

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: **Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education**

Date: **27 May 2010**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

TITLE: SACRE VISITS TO SCHOOLS

Contact Officer: Penny Smith-Orr, RE Adviser
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Chief Officer: Gillian Pearson, Director of Children and Young People Services

Ward: N/A

1. Reason for report

1.1 Members of Bromley SACRE visited two schools during the spring term 2010. Reports of the visits are attached.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 **Members to read the reports and comment as appropriate.**

Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	None
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**SACRE visit to St Paul's Cray Primary School
10 March 2010**

The visit was undertaken by Penny Smith-Orr, the RE consultant and Councillor Anne Manning. This is a lovely school with quite extensive grounds and is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary. We were warmly welcomed by the head teacher Mrs. McAllister and Mrs Tranchina, who is the RE coordinator and a member of Bromley SACRE on the teachers group.

We discussed the school intake and the current projects being undertaken, including the start of a gardening area for the children. The collective worship was being led by a visitor from the Spinnaker Trust, Mrs Hollands, and was on the subject of Faith, which is sometimes ours, leading up to Easter. There was a little worship table in place during the collective worship and the children said the school prayer. The displays in the hall were excellent and covered the Jewish, Hindu and Christian faith. Also seen in the hall and in every classroom is the school motto which is 'we work in God's love'.

The main lesson that we observed was a Year 2 lesson from a series on stories with the overall objective of developing the pupils' knowledge of religions and cultures. The session we saw was based on the story of the crying camel from the Muslim faith. The pupils had also had stories from the Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist traditions.

The teacher told the story using the whiteboard and gave the children a brief overview of Islam, the figures of authority and the main beliefs. The children clearly enjoyed the story and enthusiastically talked in pairs and groups answering the teacher's questions. The plans showed the children were to try and decide what the story teaches and an extension of this was a are animals as important as humans.

We also saw the beginning of a lesson on Judaism taught by Mrs Tranchina, on the symbolic meaning of the seder leading to a discussion based on the concept of things we value. The children looked at the seder plate and discussed the symbolic meaning of each item on the plate. They were then asked to discuss what they would take with them if they had to leave home in a hurry leading to a reflection on values.

We had a tour of the school and were impressed with the facilities and the behaviour of the children we met. We also had a quick look at the nursery which had very exciting and vibrant displays.

Although we had to leave at 11am, due to other engagements, we felt we had had a very good taste of the school and its caring ethos. We are grateful to Mrs McAllister for the time she spent with us and Mrs Tranchina for organising the visit.

**Visit to Bishop Justus CE School
3 February 2010**

The visit to Bishop Justus School was by invitation from the Faculty Leader for Communications, Mr Steve Gallears. Mr Gallears has attended the secondary RE teacher meetings and also brought some students to the SACRE 6th form conference in October 2009. The members of SACRE who went were the chair, Mr Martin Sweet and Mrs Penny Smith-Orr, the RE consultant

On arrival we met the head teacher Mrs Griffiths and Mr Gallears and had a short talk about the context of the school and our visit. The school is a voluntary aided school and therefore follows the Diocesan syllabus, rather than the Bromley syllabus. However many of the themes are the same as those in the Bromley syllabus. Not all of the students come from a Christian background but all understand that the ethos of the school is based on a Christian model. As this is a relatively new school, there had not been a Key Stage 5 until the first set of Year 12s had started in the autumn of 2009.

We went to observe a collective worship in a tutor group setting with Miss Bulmires group. The same theme is repeated throughout the tutor groups on a weekly basis. The group were respectful and all took part in the short activity, followed by a short reflection and prayer. The students then went to their different lessons.

All the RE classes are in one area of the school with interesting displays relating to RE along the corridor. We observed Mrs. Young teaching a Year 10 RE advanced learning group, this was very interesting starting with a 'think out of the box' activity where the students had to try and work out what a hidden item was. They were unsuccessful but would have another opportunity at a later date so we didn't find out either. Following on from this they sat in a circle and gave their opinions on a number of sentences on the theme of money, why do some people have too much and some too little. The method of giving their opinion was to stand up and change places according to their feelings on the sentence. This was very effective as they were able to give their honest opinion and not allowed to chastise each other if they disagreed. This was the final lesson in their unit and was a good revision session.

Two younger pupils took us on a tour of the school and were happy to answer questions and give their, glowing, opinions of the school. We also saw the area that is being turned into a chapel for the students to use in future and the very attractive sixth form area.

Finally we had a meeting with Mr Gallears and Mr Lee Kings, who is head of RE, on the syllabus they use and the excellent exam results they achieve. We left after thanking Mr Gallears for inviting us and arranging the visit.

This was a very useful visit and the members who attended would like to thank Pamela for her welcome and the discussions we had.

We would like to extend an invitation to Pamela to come as an observer to a future SACRE meeting Civic Centre where SACRE will discuss this report.