

PART 1 - PUBLIC

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

Date: **20 October 2010**

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

TITLE: SCHOOL VISITS

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 secondary schools, Bullers Wood and Hayes Secondary, during the Summer Term 2010. Reports of the visits are attached.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

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

2.2 **Members to volunteer to attend visits this term.**

Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Nil.
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SACRE Visit to Bullers Wood School 22 June 2010

The visit to Bullers Wood School was by invitation from Mr Jed Stone who is a teacher member of Bromley SACRE and a teacher at Bullers Wood. As well as this Mr. Stone was very active in organising the SACRE sixth form conference in 2009. The members of SACRE who went on the visit were Mrs Penny Smith-Orr, the RE consultant, and Rev Michael Camp, a representative of the Church of England group.

On arrival we were met by Helen van Teutem a deputy head teacher and were joined later by Mr Alex Green, also a member of SACRE, and had a short talk about the context of the school and our visit. The school follows the Bromley syllabus which has been extensively worked on by Mr Stone and his department to meet the needs of the pupils. We were given some of the documentation and also a copy of the latest departmental review, from March 2010. This document praised the department for several areas of good practice and included action points for minor improvements.

We went to observe a collective worship in a tutor group setting with Mrs Clothier's group. Tutors are provided with a booklet called Reflections which has the theme for the week and suggestions for expanding the theme including stories, and a reflective prayer. Resources are provided through the MLE. Twice a week there are Year group and key stage collective worship sessions. 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.

We then observed Mr Stone conducting a lesson using Philosophy for Children (P4C) techniques. The pupils were very engaged with the subject, which was a modern version of a Parable, and they then discussed their reactions and posed questions on the story. The classrooms we saw had excellent and thought provoking interactive displays. Once a term the 6th form are involved in a conference day on an RS topic, a recent one involved the parents of Jimmy Misson.

After the lesson we had three quarters of an hour where students from each year group made presentations to us on various aspects of the RE they had been taught and discussed their feelings about the subject. This was an excellent session with very positive views from the students and an opportunity for us to look at work they had undertaken.

We had a short discussion afterwards with members of the department, which is lucky to have five RS specialists and is a very dynamic part of the school. We discussed the possibility of links with St Georges to add to their links with Christchurch Chislehurst. We also discussed the possibility of Mr Stone presenting his work on P4C to SACRE.

This was an excellent visit which really showed how pupils can be inspired and how they feel about the subject.

Visit to Hayes Secondary School on 29 June 2010

The visit to Hayes School was by invitation from the head of department Mrs Hannah Silley as a result of suggestions by SACRE members and after attendance by some sixth formers at the Youth SACRE meeting. Three members of SACRE went, Martin Sweet, Chair, Cllr Manning, Vice Chairman, and Penny Smith-Orr, RE consultant.

On arrival we were offered lunch with Mrs Silley and Mr Osborne, the head teacher. We discussed the importance of RE within the school. All pupils are entered for the short course GCSE and 40 pupils were taking the full course by working after school. Two pupils in Y7 and two in Y10 are withdrawn from RE lessons, otherwise pupils of all faiths take part. We were given a copy of the scheme of work for Key stage 3 which follows the advice of the Bromley Agreed Syllabus. We were also given some examples of planning sheets and assessment activities that are used. It was very good to see and hear how the role of RE in the school has moved forward most positively.

We then went to observe two lessons, Year 8 with Mrs Silley looking at how Christians make moral decisions and Y12 with Mrs Boyden looking at the role of libertarianism and how it conflicts with determination. Both of these were very interesting, the Y12 lesson was revision and the students were very motivated and engaged with the teacher and each other to debate the question. The Year 8 class were quite a lively class and it was an extremely hot day but the teacher had good control and the pupils engaged in conversation and all tried to complete the written activity.

After this we observed a collective worship with years 7 and 8. This was on the theme of leadership and the need to take advantage of all the opportunities that present themselves in life. After a presentation on different well known leaders the new Head boy and Head girl were introduced and some of the new prefects. Several of these then made speeches about the things they hoped to be able to achieve during the following year which was quite inspirational.

This was a very useful and enjoyable visit and the members who attended would like to thank Mrs Silley and Mr Osborne for their welcome. We have subsequently had a letter from the Head Teacher expressing a wish to be able to work with SACRE in the future.