

## **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.00 pm on 4 March 2020

### **Present:**

Reverend Roger Bristow (Chairman)

Councillors Kevin Brooks, Robert Evans, David Jefferys,  
Keith Onslow and Chris Pierce  
Mrs Denise Angell, Reverend Rachel Archer,  
Mr Daniel Coleman, Mrs Donna Gold, Mr Lee Kings,  
Mr Saiyed Mahmood, Mr Arvinder Nandra,  
Mrs Caroline Ringham, Dr Omar Taha, Ms Jan Thompson,  
Mr Christopher Town and Mrs Edlene Whitman

### **Also Present:**

Julia Andrew, LBB Head of School Standards  
Carol Arnfield, LBB Head of Service for Early Years,  
Schools Standards and Adult Education  
Stacey Burman, SACRE RE Advisor

## **26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Kate Lymer, Hannah Arnold and Jared Nehra, LBB Director of Education.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Daniel Coleman and Mrs Caroline Ringham to the meeting and introductions took place. The Chairman advised Members that Mr Coleman would be representing the Roman Catholic faith, and Mrs Ringham would be a new teacher representative on the SACRE.

### **RESOLVED that:**

- i) Mr Daniel Coleman join the Bromley SACRE as a representative of the Roman Catholic faith; and,**
- ii) Mrs Caroline Ringham, Tubbenden Primary School join the Bromley SACRE as teacher representative.**

## **27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**28 COMPLIANCE OF THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**

No breaches of the GDPR were reported.

**29 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH NOVEMBER 2019**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.**

**B) MATTERS ARISING**

Minute 17B: Matters arising

The SACRE RE Advisor noted that Mrs Caroline Ringham had now joined the SACRE as an additional teacher representative.

The LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education advised Members that the Local Authority did not have a Consultative Advisory Committee.

The Chairman informed Members that information was awaited in relation to the format changes being made to the programme of Councillor visits. The LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education noted that the LBB Director of Education had been undertaking visits to schools to meet with Headteachers and Senior Leadership Teams, during which he had been discussing Religious Education where concerns had been raised.

The SACRE RE Advisor informed Members that a letter to Headteachers had been drafted, reminding them of the role of the SACRE. It had been provided to the LBB Head of School Standards for inclusion in the School's Circular and on the Bromley Education Matters website.

Minute 21: Bromley Education Matters website

The LBB Head of School Standards confirmed that the contact details of the Clerk had been added to the SACRE section of the Bromley Education Matters website.

Minute 22: Inter-faith Competition

The Clerk had circulated the draft calendar dates to SACRE Members for checking, and this would be discussed in more detail later in the meeting.

**30 SACRE CONSTITUTION**

Members were provided with the revised Terms of Reference, which incorporated the amendments discussed at the SACRE meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

A Member highlighted the use of the word 'monitoring' in clause 1.4, which may imply that the SACRE was inspecting schools. The Chairman noted that this was a valid concern, but the phrase 'monitoring' was being used in terms of seeing what was happening, and not to find faults. The SACRE RE Advisor informed Members that this was a phrase used by NASACRE, and one of the SACRE's duties was to report annually to the Department for Education (DfE). This had been discussed by Members at the last meeting, and the clause had been moved further down the Terms of Reference to reduce the emphasis on it.

A Member suggested that in addition to 'supporting the LA', the Terms of Reference should also mention the support offered to schools and teachers. Members agreed that an additional clause be added to the document, at 1.3, to reflect this. It was suggested that the wording for this additional clause be agreed between the Chairman, SACRE RE Advisor, LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education and LBB Head of School Standards.

In response to a question, the Chairman said that the SACRE was required to advise the LA and the Director of Education. The LBB Head of School Standards noted that items relating to the SACRE, such as the Bromley Agreed Syllabus and RE Network meetings, were included on the Bromley Education Matters website and therefore accessible by all schools, including academies.

A Member suggested that the wording 'will remain in post' used in clause 2.2 should be revised, in order to reflect that Members were voted on to the SACRE for an open term. It was further recommended that clause 2.5 be amended to state that the SACRE would 'elect' its own Chairman and Vice Chairman, rather than 'appoint'. It was noted that advice on the wording used for these clauses be sought from the LBB Democratic Services Manager and LBB Director of Corporate Services. **ACTION: Clerk**

In response to a question, the Chairman said that it was the statutory duty of the SACRE to be as aware as they were able to be, in relation to the delivery of RE and collective worship in schools. Schools were required to publish which RE syllabus they used on their websites. The SACRE could make them aware of this, and if they continued to be non-compliant it could be reported to the DfE – however as the SACRE had these responsibilities, but with little power, they would give positive encouragement to schools.

The SACRE RE Advisor noted that when they had become aware that a school was non-compliant, the issues had been brought to the SACRE for discussion, and actions had been carried out. There was not a policy on how all schools would be dealt with, as any school would instead be dealt with on an individual basis. It was stressed that there was now a much better picture in regards to RE and collective worship in Bromley's schools than there had been a year ago.

In response to a question relating to the non-compliant school discussed at the last SACRE meeting, the Chairman advised Members that the LBB Director of Education had visited the school and a robust conversation had taken place with the Headteacher. The school were advised that the SACRE were aware of their non-compliance, and would be reviewing the situation. The SACRE did not have a lot of power, but would use what power it had in the best way it could.

The SACRE RE Advisor highlighted that the SACRE's main source of information came from the teachers attending the RE Network meetings. If required, she could search the school websites for information relating to their RE syllabus, but it would be very time consuming to do so.

The LBB Head of School Standards advised Members that it was the responsibility of school Governors to check that information relating to the syllabus was provided on their school website, and this was covered in the training for Governors. It was noted that Ofsted would also check if this information was available prior to their visits. The Chairman informed Members that he was scheduled to speak at a future School Governor Forum, and would remind them of this requirement. A Member suggested that as Ofsted were already looking at this analysis, and every Ofsted report was provided to the LA, a digest of the feedback from the reports relating to RE and collective worship could be provided to the SACRE.

**ACTION: LBB Head of School Standards**

A Member noted that producing the revised Bromley Agreed Syllabus was the best way to provide support to schools. There would be new impetus and lots of interest. The SACRE RE Advisor emphasised that following the launch of the revised Bromley Agreed Syllabus, it was intended that strategies to review and measure its use would be looked at.

**RESOLVED that the Bromley SACRE Terms of Reference be approved, subject to the suggested changes being made, and the final version appended to the minutes.**

**31 DRAFT BROMLEY SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019**

SACRE Members were provided with a copy of the draft Bromley SACRE Annual Report 2018-2019.

The SACRE RE Advisor noted that the draft Annual Report included a picture of schools compliance. Page 3 of the document explained how this was being undertaken by the SACRE, and highlighted the engagement the SACRE had with schools. Members were provided with a list of schools that had attended the Primary and Secondary School RE Network meetings held in January 2020. It was noted that this was not the full list of the schools engaged with, and another new school had also booked to attend the next Primary RE Network meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

It was highlighted that in the space of a year, the SACRE now had relationships with a third of the schools in the Borough, including academies. The number of schools continued to rise, and it was hoped that this would increase further with the launch of the revised Bromley Agreed Syllabus.

In relation to the section on 'Schools', a Member raised concerns regarding the wording used in the third paragraph and noted that it may be misconstrued. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the SACRE RE Advisor would amend this section of the SACRE Annual Report to reflect that the Church of England and Roman Catholic faith schools in the Borough ran their own network and training sessions for RE. The SACRE RE Advisor informed Members that an item for inclusion on the SACRE Action Plan for the following year would be to look at further developing relationships with these schools.

It was agreed that the revised Bromley SACRE Annual Report 2018-2019 document would be provided to the Clerk for circulation to Members, stating the deadline for further comments to be received.

**ACTION: SACRE RE Advisor / Clerk**

## **32 REVISED BROMLEY AGREED SYLLABUS**

The SACRE RE Advisor reminded Members that copies of the documents to be included in the revised Bromley Agreed Syllabus had been provided to previous meetings of the SACRE. These documents were now being finalised, ready for uploading on to the Bromley Education Matters website, and included materials and resources for teachers to use.

A launch event for the revised Bromley Agreed Syllabus was currently in the planning stage, and it was hoped that it would take place during the week commencing Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020. The SACRE Chairman had been speaking with Mr Lee Kings in regard to holding the launch at Bishop Justus Church of England School. Mr Kings said that it was looking hopeful, and he anticipated that he should be able to confirm if the school could host the launch that week. The Chairman advised that more details, including the timings of the launch, would be provided to Members once they were available.

The SACRE RE Advisor noted that the launch of the revised Agreed Syllabus would also incorporate the launch of the inter-faith calendar. It had been suggested that part of the launch would include hearing student voices about what RE meant for them. However it was noted that pupils would need to be accompanied to the launch by their parents, and if this was not viable, another option would be to display pupil work.

The SACRE RE Advisor was hoping that SACRE Members could be involved in an interactive inter-faith activity, such as them being interviewed by pupils or talking about an artefact of their religion, which could be recorded and used as a resource for teachers. Mr Mahmood suggested that it may be helpful for

Members to be provided with the questions that pupils would like to ask prior to the launch event, in order to prepare responses, or for them to be vetted by the teachers to decide if they were appropriate.

A Member noted that consideration could be given as to what SACRE representatives could offer to schools – such as question and answer sessions or resources that they could take into schools – and link them to lessons included in the revised Bromley Agreed Syllabus.

The SACRE RE Advisor informed Members that she was putting together a list of contact details for faith representatives and guest speakers who would be willing to go into Bromley schools. It was noted that the Clerk had contacted the individual faith representatives regarding this, and a number of responses had been received, the detail of which would be forwarded on to the schools. It was suggested that the Clerk email all SACRE Members asking them to forward on details of any contacts that may be interested.

**ACTION: Clerk / SACRE Members**

### **33 SACRE ACTION PLAN (INCLUDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS)**

Members had been provided with a copy of the SACRE Action Plan for 2019-2020, which had been produced by the SACRE RE Advisor.

The SACRE RE Advisor said that the document had been updated as of 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020, so the status of a number of items had since changed. All items were “on track”, and some items could now be marked ‘green’ as they had been completed, including the two ‘amber’ tasks listed under the Agreed Syllabus – Planning.

The SACRE RE Advisor noted that further details relating to the Agreed Syllabus – Share / Launch would be added to the SACRE Action Plan as she went through the process of organising it.

### **34 INTER-FAITH COMPETITION**

The LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education informed Members that the Local Authority had received the first funding payment for the inter-faith calendar competition, and the second payment would be received on completion of the project.

The SACRE RE Advisor informed Members that the artwork for the inter-faith calendar competition had been sent to the designer. A PDF of the design work would be circulated to SACRE Members.

**ACTION: SACRE RE Advisor / Clerk**

The Clerk had circulated the draft list of calendar dates to all SACRE Members for checking. The SACRE RE Advisor thanked Mrs Donna Gold for

her comments, and confirmed that, as last year, a general comment would be added to the calendar to reflect the fact that the Jewish festivals began on the evening before the festivals actually started, and confirmed that this would be included.

In response to Reverend Rachel Archer's question relating to the reason for splitting Christian into Catholic and Protestant, the SACRE RE Advisor said that on some occasions the festivals held were different. This would be specified in the calendar, and they would be colour-coded differently.

The SACRE RE Advisor also thanked Mr Mahmood and Dr Taha for providing their amendments, which she confirmed had now been incorporated in the list of festival dates.

Mr Arvinder Nandra noted that he had not received the email providing the draft calendar dates, and requested that it be resent to allow him to check the dates included for Sikh festivals. **ACTION: Clerk**

In response to a question, the SACRE RE Advisor said that once the design of the calendar was approved, copies would be printed in time for the revised Bromley Agreed Syllabus launch in May 2020.

## **35 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### NASACRE AGM

The Chairman advised Members that, along with the SACRE RE Advisor, he would be attending the NASACRE Conference and AGM. This year, it was being held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at Crowne Plaza London - The City. The theme of the conference would be 'Authority in RE' and a report on the NASACRE Conference and AGM would be provided to the next meeting of the SACRE.

### MindCare Dementia Support

The Chairman advised Members that the Clerk had received an email from Saira Addison, Dementia Services Manager – MindCare Dementia Support, who was looking to make contact with faith communities in order to provide support and input to services. It was suggested that, with Saira Addison's agreement, the email be forwarded on to SACRE Members for them to make contact with her directly. **ACTION: Clerk**

The Chairman noted that the next meeting of the SACRE would be taking place in the new municipal year, and extended his thanks and gratitude to all Members of the committee for their contribution to SACRE meetings, and their interest and engagement to encourage and support schools in the Borough.

**36            DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

6.00pm, Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020  
6.00pm, Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
6.00pm, Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

The Meeting ended at 7.20 pm

Chairman