

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

Minutes of the virtual meeting held at 5.30 pm on 23 November 2022 via  
Microsoft Teams

### **Present:**

Reverend Roger Bristow (Chairman)

Councillors Jonathan Andrews, Graeme Casey,  
David Jefferys, Kate Lymer and Chris Price  
Reverend Rachel Archer, Mr Christopher Town,  
Mrs Denise Angell, Ms Hannah Arnold, Mr Lee Kings,  
Mrs Caroline Ringham, Mrs Katie Burtonshaw,  
Mr Saiyed Mahmood, Mr Arvinder Nandra and  
Dr Omar Taha

### **Also Present:**

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

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

The Chairman welcomed SACRE Members to the virtual meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Daniel Coleman, Ms Deborah Corcoran, Councillor Robert Evans and Mr Sanjay Gupta.

The Chairman led SACRE Members in paying tribute to Ms Jan Thompson, a highly respected Church of England Representative on the SACRE who had recently passed away. Ms Thompson was a former SACRE RE Adviser and Assistant Director of the Rochester Diocesan Board of Education and individual SACRE Members praised her outstanding commitment to religious education as well as her much-valued contribution to SACRE activities over many years, including the annual Islamic competition.

## **17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **18 COMPLIANCE OF THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**

No breaches of the GDPR were reported.

**19 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH JULY 2022**

In considering the Minute Annex, a SACRE Member noted a reference to the creation of a *Draft Handbook on Religion and Worldviews*. The SACRE RE Adviser confirmed that was being compiled by the Religious Education Council to encourage the adoption of a new approach to the teaching of religious education and that the ideas expressed within the Handbook were already included in the Bromley syllabus.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

**20 REVIEW DETERMINATIONS**

No determinations had been received.

**21 'REAL' RESOURCES: INTERFAITH DIALOGUE CONFERENCES**

The Committee considered an update of the SACRE RE Adviser on 'Real' Resources: Interfaith Dialogue Conferences.

The SACRE RE Adviser advised that following the success of the inaugural Interfaith Dialogue Conference, a further conference had been held in August 2022 where session recordings had been made to create short videos that could be used as classroom learning tools. SACRE Members were requested to review these videos as part of a robust quality assurance process to ensure they fit with the agreed syllabus. The videos would then be uploaded to a secure site for access by named representatives from Bromley schools. The LBB Head of Service for Early Years, Schools Standards and Adult Education suggested that a volunteer be sought from each Member grouping within the Committee to be part of the quality review process.

On a related note, the SACRE RE Adviser was pleased to announce that as a result of being awarded funding by Westhill to create the video resources, Bromley had been invited by NASACRE to present this learning project at an online workshop which would probably take place on 15 June 2023 (*date yet to be confirmed*). It was proposed to show an example video and share the experiences of participants as part of the workshop, perhaps also including input from teachers. The Charman requested that the SACRE RE Adviser circulate further details of the event to SACRE Members including how to get involved.

**Action:** SACRE RE Adviser to forward request wording to Clerk who will send email to members regarding volunteering in reviewing the above.

**22 INTER-FAITH CALENDAR COMPETITION**

The Committee considered an update of the SACRE RE Adviser on the Inter-Faith Calendar Competition.

The SACRE RE Adviser suggested that possible themes for this year's competition included 'How do we know they are special or holy?' or 'What makes a place special or holy?' which were accessible to pupils of all backgrounds, including non-religious, although it was anticipated that the majority of entries would have a religious focus, and this was supported by the Committee.

A SACRE Member observed that the calendar was now produced online only and requested that a quote be obtained for hard copy calendars. This was agreed by the Committee and would be reported to a future meeting of SACRE.

**Action:** *LBB to investigate quotes for printing of calendar for next year.*

## **23 SACRE SELF-EVALUATION**

The Committee considered an update of the SACRE RE Adviser regarding the SACRE Self-Evaluation.

The SACRE RE Adviser thanked all SACRE Members who had responded to the SACRE Self-Evaluation. In considering Section 3: Effectiveness of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, a SACRE Member highlighted a mismatch for 'How well does SACRE promote the Agreed Syllabus and provide training to prepare teachers to use it effectively?' which teachers had reported as 'Established' but which remained marked as 'Advanced' in the SACRE Self-Evaluation. The Member noted that whilst the quality of training materials was excellent, there had been some issue around attendance to recent meetings. It was acknowledged that the question was about 'promoting and providing training' which was strong. Whilst it was appreciated that meetings would continue to be held online for budgetary reasons, it was agreed that in person sessions would be preferable for attendees. Following discussion, SACRE Members agreed to amend the rating of this measure as 'Leading to Advanced' and to hold an in-person Primary RE Network meeting on 7 June 2023.

**Action:** *To amend the SACRE Self-Evaluation as outlined above.*

## **24 SACRE ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee considered the SACRE Annual Report 2021/22 for approval, subject to the below updated Chairman's Introduction:

*"I remain indebted to Joanne Partridge who, in her role of Clerk to SACRE, gives invaluable support to both the Committee and to me. Stacey Burman, our RE Adviser, continues to work hard to provide as much support as possible to schools. We are pleased that the revised Bromley Agreed Syllabus appears to have been well received and Stacey continues to provide support and resourcing to RE Teachers as they implement it within their schools.*

*I continue to be grateful also to Jared Nehra, Bromley Director of Education, and to Julia Andrew and Carol Arnfield, Bromley School Standards officers, who assist us to deliver a high level of support to Bromley's schools, and especially to those at the front line of delivering high quality RE and the experience of life-enhancing collective worship for all. I am grateful also to the members of Bromley SACRE for their commitment to this work and their engagement with the various issues which are raised by it.*

*Bromley SACRE seeks to encourage and support those who deliver RE and lead Collective Worship in Bromley's schools (whether maintained or not) in helping to ensure that children and young people are given every opportunity to discover for themselves the way in which religious and other world views impact every area of our lives. This work remains as vital today as it ever was."*

With regard to the draft annual report, a SACRE Member was concerned that only 50% of primary schools in Bromley had stated they were confident they were delivering enough curriculum time for RE. The SACRE RE Adviser explained that this was 50% of responding schools, which only represented a small proportion of primary schools in Bromley, but that the Director of Education could be requested to emphasise the importance of religious education to all or targeted primary schools if this was a concern of the Committee. The Chairman confirmed that Bromley SACRE had historically preferred to take an encouraging and supportive approach to promoting the delivery of effective religious education and collective worship in Bromley schools; however, further steps had been taken previously where schools were identified as non-compliant in their responsibilities around religious education and collective worship. The Chairman underlined the need to inform and engage School Governors around religious education and collective worship requirements in schools, including any Governor with designated responsibility for curriculum.

The SACRE RE Adviser suggested a questionnaire be provided to Bromley Governors asking whether they could confirm the curriculum time for religious education and collective worship; whether there was a specific Governor role supporting religious education or more generally, the curriculum in their school; and whether this Governor regularly met with subject leaders for religious education, and this proposal was agreed by the Committee. LBB Officers confirmed that they would be attending future Governors' meetings provided by the Local Authority, and that the Chairman could also attend to share and discuss the above point and promote any questionnaire/survey agreed. However, as not all schools were represented at Governors' meetings, it was suggested that any messages or surveys be communicated to schools in another format.

In considering other aspects of the draft annual report, a SACRE Member requested that identifying titles be added to Table 1 in Section 2c: School Provision, Attainment and Quality of Religious Education and this was agreed by the Committee. Another Member queried when exam data would be

available for inclusion in the report, and it was advised that this would be noted and provided to SACRE Members once data validation had been completed in December 2022.

**Action:** SACRE RE Adviser to prepare a survey/questionnaire for schools/governors regarding RE and Collective Worship in their schools.

**Action:** RE Adviser to forward amended document to Clerk to send to NASACRE.

**RESOLVED:** That the SACRE Annual Report 2021/22 be approved, subject to the above listed amendments including the updated Chairman's Introduction.

## 25 SACRE ACTION PLAN (INCLUDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS)

The Committee considered the SACRE Action Plan (including relationships with schools).

In response to a question from a SACRE Member on the Action Plan, the SACRE RE Adviser acknowledged that it had been agreed in previous years that action agreed by SACRE focus on the Agreed Syllabus and not include collective worship. The SACRE RE Adviser explained that whilst there was no current live action for Bromley SACRE to promote effective collective worship, NASACRE was currently undertaking work in this area, and this could be presented to a future meeting of SACRE for consideration. It was noted that Bromley SACRE Members wished to make the encouragement of collective worship a focus of future work.

In considering other arising matters, the SACRE RE Adviser notified the Committee that a project establishing regional RE Hubs in every education region in England and Wales was underway. Under this project which had been funded by various national RE organisations, each hub would have an RE Lead who would work for two days a month to compile information relating to all local religious education bodies including SACREs, teacher networks and others delivering or supporting collective worship with the ultimate aim of supporting increased collaborative working. The RE Hubs would also offer a short online training session to enable individuals from places of interest or worship to gain kitemark accreditation to speak in schools. This would lead to an 'approved' list of speakers being made available on the website for schools and SACRE Members were invited to apply to attend this training session, for which a flyer was included in the agenda pack.

The SACRE RE Adviser further announced that she had successfully bid for funding from the Faith and Belief Forum to run a pilot programme with several schools to increase parental engagement with religious education in schools. The pilot scheme would see a small number of parents from participating schools being given an intriguing artefact from a religion or world view (artefacts would not be holy or sacred) and asked to reflect on the concept to

which items related and how they might be used. The responses would be collated and shared with participating parents at a school-based event, along with an explanation from the relevant worldview/religion. Further classroom activities could be undertaken with pupils regarding the chosen items, using resources devised from/with the varied responses and with the explanations provided. On a related note, another Member advised that parental engagement had been part of a recent inter-faith week at her school with parents invited to view a gallery of artwork created by the pupils. It was agreed that this project would support the above schools' project and would be open to all Bromley schools to take part.

**Action:** SACRE RE Adviser to include reference to the new project in an upcoming schools' newsletter.

## **26 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman led the Committee in thanking Reverend Rachel Archer who would shortly be relocating to a parish in another region of the United Kingdom for her excellent contribution to the SACRE, initially as a Teacher Member and latterly as a member of the Church of England group. There were a number of vacancies for Church of England Representatives on the Committee and work was underway to address this. The SACRE RE Adviser also noted vacancies for secondary teachers in another committee.

**Action:** Chairman and SACRE RE Adviser to investigate vacancies in relevant committees.

## **27 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

6.00pm, Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023

The Meeting ended at 6.48 pm

Chairman