

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

**21 March 2022 (6.00pm –pm)**

The meeting took place via zoom (video-conferencing platform)

Present:

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

Wendy Brice-Thompson, Roman Catholic (Chair)  
Rabbi Lee Sunderland, Jewish Community  
Peter Feinson, Baptist  
Kamal Siddiqui, Muslim Community  
Tariq Mahmood, Muslim Community  
Dawn Ladbrook, Evangelical Free Church  
Dr John Lester, Baha'i faith  
George Prinn, Humanism  
John Smalles, Evangelical Free Church  
Barry Smith, United Reform Church

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

Stephanie Ellner  
Marlene Wylie\*

**Representing teachers (Group C):**

Clare Beech  
Kathryn Everitt

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

Councillor Judith Holt  
Councillor Viddy Persaud

**Professional adviser:**

Julia Diamond-Conway (JDC)  
Michelle Morgan – Clerk  
Sidra Naeem – Essex SACRE

\*for part of the meeting

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Chair's  
Initials

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Frost and Jenny Fox.

The absence of the following Members was noted; Pastor Aloysius Peter, Nasir Mubasher, Om Dir, Sansar Narwal, Luthaneal Adams, Ruth Everett, Terry Riches, Councillor Osman Dervish and Councillor Phillipa Crowder

## **2. NEW OR SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Sidra Naeem (Essex SACRE) had been invited to attend by the Vice Chair and was welcomed to the meeting.

## **3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2021 AND MATTERS ARISING**

3.1. The notes of the meeting held on 8 November 2021 were received and agreed.

3.2. Matters arising from the minutes, not included elsewhere on the agenda, were as follows:

3.2.1. Secondary colleagues (minute 4, refers): JDC/Cllr VP agreed to source secondary candidates for SACRE when the opportunities arose. JDC advised that she had contacted the previous representative K Fanning however had not yet received a response.

3.2.2. Foreword (minute 6, refers): The Chair had sent the foreword.

3.2.3. Venue (minute 9, refers): Unfortunately the Romford Evangelical Church had not been able to host this meeting due to other groups being in attendance on Monday evenings.

## **4. UPDATE ON SCHOOL ACTIVITY**

JDC reported that The RE Today advisory team were currently in the process of creating new full unit plans to accompany the Agreed Syllabus decided on by SACRE and the Agreed Syllabus Conference

Since the last report, 3 CPD sessions have been held virtually for primary RE teachers within the borough:

- 24th November 2021: how to turn one of the borough's unit plans into an effective medium-term plan for a class. Feedback had been positive with regards to the long unit plans in the syllabus, however concern had been shared that it would be challenging to cover all of the curriculum in the 6 weeks.

- 13th January 2022: diversity within a religion, scrutinising audits and questionnaires to work out how to move RE forward within individual schools.
- 1st March 2022: evaluation of draft unit plans to accompany the new Agreed Syllabus, what good RE was and was not. Some of the questions and the layout required further amendments however overall the consensus had been positive.

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

SACRE Members had received a copy of the report.

JDC summarised the reports key areas such as the analysis of the NATRE secondary survey and the clear concern within the community regarding the lack of support from Government funding.

SACRE Members were advised about the NASACRE Online Training Programme.

JDC suggested that schools might wish to join in with the 'Spirited Arts' project.

It was suggested that a Member of the Havering SACRE may wish to attend the Annual Conference on Monday 23 May in Birmingham. The Local Authority had covered the cost of attendance before on the proviso that the delegate shared what they had learned/observed with the rest of the group on their return. G Prinn advised that he would be interested in attending.

**ACTION: HGS / JDC / G Prinn**

## **6. SCHOOL WEBSITE MONITORING**

For those newer SACRE Members, JDC advised that in the past school website audits had been completed to ascertain whether RE content matched the Agreed Syllabus. The information was then collated and letters sent to schools either congratulating them on their offer or highlighting concerns if content does not appear to be compliant.

Pre pandemic, SACRE Members had completed a significant number of audits and, as a result could now start with a new rolling programme of audits. It was discussed that using a computer suite at a school would be beneficial to undertake some of this work at the next meeting in the summer term. It was however noted that many schools had moved away from using computer rooms and were now using more mobile devices in

classrooms. K Everitt agreed to see if her school's computer suite could be used.

**ACTION: K Everitt**

## **7. SACRE SELF EVALUATION**

JDC referred to the recent NASACRE webinar on self-evaluation which the Chair had been able to attend. SACRE Members were advised that the format of the Annual Reports would change so that all SACREs were using the same format therefore making it easier for the DfE to monitor effectiveness.

NASACRE was encouraging all SACREs to undertake a self-evaluation exercise, the results of which, would inform the Annual Report and also result in an Action Plan to resolve any areas of development identified.

A copy of the SEF was shared for information. There were 5 sections that SACRE Members would need to measure their effectiveness against and these would then be rated as either advanced, established, developing or requires improvement. The areas were:

- Management of SACRE and partnership with the LA
- Standards and quality of provision of RE
- Effectiveness of the Local Agreed Syllabus
- Collective Worship
- Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community

*M Wylie arrived at 6.30pm*

Discussions followed regarding how best to manage this self-evaluation process; should the initial work be undertaken by individuals at home and then shared at the meeting or would group work be more effective.

The question was raised as to whether the previously completed self-evaluation some years before, would be used as a benchmark however JDC explained that the categories had been amended since then and therefore comparison would be challenging, although this could be looked into further.

The Chair explained that such discussions would be more effective face to face; the SEF could be divided into sections and ideas shared at the summer term meeting. It was agreed that the self-assessment needed to be prioritised above the website monitoring which could be deferred to the

autumn term. Groups would therefore be defined and allocated areas prior to the next meeting.

**ACTION: JDC/Chair/Vice Chair**

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The following other business was discussed:

- S Naeem shared information regarding 2 forthcoming events; an Interfaith Quiz night and training on Ramadan. SACRE Members were encouraged to attend. It was noted that as the Ramadan session was during the school day, a recording of the training would be available so that it could be shared with teachers unable to attend. The link would be forwarded via the Vice Chair.

**ACTION: Vice Chair**

- J Smailes invited SACRE Members to contact him for a copy of the publication 'Good News for Everyone.'

**9. DATES OF MEETINGS IN THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR**

A date for the next SACRE meeting would be circulated; Thursday was agreed as a suitable day of the week. Rabbi L Sunderland advised that the Romford Synagogue would be happy to host the meeting.

S Naeem requested to also be advised of the next meeting date.

**ACTION: HGS**

Meeting closed at 6.50pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

**Chair's  
Initials**