that the Queen's Theatre was unable to accommodate the proposed exhibition.

DW and TM arrived

It was agreed that Mr John Smailes would receive the school entries for the art competition. During the autumn term there would be a judging session.

It was agreed that Frances Bardsley School would be approached to see if the exhibition in the Gallery could be viewed by parent between 3-6pm.

ACTION: JL

The exhibition would also move to Havering libraries.

Agreed Syllabus

It was noted that 15 responses had been received and that these would be considered later in the meeting. Members were advised that staff in Redbridge had been invited to participate in a similar survey.

Inter Faith Network

It was confirmed that some SACRE members were also members of the Inter Faith network.

Havering School Improvement Service (HSIS) Termly Update

It was reported that there would be a regular feature about SACRE and RE matters in the termly update. A copy of the online termly update would be circulated to all members of SACRE who were able to access online publications.

ACTION: HGS

6. AGREED SYLLABUS

Julia Conway-Diamond advised that there had been a positive response to the survey on the agreed syllabus.

The Commission for RE report would be published in September which would set out a national entitlement for RE. Locally, the challenge would be to ensure that the entitlement is met.

Another challenge highlighted was what religions are covered.

The statement of entitlement but what impact will this have on pupils' lives?

It was noted that the RE Council would be producing a model curriculum.

At this point in the meeting, SACRE members worked in small groups to review the survey responses and as a result, the following points were highlighted:

- There was no specialist RE teacher training followed by staff. It was felt that staff would welcome training with exemplar plans if these could be provided without cost to the school.

In response, JDC advised that some exemplars were available.

- It was noted that TAs and HLTAs are asked to teach RE. It was felt that PPA teachers were teaching RE.
- Good practice within a MAT of shared INSET had been helpful with an NQT in a primary school within the MAT being able to seek support from colleagues in other schools within the Trust.
- It was noted that it was more likely that in a secondary school training would be given to help staff to teach comparative religions.
- Resourcing was good for certain religions but there was not the same range of resources for all faiths. A resources pack to support the syllabus would be a good way forward.
- There was an interest in an assessment framework. It was suggested that teachers would find it helpful to have 2 or 3 outcomes for each unit or schools could expect staff to assess differently. An assessment book could be provided to each school.

- It was felt that it had taken staff time to implement the last agreed syllabus and staff were not keen to change it again when it was working in schools.
- There was a view that some units in the current syllabus were particularly hard and were in need of review.
- A view was expressed that the Islamic section of the syllabus is incomplete in that it reflects beliefs but not actions, for example, feeding the poor is important in the Koran but it is not in the curriculum. It was acknowledged that faiths represented needed to be happy with the section of the curriculum relating to their faith.
- A resource cataloguing visitors who could be invited into school and places to visit would be useful to schools. Deborah Weston offered to share a GoogleDoc to share as a free downloadable resource.

ACTION: DW

- More training for staff was required to enable staff to feel more confident about teaching RE.
- It was noted that it was the responsibility of the Headteacher for the teaching of RE but governors needed to hold Headteachers to account.

7. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION

It was noted that the New Ofsted Framework had been published and there were elements of the Framework which were very good news for RE. Members were encouraged to look at the Framework (which was available on the Ofsted website) and in particular review paragraph 172 (and footnote 68), and paragraphs 180-181.

The written report from Julia Diamond-Conway was received.

It was acknowledged that there would be no representative at the NASACRE Conference but resources from the Conference would be obtained.

ACTION: JDC

8. YEAR OF BELIEFS

See minute 5 above.

9. TEACHER TRAINING

There was no further discussion on this item (see minute 6 above).

10. ANNUAL REPORT

Members were advised that it had been decided to delay the writing of the annual report until the autumn term. This would enable the report to reflect the most recent school data.

ACTION: Chair / JDC

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1. Constitution and membership

- It was agreed that Marlene Wylie, representing the Church of England would be a Group B representative.
- Wendy Brice-Thompson was in agreement to become the Roman Catholic representative, subject to the agreement of the Diocese, to fill the vacancy created by Kevin Walsh's resignation. The Clerk undertook to contact the Diocese about this matter.

ACTION: HGS

- Mrs Munday had indicated to the Clerk that she would contact the NEU to advise of her resignation. It was agreed that the Clerk would also contact the NEU to seek a replacement representative.

ACTION: HGS

- Julia Conway-Diamond agreed to contact Rabbi Lee Sutherland to discuss his attendance at SACRE and clarify his intentions regarding ongoing membership or whether another representative could be identified to attend SACRE meetings.

ACTION: JDC

11.2. Election of Chair

Members were advised that at the next meeting, consideration would need to be given to the arrangements for electing a Chair.

12. DATES OF MEETINGS IN THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

It was agreed that dates of future meetings would be determined and circulated to members.

ACTION: JDC