

Decision Maker: Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Date: 12th March 2014

Decision Type: Non-Urgent

Title: School Visits

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Ward: N/A

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 SACRE members visit local schools in order to see how RE is taught and to offer support to the RE Coordinator of the school

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Accept these reports and comment on the Guidelines for Visits

2.2 Consider attending one of the proposed visits

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 Reports of visits to Darrick Wood Secondary and Valley Primary, both undertaken in November 2013 are attached as appendix 1a and 1b. Visits to Cudham C of E Primary and Keston Cof E Primary are planned for March 2014 dates to be advised.

3.2 It has been requested that members have an indication of the elements of a 'good' RE department and a tick list/ sheet for making comments when visiting schools. These could then be kept as a further record of visits made.

3.3 Guidelines for Bromley SACRE members when visiting schools

3.3.1 The reason for these visits is to give the members of SACRE on going information about religious education and collective worship in the Borough's schools. This is important so that SACRE members understand what happens in schools and since the new Ofsted reports do not give specific subject reports it will give SACRE members a chance to see how schools manage RE and collective worship.

3.3.2 The other reason for the visits is for SACRE to have an opportunity to show support for schools in the organisation and delivery of RE and Collective worship. This support might be practical or may take the form of listening to concerns and bringing these back to SACRE for discussion.

3.3.3 During a visit the SACRE members would generally;

- Discuss the school's RE and collective worship policies and provision with the Head Teacher.
- Talk to the RE co-ordinator about the use of the syllabus and the scheme of work
- Visit some RE lessons as observers
- See some examples of the pupils RE work and notice any evidence of RE displays in the classrooms and corridors
- Attend an act of collective worship.

3.4 While the visit is in no way an inspection the following questions are provided as a useful guide for SACRE members taking part in the visit. The answers to these questions will be used to provide a short report to the rest of the SACRE committee.

- **Religious Education;**

1. Is it clear in the school brochure that pupils may be withdrawn from RE lessons?
2. How many pupils are withdrawn from RE lessons?
3. Is RE well resourced in terms of artefacts/ books, timetabling and budget?
4. How long has the co-ordinator been in post?
5. Are they given time to monitor RE and is there a development plan for RE?
6. Are they allowed/encouraged to attend inset and co-ordinator meetings to keep up to date?
7. Is there a programme of RE visits and visitors?

Collective worship should be planned in the same way that schools plan other areas of learning. Each school will have its own planning sheets and methods. Here is a suggestion of the headings for a planning sheet which can also be used as a monitoring sheet. If the school uses the collaborative planning sheet in appendix C in conjunction with this sheet, planning will not be an onerous task.

Theme: Today's Title:

Date: Age of pupils:

Music: (live/recorded/singing) Story title: Biblical ref if applicable

Organisation:

Resources:

Evaluation:	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Atmosphere	o	o	o	o
Effectiveness	o	o	o	o
Engagement	o	o	o	o
Appropriate Content	o	o	o	o
Resources	o	o	o	o
Age appropriate	o	o	o	o
Reflection	o	o	o	o



Commentary on an RE lesson

Visit to.....

Class/Year group.....

Name of Visitor.....

Are Pupils..	Outstanding	Satisfactory	Poor	COMMENTS
Engaged with the lesson?				
Enthusiastic, taking a pride in their work?				
Using religious vocabulary properly?				
Given time to reflect on what they have learnt?				
Questions and ideas valued?				
Is the lesson well planned				
Are there different learning strategies in place and is ICT used?				

Appendix 1a

Visit of Bromley SACRE to Darrick Wood School on 11th November 2013

This visit was undertaken by Cllr Anne Manning, chair of SACRE, and Mrs Penny Smith-Orr, the RE Adviser to Bromley SACRE.

We met the Head of RE, Mr Dave Morrell, at the school at 8.20am and were introduced to Mrs Rhymaun, the head teacher. The School is very well decorated and laid out and includes a prayer room for pupils to use during Ramadan. There are 1700 pupils with a sixth form of 400 and a Special Needs unit as well. At KS3 pupils follow the Bromley Agreed Syllabus, at KS4 most pupils (approximately 240 in each year group) study the Edexcel Religion and Life/Religion and Society and at KS5 students study OCR Philosophy and Ethics. They have links with Tubbenden Primary.

We were taken in to the Collective Worship (CW) being held that day on the theme of Remembrance Day. The poem 'In Flanders Field' by John McCrae was the theme of the day and two pupils did a beautiful dance on the theme of war and loss. It was also announced that the debating society had won their latest round in a competition and were going on into the SE championships. The whole school have collective worship on a Friday and each day pupils have a thought for the day in their tutor groups. Each tutor has a very comprehensive termly booklet, produced by Mr Morrell, with the weekly 'thoughts' and some discussion points for the group, there are also power point presentations for them to show. The same themes for the week are used in the bigger CW gatherings.

After this we had an interesting meeting discussing the school and the RE curriculum with the head teacher and Head of RE. A copy of the Religious Studies departmental booklet, containing everything that the team of five teachers in the department needs to know, was very impressive. The School is part of the Bromley collegiate and is part of a scheme training new teachers, there are two trainees in the RE department with Mr Morrell being the lead mentor for RS for this scheme throughout Bromley.

The Schools motto is 'Respect, Responsibility, Honesty' which is vigorously promoted in all areas of school life. The department is well resourced with artefacts and text books and pupils of different faiths are accorded due respect and are often called on as a resource. We were invited to observe a lesson for Year 11 pupils, taught by Mr Morrell. This was on the topic of Christian and Muslim attitudes to medical treatment for infertility. There was lively discussion and the pupils were given a set of information sheets on the topic. They had to answer two questions using the information adding quotes to support their answers: Why do some Christians and Muslims agree with infertility treatments and some do not? And Christians should not accept the use of infertility treatments, do you agree? This lesson was well organised and the students were interested in the subject. In the classroom there were models of Churches and Mosques, masks based on 'What makes me unique? And newspaper articles and words and phrases relating to religious education to help pupils. We really valued the chance to visit the school and meet the staff and are pleased that there is a very real intention to link in with Bromley SACRE.

With regard to support from SACRE;

Mr Morrell is considering applying for the REQM award during the next few terms

He also asked for the syllabus to be put onto the Council website. (This action has now been completed).

Appendix 1b

Visit by Bromley SACRE to Valley Primary School on 22nd November 2014

Four members of SACRE attended this visit having been invited by the RE Coordinator, who is a part time teacher here and is in the teacher group of SACRE representing the Primary Academies. Prior to the visit by SACRE members the RE Adviser had had a meeting with the head teacher covering a number of topics related to religious education and collective worship. It is to be noted that the school is an Academy and has decided to continue to use the new agreed syllabus for Bromley.

In the entrance hall of the school we looked at a display on the theme of celebrating unity in our diversity, we then observed two lessons and a Collective worship for the whole school. The first class was a Year 1 class following the theme of 'Let's celebrate' looking at the Jewish festival of Hanukah. Having briefly recapped work on Hindu Diwali they found out about Hanukah using a mixture of story and role play and pictures on a whiteboard. The teacher, an HLTA who was teaching the class as the class teacher was on PPA release time also showed them some artefacts and they had a question and answer session. The deputy head came in to play the piano and the children learned a counting song about lighting the Hanukah candles. Their activity was to either write key words or sentences on a picture of a Menorah. The pupils were lively and engaged during the lesson even though this was not their usual teacher.

Secondly we observed the RE Coordinator teaching a year 4 class looking at symbols. Having dressed a pupil up as a sea scout the pupils discussed what do people wear that distinguishes them or their work. After the discussions some pupils fed back their ideas and then the class had a guessing game based on uniforms people wear. They then looked at and commented on the 5 Ks, Sikh symbols, which were introduced out of a bag. The teacher got the class to do a lot of thinking about these items and affirmed the pupils in their ideas very well. Their activity was to make a representation out of plasticene of each item and label them while also thinking of what symbols would represent them personally.

At the collective worship most of the staff were not present, it was on the theme of Anti bullying week and the principles of this. Two teaching assistants were dressed as characters from the Diwali story, and pupils were reminded of Diwali, Hanukah and Advent and the symbolism of these including discussion about the way good must overcome evil and the sort of behaviour that should not be seen. A candle was lit for reflection on Bible references to Jesus and being kind and peaceful during which several Muslim pupils left the hall. These returned later having looked at attributes of Allah, good/kind/trusty/compassionate which they spoke about but were apparently returned early because they were in the hall while the others were praying.

The children watched a 'magic' trick which was rather puzzling as an analogy with a black and white balloon representing good and bad behaviour. Inside the black balloon was another white one which was set free thereby getting rid of (black/bad) behaviour. The pupils were well behaved during this and finished by all singing with Y6 providing the harmonies.

The lessons we observed were very good examples of active RE and the members of SACRE were able to see how a mixture of questioning and activities can make RE come to life.