

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.30 pm on 5 June 2013

Present:

Martin Sweet (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Anne Manning (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors: Reg Adams, Roger Charsley, Kate Lymer
(present until 7pm) and Gordon Norrie.
Rev Roger Bristow, Virginia Corbyn and Christopher Town.
Arlene Fane, Fiona Hawkes, Jed Stone and Jackie Tranchina.
Samantha Barnett, Ray Hagley, Saiyed Mahmood and
Swarn Riat

Also Present:

Ms Penny Smith-Orr, RE Adviser
Christine Reeks, Clerk to SACRE

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stephen Carr, Councillor David Jefferys, Patricia Colling, Emma Honey and Sue Polydourou. Councillor Lymer apologised for having to leave the meeting early as she needed to attend another meeting. The Chairman welcomed Rev Roger Bristow who had been appointed as the new Church of England Representative.

The Chairman informed SACRE Members that this would be his last meeting as he would be resigning as a member and Chairman of SACRE due to the relocation of his employment. He thanked members for their support, friendship and kindness over the many years he had served on SACRE. Mr Mahmood thanked the Chairman on behalf of SACRE members for the unstinting service he had given to SACRE. His contribution would be greatly missed.

The Chairman informed members that as a result of his resignation, Edlene Whitman a Baptist representative had been nominated by the Free Churches Education Committee to fill the SACRE membership vacancy. It was hoped that she would be able to attend the next SACRE meeting in November.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3 A) MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6TH MARCH 2013

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 6th March 2013 be confirmed.

(Councillor Lymer apologised for not submitting her apologies to the meeting, as she had been unable to do so due to last minute unforeseen circumstances.)

B) MATTERS ARISING:

Minute 5b: re: Letter to Michael Gove MP. It was noted that a response had been received from Michael Gove which had been circulated to SACRE members.

Minute 6: It was noted that instead of writing to the Assistant Director of Education, the Chairman had met with her to discuss the level of support being given to SACRE. The Chairman reported that The Department of Education had carried out a review of Local Authority Statutory Duties, and had published a document in which the duty of a local authority to fund and support a SACRE had been deleted. However, following further enquiries and investigation by the Chairman of SACRE it was ascertained that this provision had been omitted in error and the Department for Education subsequently apologised. The Vice-Chairman asked that SACRE Members' thanks be recorded in the minutes for the work undertaken by the Chairman in this regard.

The Chairman confirmed that the SACRE budget for 2013/14 had been agreed and that the next SACRE Chairman would need to be involved with determining the budget for 2014/15.

4 ORAL UPDATE AND PUBLICATIONS

a) NASACRE AGM 23rd May 2013

The Chairman and RE Adviser had attended the NASACRE AGM on 23rd May 2013. The Chairman commented on the keynote address which was shared by HMI Alan Brine (OFSTED national leader for RE) and Dr Mark Chater (Director of Culham St. Gabriel's Trust). Suggestions for the "next steps" for Bromley SACRE were outlined by the Chairman and discussion took place. The suggestions had been based upon conversations and the question/answer session which took place at the AGM, (see details in the notes of the AGM appended to these minutes.)

Particular points/suggestions raised by SACRE members included the following:

SACRE needed to adopt a positive approach. Efforts needed to be made to increase the awareness of SACRE and make its work/function more widely known.

Head Teachers and Departmental Heads/RE Co-ordinators from schools, including academies could be invited to attend SACRE meetings.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman should meet with the Assistant Director of Education on a regular basis.

Perhaps more could be done to publicise the work of SACRE, by issuing press statements for particular events, e.g. publicising the Youth SACRE.

Information could be distributed to school governors via updates/newsletters.

It was important to look at connectivity. Periodic meetings of Link Governors were held which most schools attended, and in addition there was a Chair of Governors' Forum. It was suggested that the RE Adviser could find out more from the Business Development Manager at the Widmore Education Centre who had now taken over responsibility for Governor Support.

Although some schools had access to the "Fronter" system, not all schools subscribed to this. It was suggested that perhaps a SACRE website could be developed which had a private area within the website (password protected) where such documents such as the Faith Directory could be accessed.

b) Youth SACRE

Since the last SACRE meeting, a meeting of the Youth SACRE had taken place which had been organised by the RE Adviser and Fiona Hawkes at Coopers Technology College. The meeting had been very positive and arrangements were being made for pupils to visit St Nicholas' Church in Chislehurst to make a virtual film, similar to the one which the Youth SACRE had previously made when they visited Bromley Synagogue. The visit to St Nicholas' Church was due to take place on 24th June 2013, and it was hoped that the film could be shown to members at the next SACRE meeting. The Chairman commented that during conversations with delegates at the NASACRE AGM, other SACRE's were impressed that Bromley still had a Youth SACRE.

c) Faith Directory

The training session for Faith Directory volunteers had taken place at the Civic Centre on Wednesday 20th March 2013. The RE Adviser reported that it had been very successful and thanked all those who had attended. Photographs had been taken at the event and had been submitted to the Council's in house newsletter "In Touch". Subsequently the RE Adviser had produced Guidance on Faith Speakers in schools, plus a list of volunteer speakers which had been circulated to all Bromley schools.

d) Islamic Competition

The prize-giving would take place at Darul Uloom from 6.30pm to 9pm on Thursday 7th November 2013. All SACRE members were invited and were asked to notify Mr Mahmood if they wished to attend. Mr Mahmood would send further details to the SACRE Clerk who would forward these to SACRE members.

5 AGREED SYLLABUS

The Bromley Agreed Syllabus and scheme of work was being revised to bring them into line with current thinking on RE teaching. The RE Adviser informed members that she had updated the previously circulated copies of the draft units of work, taking into account further comments and amendments which had been received from SACRE members. Since the last meeting the introductory pages of the syllabus had been circulated to SACRE members for consideration, together with themed units and learning objectives for Key Stages 1 and 2. A grid had been prepared to help teachers see a suggestion of how to spread the teaching of each religion across the year groups. It had been agreed with Beverley Johnston (the previous Head of Education Commissioning and Business Services) that the new syllabus be put onto a CD for use by schools, rather than produce a printed copy as had been done previously.

Following discussion SACRE Members agreed the following:

- (i) The Learning Objectives would form the statutory element of the RE syllabus.
- (ii) The study of Buddhism at Key Stage 2 would be optional; if this were chosen, the relevant learning objectives would be statutory, and that a further themed unit be written should schools not want to use the optional Buddhism unit.
- (iii) The suggested teaching grid and themed units should be approved.
- (iv) A designer should be appointed to produce the final document. It was noted that any grammatical and typographical errors in the documentation would be rectified and the publication would be proof read before being produced on a CD.

The Chairman requested that if SACRE Members had any further minor points to make they should contact the RE Adviser direct.

Mr Mahmood thanked the RE Adviser on behalf of SACRE members for the considerable amount of work which she had undertaken in connection with the revision of the agreed syllabus.

RESOLVED that work on the revised agreed syllabus be progressed, in accordance with the points outlined above

**6 SCHOOL VISIT
Report No. ED13059**

SACRE members visit local schools in order to observe the teaching of RE and to offer support to the RE Coordinator of the school. On 18th January 2013 the Chairman, Councillor Adams and Christopher Town visited Marian Vian Primary School. A report of the visit was considered by SACRE members.

Councillor Adams remarked in particular on the tour of the school by pupil “guides” which took place after a Year 5 class assembly, and the discussion on RE and collective worship which subsequently took place with pupils on the school council. Christopher Town commented on the excellent displays of RE work around the school and the very good RE lesson which had been observed.

The Chairman drew SACRE members’ attention to the key issues for SACRE outlined in the report. Members of SACRE found the report very useful and informative. The Chairman would write to the Head Teacher of the school to thank him on behalf of SACRE for allowing the visit to take place.

The RE Adviser informed SACRE members that a visit to Valley Primary school was being arranged for 20th June 2013* and a visit to Darrick Wood Secondary School was planned for 16th September 2013. Councillor Adams, Christopher Town and Fiona Hawkes indicated that they might be able to visit Valley Primary School and Councillor Mrs Manning and Samantha Barnett might be able to visit Darrick Wood School. Members were asked to email the RE Adviser direct to confirm their availability.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the report of the school visit be noted,**
- (ii) SACRE members notify the RE Adviser if they would be able to attend the school visits planned for the summer and autumn terms.**

(It subsequently transpired that a visit on that date would not be possible and it was hoped that this could be rearranged for the 10th October 2013.)*

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

8 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 6th November 2013

Wednesday 5th March 2014

All meetings to start at 6.30pm

The Meeting ended at 8.20 pm

Chairman