

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

**Briefing for Standing Advisory Committee
for Religious Education (SACRE)**

6th November 2013

SACRE SUPPORT FROM LB BROMLEY AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

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1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present a draft development plan for the next financial year, to enable members of the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education to discuss this document and the budget presented by an officer of the Council.
- 1.2. A key question for Bromley SACRE is; how can Bromley SACRE continue to monitor and improve learning and achievement in Bromley schools?
- 1.3. A key question for LAs is: Does the professional, administrative and financial support for SACRE enable it to carry out its duties effectively and improve learning and achievement in RE?

2. THE BRIEFING

- 2.1. Attached as appendix one is the draft development plan for SACRE in the next financial year.
- 2.2. At the meeting there will be a discussion with an officer from Bromley Council on the budget and arrangements for Bromley SACRE in the next financial year.
- 2.3. The law still states that a local authority has to support a SACRE committee, see below for the requirements for the local authority and for the SACRE committee.
- 2.4. In the last two to three years religious education has been in the news due to the introduction of the English Baccalaureate, which omitted RE, and the National Curriculum reviews which also omitted RE as it is a subject in the basic curriculum (as a result of the law stating that every child registered in school must be taught religious education from age 4-18years) and not in the National Curriculum. On October 23rd 2013 the RE Council is launching its own RE review which will be an updating of the recommendations from the Non Statutory National Framework for RE of 2004.

- 2.5. The latest OFSTED subject report released in September 2013 did not report very positively on RE nationally, although Bromley schools were not inspected. This can be found at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential>. Since January 2012 OFSTED have to report on Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural aspects throughout a school, which rely heavily on good religious education and collective worship. It is acknowledged that Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. It also plays a key role in promoting social cohesion and the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society.
- 2.6. It is important to consider how changes to the education policy of Bromley Council affect the work of the SACRE committee and for a SACRE budget and development plan to be a continued part of the council's overall budget plan.
- 2.7. A key question for Bromley SACRE is; how can Bromley SACRE continue to monitor and improve learning and achievement in Bromley schools?

2.8 Local authority support for SACREs

- 2.8.1 As part of their responsibilities to ensure high quality RE and collective worship for all pupils the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to establish a SACRE and an agreed syllabus conference (ASC), and also has statutory responsibilities in supporting both bodies.
- 2.8.2 'The L(E)A's duty to convene a conference or to establish a SACRE implies providing sufficient funds for these bodies to perform their duties.' ERA 1988 s11 (1)
- 2.8.3 'Sufficient funding' for the SACRE may vary depending on factors such as the size and faith diversity of different LAs but should not be less than:
- Clerking support for 3-6 SACRE meetings per year,
 - Specialist RE advice and back up support for
 - 3-6 SACRE meetings per year,
 - preparation and publication of the SACRE annual report.
- 3.8.4 Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that the agreed syllabus is reviewed every five years. The LA is responsible for providing satisfactory funding for this task, including writing, consulting, publishing and providing necessary training. In addition, the SACRE has the power, rarely used, to require the LA to review its agreed syllabus within the five year period as stated in ERA 1988 s11 (7).
- 3.8.5 Sufficient funding for the ASC within a five year cycle may vary for reasons similar to those leading to variation in funding of SACREs in different LAs but should not be less than:
- Clerking support for 3-6 ASC meetings,
 - Specialist RE advice and back up support for the 3-6 ASC meetings,
 - Specialist RE advice and back up support for reviewing the agreed syllabus, and preparing, and publishing the reviewed syllabus and disseminating it across the LA schools. 5-10 days within a five year cycle.
- 3.8.6 The statutory duty is reaffirmed in the *Religious Education guidance in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010* which states, "An LA should fund and support a SACRE and an ASC satisfactorily in line with the duty to constitute or convene each of these bodies and to enable them effectively to carry out their function."

3.8.7 In addition to these central statutory duties an effective SACRE should

- Monitor standards and achievement in RE in the LA through agreed school visits and analysis of appropriate data including external examination results,
- Have a clear, realistic development plan which raises both the profile of, and achievement in RE,
- Enrich the quality of RE through specific projects e.g. raising boy's attainment,
- Build strong and positive partnerships with schools, colleges and universities, local faith and belief communities and keep informed of key national developments in RE,
- Provide effective support on the effective teaching of RE including planning, methods and resources.

3.8.8 All of these require that a specialist RE professional is in place; is well informed and qualified and has the capacity to manage these actions with the SACRE.

3.8.9 As with members of school governing bodies, some provision should be made for the induction, training and development of SACRE members and for expenses to attend meetings.

3.9 A key question for LAs is: Does the professional, administrative and financial support for SACRE enable it to carry out its duties effectively and improve learning and achievement in RE?

3. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

3.1 Appendix One Draft SACRE Development Plan April 2014 – March 2015