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DATE: 23 June 2015

To: Members of the
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Councillors Kevin Brooks, Mary Cooke, Robert Evans, David Jefferys, Keith Onslow and Sarah Phillips

Church of England: Reverend R Bristow, Mrs V Corbyn, Mr C Town and Reverend S Varney

Teachers: Ms H Arnold, Ms C Shelley, Mr J Stone, Mrs J Tranchina and Ms A Winson

Other Faiths: Mrs S Barnett, Mrs P Colling, Mr S Gupta, Mr R Hagley, Mr S Mahmood, Mr S Riat and Mrs E Whitman

Co-optee: Mrs Polydorou

A meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education will be held at Bromley Civic Centre on **WEDNESDAY 1 JULY 2015 AT 6.00 PM**

MARK BOWEN
Director of Corporate Services

Copies of the documents referred to below can be obtained from
<http://cde.bromley.gov.uk/>

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7 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 17th November 2015

Wednesday 9th March 2016

Wednesday 29th June 2016

All meetings to start at 6pm



Agenda Item 3

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.00 pm on 17 March 2015

Present:

Reverend Roger Bristow (Chairman)
Councillors Kevin Brooks, Keith Onslow, David Jefferys
and Sarah Phillips (from 6.40pm).
Virginia Corbyn, Christopher Town and Rev Steve Varney.
Catherine Shelley, Jackie Tranchina and Anna Winson.
Samantha Barnett, Patricia Colling, Saiyed Mahmood,
Mrs Polydorou, Swarn Riat and Sue Polydorou.

Also Present:

Penny Smith-Orr, RE Consultant/Adviser
Christine Reeks, Clerk to SACRE

In Attendance:

Julia Waldman, Interim Consultant, Schools and Early
Years Commissioning & Quality Assurance
Denise Angell, RE Co-ordinator, Warren Road
Primary School
Rev Alan Mustoe, Rector, St Nicholas Church, Chislehurst

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The Chairman welcomed Denise Angell, Rev Alan Mustoe and Julia Waldman to the meeting.

Councillor Phillips had previously sent apologies for her late arrival. Councillor Brooks, Councillor Phillips, Samantha Barnett, Patricia Colling and Julia Waldman apologised for having to leave the meeting early due to other commitments.

Apologies for absence were received from Hannah Arnold, Sanjay Gupta, Ray Hagley and Edlene Whitman.

14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

15 A) MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2ND DECEMBER 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2014 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Minute 5(e) Islamic Competition. After the first paragraph add:

The prizes were presented by Mr Stephen Lloyd MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Religious Education.

B) MATTERS ARISING:

Minute 5(c) The Trojan Horse Conference.

The Chairman and RE Consultant would be attending the conference which was being held on Friday 20th March 2015 in St Albans. They would report back at the next meeting.

16 ORAL UPDATE & PUBLICATIONS

a) SACRE Annual Report 2013-2014

This had been completed and distributed to SACRE Members, the Director and Assistant Director of Education, the Education Portfolio Holder, Members of the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee, libraries, schools and NASACRE. A copy had also been sent to Nicky Morgan, the Secretary of State for Education. This had been acknowledged by the Ministerial and Public Communications Division at the Department of Education.

b) NASACRE Conference and AGM

The Chairman and RE Consultant would be attending the NASACRE Conference and AGM which was being held on Thursday 21st May 2015 in Birmingham. They would report back at the next meeting.

c) Islamic Competition

The prize giving for the Islamic Competition would take place at Darul Uloom on Thursday 12th November 2015. Entries from schools needed to be received by the end of September 2015. The RE Consultant confirmed that details of the competition were available to schools on "Fronter".

d) Discovery RE

A number of SACREs and schools had received mailings from commercial providers of RE Resources making the claim that their products can help schools deliver the relevant locally agreed syllabus by mapping the syllabus to their specific product for primary schools. (A charge is made for their services.) NASACRE had given guidance to SACREs on how to respond to

these approaches. The Chairman reported that he and the RE Consultant had received a communication from such a provider; "Discovery RE", which had used the new agreed Bromley RE syllabus as a basis for their product. The RE Consultant commented that in addition to the statutory requirements for RE, the Bromley syllabus also has suggested questions, activities and resources for schools, and she was available to support them in delivering the syllabus. Following discussion SACRE Members were of the opinion that Bromley's locally agreed RE syllabus was a comprehensive and up to date resource which should be adequate for the needs of Bromley children and asked the RE Consultant to advise schools accordingly. **ACTION PSO**

17 SACRE REPORT FROM THE RE CONSULTANT
Item ED15170315

A) LETTER FROM LORD NASH

Lord Nash, the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Schools, had sent a letter to all local authorities outlining the workings of SACRE and discussing a number of items regarding Religious Education. SACRE Members considered the letter and noted that it had been forwarded to all schools in Bromley. NASACRE had suggested that SACREs respond to the letter and had issued guidance for doing so. It was also suggested that Lord Nash's letter and SACREs response be copied to the Director of Children's Services and the appropriate Portfolio Holder.

The various points raised in Lord Nash's letter were discussed. Whilst some SACRE members considered it was not necessary to respond to the letter, it was agreed by a majority that a reply should be sent. The Chairman and RE Consultant agreed to prepare an appropriate response.

RESOLVED that the Chairman send a response to Lord Nash's letter on behalf of Bromley SACRE.

B) SACRE SELF EVALUATION

(This item was considered at the beginning of the meeting when all SACRE Members were present.)

The Annual Report of Bromley SACRE contains a self-evaluation of SACRE which is updated each year. Previously it was agreed that the RE Consultant should carry out the self-evaluation and report as necessary. However, this means that the members do not have an input into the document and might not have knowledge of the categories which lead to a successful SACRE committee.

SACRE Members were asked to consider the top 3 priorities decided for Bromley SACRE in response to the NASACRE survey carried out in December 2014 (*see minute 7 of minutes dated 2nd December 2014*), and to discuss the self-evaluation of Bromley SACRE.

The SACRE Reporting & Evaluation Toolkit was used and SACRE Members spent time at the meeting within their groups discussing the self-evaluation.

Teachers were asked to focus on Section 1
(Standards and Quality of Provision of RE)

Representatives from the Church of England were asked to focus on Section 3 (Collective Worship) (*They had also met prior to the meeting.*)

Councillors were asked to focus on Section 4
(Management of SACRE)

Other faiths were asked to focus on Section 5
(Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community).

Members could comment on other sections if they wished.

The RE Consultant would complete Section 2 (The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus).

Results of the self-evaluation can be seen in the table appended to these minutes. Members commented on the reasons for making their decisions.

Additional points arising from the discussions are listed below.

Section 1 - Standards and Quality of Provision of RE

The teaching group on SACRE considered it was a good idea for schools to “cluster” and commented that more input from different faith groups would be greatly appreciated. The RE Consultant referred to the support given through the RE Advisers network meetings which were organised for non-specialist primary school co-ordinators. The teaching group said it would be useful for them to be able to share email addresses for the Heads of RE and RE co-ordinators. The RE Adviser would see if she could obtain the relevant details.

ACTION PSO

The Chairman commented that it was important to find different ways of communicating and since the last SACRE meeting he had set up a Bromley SACRE Facebook page for anyone to post relevant things to it. He would of course monitor the page to ensure it contained appropriate content and hoped that it would prove to be a useful resource (*see also minute 18*).

Section 3 - Collective Worship

Key Area 3B - The C of E Group considered that this was only just established and fell down on clause 3. Sources of information were limited to their own knowledge of schools and school visits, and also Ofsted reports. It was considered that more could be done to become firmly established by signposting advice and training available. Mention was made in particular of the document produced by Bromley SACRE in 2008 - Refreshing Collective Worship in Bromley Schools “Reflective Pools” and it was suggested that schools be reminded of this. The RE Consultant advised that this document

was available on "Fronter" and she would remind schools of this when undertaking school visits.

Key Area 3C - Responding to requests for determinations

It was considered that this was not applicable. Procedures would be put in place if and when required.

Section 4 - Management of SACRE

The question was raised as to whether Bromley SACRE ever met with other SACREs. The RE Consultant said that they did not and informed members that she also supported three other local SACREs. She remarked that the SACREs were all very different. It was suggested and agreed that that it would be a good idea for the four SACRE Chairmen to meet. The RE Consultant agreed to liaise with the Chairman regarding a possible meeting of the four SACRE Chairman.

ACTION: PSO & Chairman

It was suggested that it would be better for any SACRE training to take place as a separate session rather than as part of a SACRE meeting. The RE Consultant informed Members that training which had taken place previously had been sourced from a CD produced by NASACRE. A Member commented on the successful event which took place when the revised RE syllabus was launched.

Councillor Brooks asked whether there were any links with the increasing number of Pentecostal Churches in his Ward (*Penge and Cator*). The Chairman advised that currently there was not and Councillor Brooks said that he would look into this.

ACTION: Councillor Brooks

Section 5 - Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community

The other faith groups considered that there was a need for greater understanding of different faiths and this could be developed for example through inter faith activities.

Mr Riat commented that although major religions were represented on SACRE there were also a lot of very small religious groups meeting in the Borough, for example some groups met at Community House. They also met at halls and houses in the borough. He thought it would be useful and of benefit to SACRE to undertake research to find out where such services were being held. The Chairman considered that this was something which would be difficult to find out. The RE Consultant said that in the past the South London Interfaith group had tried to do some mapping, but as things change rapidly she felt it would be almost impossible to get an up to date picture. Councillor Jefferys suggested that perhaps this was something which could be done through the Archdeacon's office with parishes being asked to provide such information which was known in their areas. It was agreed that this would be a good idea and the Chairman agreed to contact the Archdeacon to see if this could be done.

ACTION Chairman

RESOLVED that the SACRE Self-Evaluation be agreed and the action points above be pursued.

C) SACRE DRAFT DEVELOPMENT PLAN - APRIL 2015 TO MARCH 2016

A development plan was drafted each year by the RE Consultant/Adviser which outlined the work plan for the forthcoming year.

SACRE Members considered and discussed a draft development plan for the period April 2015 to March 2016. The plan included the priorities that were decided by SACRE Members and sent to NASACRE in December 2014.

Rev Varney commented that the development plan would need to be revised in light of the action points which had arisen under the self-evaluation item.

Councillor Jefferys suggested it might be useful for the four SACRE groups to discuss at the next meeting whether they wished self-evaluation to progress from established status to advanced.

Councillor Onslow commented that it would be useful to monitor SACRE's position at the beginning of the period and what it had achieved at the end. It would be useful to have a measure of year on year progress.

The RE Consultant said that in order to find out if the new RE syllabus was embedded in schools she would send them a short questionnaire to find out if they were using it.

ACTION PSO

RESOLVED that the SACRE draft Development Plan for 2015/2016 be agreed and looked at as an item at each meeting.

D) SCHOOL VISITS

SACRE members visit local schools in order to observe the teaching of RE and to offer support to the RE Co-ordinator of the school.

On 10th November 2014 the Chairman and RE Consultant visited Warren Road Primary School, having been invited by Mrs Denise Angell the RE Co-ordinator (*who was in attendance at the SACRE meeting*). A detailed report on the very good school visit was considered by SACRE Members.

Mrs Angell suggested that it would be helpful for schools to be sent a copy of the report as soon as possible after the visits had been made, with a note to say that the report would be submitted to the next SACRE meeting. The RE Consultant agreed that this would be done in future.

SACRE Members also considered a report on a visit to Poverest Primary School on 24th November 2014, which was made by the Chairman, the RE Consultant, Councillor Keith Onslow and Mrs Edlene Whitman, the Free churches representative. Unfortunately they were not able to see an RE lesson during the visit, but there was evidence in each classroom that RE had taken place and there were a number of displays relating to RE throughout the school.

The RE Consultant hoped that a visit could be made to Hayes Secondary School during the summer term. She would contact SACRE Members when arrangements had been made to see if they would be able to accompany her on the visit.

RESOLVED that

(i) the reports of the visits to Warren Road Primary School and Poverest Road Primary School be noted,

(ii) the RE Consultant to notify SACRE Members of arrangements for school visits during the summer term.

18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Communication

The Chairman informed SACRE members that

i) He had opened two social media accounts; a SACRE Facebook page (*mentioned above*) and a twitter account – tweet @Rev_Roger He had also asked the Local Authority if it would be possible for a Bromley email address to be set up for him as SACRE Chair. In the meantime he could be contacted via email on vicar@htc-bc.org.uk

ii) A new series of 5 Religious Education programmes for Key Stage 2 pupils was due to start the following week on BBC2. These would cover Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Judaism and Hinduism.

The RE Adviser also urged SACRE Members to listen to a very informative Radio 4 programme, “Beyond Belief” which had been aired the previous day.

Expansion of new Muslim Centre in Croydon Road, Keston

The Chairman informed SACRE Members that a planning application had been submitted to the Council to expand the Al-Emaan Muslim Centre in Croydon Road, Keston and to increase the number of parking spaces. The Centre is on the site of a former Methodist Church. It was noted that permission was not needed to convert the church into a mosque as both are designated places of worship. It was understood that there was concern locally about traffic issues and parking at the premises which was near a busy road junction. The Chairman noted that communication between the Centre and local groups / residents had not been as good as it might be and expressed the hope that this might improve. Amongst activities proposed at the Centre is a school of Islamic studies and this could potentially become a valuable resource for SACRE and for local schools.

(NB: Since this meeting the Council had rejected the application for planning permission. It is understood that the Centre managers do not intend to appeal this decision.)

19 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 1st July 2015
Tuesday 17th November 2015
Wednesday 9th March 2016
Wednesday 29th June 2016

All meetings to start at 6pm

The Meeting ended at 8.00 pm

Chairman

Report No.
SA15001

London Borough of Bromley
PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Date: 1st July 2015

Decision Type: Non-Urgent

Title: **REPORTS FROM THE RE CONSULTANT**

Contact Officer: Penny Smith-Orr, RE Consultant
Tel: 020 8653 8606 E-mail: penny.smith-orr@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Executive Director: Education, Care and Health Services

Ward: N/A

A) NASACRE Conference and AGM

B) SACRE Training Session

C) School Visits

REPORT FROM THE RE CONSULTANT

A) The NASACRE Conference and AGM

1. Reason for report;

To advise members of the issues raised at the NASACRE AGM May 21st 2015.

2. Commentary;

The SACRE Chairman and RE Consultant attended this Conference and AGM of SACREs. The Keynote Speaker was the Right Honourable Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for Education & Skills 2002-2004, Visiting Professor, School of Politics, Philosophy, Language and Communication Studies, at the University of East Anglia. The Seminar Leaders were Denise Cush, Professor of Religion and Education at Bath Spa University and Mary Myatt, Lead Ofsted Inspector, and Culham St Gabriel's Lead Consultant for Teacher Conferences. Notes of the conference produced by The Chairman are attached (Appendix A).

3. Recommendations;

Members to read the report and bring any questions to the meeting.

B) SACRE Training Session

1. Reason for Report;

Using the questions from the NASACRE AGM members can consider issues that affect Bromley SACRE and consider the ways to solve these.

2. Commentary;

This will be a group activity for each of the constituent groups of the SACRE committee and Members may like to fill in their ideas before the meeting (see Appendix B).

3. Recommendations;

After discussion of the ideas of each group this will inform SACREs work in the future in conjunction with the annual development plan.

C) School Visits

1. Reason for report;

To present information to all members on two of the school visits undertaken by the RE Consultant and some members during the Spring term.

2. Commentary;

Two reports of school visits to Darrick Wood and Chislehurst Girls High Schools are attached (Appendix C). These visits were made during the Spring term 2015. It is important for members of the committee to try and attend school visits at least once a year so that they can see religious education and collective worship in action.

3. Recommendations;

Members to note the reports and comment as necessary.

NASACRE AGM & CONFERENCE 2015
21st May 2015 at Birmingham Council House

Keynote Speaker: Rt. Hon Charles Clarke

Secretary of State for Education & Skills, 2002 – 4. Visiting Professor, School of Politics, Philosophy, Language & Communication Studies, University of East Anglia

Booklet co-authored with Linda Woodhead on relationship between schools & religion due to be published this summer. Link to CC & LW's book will be made available.

RE has never been more important than it is at present. Just a cursory review of the news headlines reveals this to be true.

Religion features more highly in people's thinking today than it used to in periods in the past, especially young people.

Curriculum Questions and Answers:

Should RE be a statutory requirement?

Historically not part of National Curriculum due to concerns about the right to withdraw children from RE.

Clearly it is vitally important that RE does remain a statutory requirement in a world where religion features so highly, despite the arguments of secularists.

Should RE be part of the National Curriculum?

Historically RE was once called Religious Instruction due to arrangements with the established Church.

Religious Education is more open and arguably a better name. In Scotland it is Religious & Moral Education.

Should RE be required throughout all stages of education, i.e. Key Stages 1-5?

Questions currently around key stage 4 especially. Key stage 5 doesn't really exist as a specific provision. Some also question whether RE is appropriate at Key Stage 1.

Should the curriculum & syllabus for RE be determined nationally?

Clear need for local issues to be reflected in the delivery of RE within schools but there are also strong coherent arguments for a nationally determined curriculum.

If we retain the status quo there needs to be clear commitment from National Government to require Local Authorities to support SACREs to strengthen their authority, power and influence.

Local structure, if it is to be effective, must extend to *all* schools.

If a National syllabus, it must be reviewed at least every 5 years with local input into that process.

The delivery of RE syllabus *must* be informed by the local situation and SACREs are best placed to ensure that this happens.

RE must include *all faiths* including non-theistic belief systems.

What is the place of Community Cohesion within the teaching of RE?

Active local SACREs can help to ensure that community cohesion remains part of the teaching within schools, irrespective of whether Ofsted are required to inspect this aspect of school provision.

What is the role of SACRE in helping parents to access Religious Instruction where that is wanted?

Should the 'Right to Withdraw' remain established within education, or does the present world situation demand that *all children* receive Religious Education?

General Questions and Answers:

Contact local MP about issues regarding RE.

Right to Withdraw: clear arguments for and against. Westminster Faith Debates have tackled this issue in recent years. Real concern about those with extreme views who choose to withdraw their children from a balanced presentation of Religious Education.

Q: What is your view on the privileged position of the Anglican Church on SACREs as opposed to Christians of other denominations who are lumped together with other faiths?

A: Argument for a revision of the constitution of SACREs.

Q: Can local SACREs choose to constitute in accordance with the local situation?

A: There is some allowance for flexibility in the co-option of members to SACRE.

The National Framework for RE (2004) and RE Council advice is followed by most SACREs. Important to allow SACREs to retain some decision making powers otherwise they are demotivated. The support for and delivery of SACREs across the country is very patchy. SACREs need to be funded appropriately (many aren't) if they are to be truly effective. Good local leadership is vital.

Q: What *should* be the role of the established Church in education and in SACREs?

A: This will inevitably vary from place to place.

Role of CofE in SACREs is frequently hugely beneficial. When there were issues around the viability of a local SACRE entered into SLA with local Diocese.

Question re Humanist Lobby: What should be the place of humanism in RE & on SACREs?

A: CC strongly of the view that non-theistic belief systems should be reflected within both as all belief systems should be included.

Q: Should RE become 'Religious & Cultural Education'?

A: How do we ensure that RE is taught well, by specialists given specific & sufficient time allocation?

Media & 'professional' ignorance often leads to serious misunderstandings both at home and in the classroom.

Very difficult to find the right wording to encompass what RE is in practice.

There are serious issues around the training and resourcing of teachers for RE. There needs to be some consistency in Continuing Professional Development for teachers but this will require funding.

This is a time for change! What is the role of Collective Worship in today's world?

Should RE & Collective Worship be separated? RE is essential.

CW should not, perhaps, be compulsory.

Seminar Leader: Denise Cush – Professor of Religion and Education at Bath Spa University

The Current Situation in RE

Confusion about the aims of RE
Do Community Cohesion, SMSC, etc. get in the way of RE?

Need for RE to reflect actual religious landscape
Internal diversity within Religious traditions
Place of Humanism? What does non-religious mean?
What do children themselves believe/do?
Majority would not call themselves religious but are not living selfish lives. Most children/young people aspire to happiness and believe that if things go wrong it's their fault.

Many draw from several traditions, mixed faith, pick n mix.
New forms of religiosity incl. Paganism, spirituality, spiritual revolution.
Customised personalised faith, self as authority.
Majority faith adherents call themselves Christian, then non-religious, spiritual, before other 'mainstream' faiths.
Rise of 'Forest Church' as new form of Pagan spirituality.

Debates about content.
Tension between study of religions and philosophy & ethics
Study of 'lived religions' rather than historical context.

Debates about approach
Does much RE give a 'rosy' anodyne picture of religions? Need for a more critical approach.

Who defines the facts? Academics or Faith Communities (which section of FC?)?
Are our pictures of religions shaped by patriarchy, heteronormativity and colonialism?

Should the law be changed?
Should non-exam RE at KS4&5 be abandoned?
What can we learn from other countries?

Practical Challenges

Public understanding of RE
Lack of qualified teachers (secondary)
Little input at ITT (primary)
Lack of CPD
Insufficient timetable time - even for GCSE
Confusing varieties of schools
Pressure on role of SACREs
Low status - Ebacc, Russell Group, parents and pupils
Re rudiment to Theology & RS degrees

Notable Successes

45 years' experience of non-confessional multi-faith RE
RE teachers with confidence, expertise and enthusiasm
Strong links with faith communities facilitating the encounter with living religions
Range of pedagogies including critical enquiry
Lots of resources - RE:online
Improved GCSE and A level criteria
Restoration of Bursaries
Different: an academic subject like no other

**Mary Myatt – Lead Ofsted Inspector, Culham St Gabriel’s Lead Consultant for Teacher Conferences
“Great RE”**

Religion = *religion* 'the ties that bind us together'

'Sharing Our Stories' - Suffolk Interfaith Resource

Building Capacity: Three Aspects

Funded Projects i.e. - Culham St Gabriel, Hockerill - RE Teachers' Prize, Farmington, Keswick Hall Trust

Getting to Good RE' (about improving the quality of RE teaching and learning in Primary schools).

RE Hubs,

Teachers' Groups (NATRE website & social media)

RE Quality Mark: downloadable self-assessment tool, pupil questionnaires, growing the next generation of leaders, nearly 200 schools have now received QM

Wokefield Park: weekend RE training at no cost to schools
"Helping colleagues to feel hopeful (not helpless)"

**Mark Plater: Lecturer in Education & Theology, Bishop Grossteste University
The purpose of RE – SACRE Member survey**

There is considerable confusion about what RE is for / seeking to do.

Survey of SACRE members will be undertaken to discover what those responsible for RE across the piece think.

Method:

On-line survey

To all SACRE members in all SACREs

How do SACRE members views compare with others? Teachers, etc.

Opening shortly, initial responses Sept 2015.

Taking the 8 most requested topics from last year’s conference you will have the opportunity with colleagues from nearby SACREs to network, discuss in-depth and record your work. Please look at these before-hand and give some thought to your local situation, ready to share with colleagues. This proforma will be used to collect your contributions and discussion. We will collate and make all the groups’ ideas for ‘Meeting the Challenge’ available on our website.

<p>Top 8 Challenges highlighted by SACREs at <i>Rising to the Challenge 2014</i></p>	<p>What are the issues in your area? (Share your Experience)</p>	<p>How do/might you address this? (Share your experiences & <i>Ideas</i>)</p>
<p>1. Engaging with schools <i>What are some successful ways you connect with your local schools and support their RE?</i></p> <p>2. Lack of coherence/ consistency of RE across schools <i>What are the challenges in keeping contact with schools to monitor their RE?</i></p>		
<p>3. Confusion around our role in relation to Academies/ free schools</p> <p>4. The decline of RE in Academies & free schools</p> <p>5. Engaging with Academies to develop better working relationships <i>How do you work with Academies? How do you know what schools are providing in RE when there is such a range of types of school? How do you keep contact with schools to monitor RE, when we have less resource and such a range of non-LA maintained schools?</i></p>		

Taking the 8 most requested topics from last year’s conference you will have the opportunity with colleagues from nearby SACREs to network, discuss in-depth and record your work. Please look at these before-hand and give some thought to your local situation, ready to share with colleagues. This proforma will be used to collect your contributions and discussion. We will collate and make all the groups’ ideas for ‘Meeting the Challenge’ available on our website.

<p>Top 8 Challenges highlighted by SACREs at <i>Rising to the Challenge 2014</i></p>	<p>What are the issues in your area? (Share your Experience)</p>	<p>How do/might you address this? (Share your experiences & <i>Ideas</i>)</p>
<p>6. Sharing good practice across SACREs</p> <p>7. Encouraging collaboration / sharing of resources with neighbouring SACREs eg sharing adviser, CPD and clerk</p> <p><i>What examples of collaboration or partnership can you share? How effective are they? What barriers were there?</i></p>		
<p>8. Need to promote importance of RE in schools and with LAs and DfE</p> <p><i>How do you raise the profile of RE with local partners and communities in your area?</i></p>		
<p>Other Areas of Challenge</p> <p><i>Any other challenges that are particular priorities for your SACRE either as current issues or successes to share with others?</i></p>	<p>Solutions/Suggestions</p>	

Visit to Darrick Wood School on 2nd March 2015

This visit was undertaken by the SACRE Chairman and the RE Consultant. We were met by the Head teacher and the head of the RE department, Mr Morrell. The school has expanded and has 260 pupils in each year and 300 pupils in the 6th form. Although the school has extended several times there is a very good and obvious ethos of care amongst the staff and pupils.

After a short discussion we attended the Year 7 Collective Worship. Mr Hammond, the assistant achievement coordinator, presented some slides on school classrooms around the world and asked the pupils to reflect on the facilities that some pupils lacked. The pupils sang a hymn and listened to a prayer and then all said the Grace together. We were told about the Easter assemblies that were coming up and how the school tries to celebrate different religious festivals during Collective Worship time. We were told that there are no withdrawals from collective worship at the school.

Mr Morrell took us on a trip around the school pointing out the art works and the inspirational displays to encourage pupils to do their best. We also saw a display of a school in Africa sponsored by, and also called, Darrick Wood School. There was a lot of information about the different charities that the school helps and also interesting 'thoughts' and items to reflect on as we went through the different departments. The school's motto is 'Respect, Responsibility, Honesty' which is vigorously promoted in all areas of school life.

We saw some of two lessons both with Year 8 pupils and both on the subject of Islam. One was led by a newly qualified teacher who showed a video of the differences and similarities between Islam and Christianity and then got the pupils to look at some phrases from the film and put them into the correct order, this was a good way of getting pupils to listen very carefully when looking at a media presentation. The other lesson by Miss McGuinness was on the Five Pillars of Islam and pupils in groups had to share information that they had discovered on each of the five pillars. It was very interesting to see the different approaches taken by the two teachers with similar pupils and on the same topic.

As on previous visits we had a very interesting discussion with Mr Morrell and the head teacher on the merits of the RE department. We also discussed the RE quality mark and it is hoped that the RE department will have time to apply for the quality mark as I am certain that they would be able to achieve it with ease.

Visit to Chislehurst Girls School Tuesday 3rd February 2015

This visit was undertaken by the RE Consultant, Mrs Smith-Orr, the Chairman of SACRE, Rev R Bristow, and a Church of England representative, Rev S Varney. Due to the snowy conditions on the morning a fourth member of SACRE was unable to attend.

We had a discussion with the head of department Miss Winson and the deputy Head, Mrs Forder, who manages the Humanities curriculum in the school. We were given a comprehensive document on the assessment plan for religious education and discussed the importance that religious education is given in the school, there are five RE specialist teachers. There is a good budget for the department and the school has a large number of artefacts for use in all lessons. The latest results were that 80% of pupils had achieved GCSE A*-C grades and 80% pupils had achieved A*-C in the A" examinations. The school use AQA as an exam board.

Rev Varney had managed to get to the school in advance of the other members and saw a Year 12 class, his comments were as follows; 'There were around 12 girls present. the topic was the "Argument from Design" with reference to Swinburne. The material went way over my head. The students were fully attentive and when the teacher asked for answers to questions from the whole unit to be written up on small white boards, it seemed that all gave the right answers and quickly. They all knew their stuff'

We all saw part of a lesson with mixed ability pupils which was very interesting on the concept of heaven and hell and there was some interaction between the girls and the two visiting reverends on what might be found in heaven. We also saw parts of lessons on Islam and Hinduism. All the pupils were very engaged and able to voice their opinions clearly. The teachers were knowledgeable and the lessons were delivered in an interesting and engaging way.

Regarding collective worship there are ten big events through the year and Tutor time of ten minutes each day includes a time of reflection on a theme.

We discussed the RE Quality Mark and it is hoped that the school will consider applying for it in the future. The school is clearly committed to excellent RE Teaching and Learning and the commitment of the lead teacher was clearly demonstrated on our visit and by the fact that she has been attending the Bromley SACRE meetings as a teacher representative.