

Report No.
SA16003

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Date: 29th June 2016

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

Title: SCHOOL VISITS

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Ward: N/A

SCHOOL VISITS

1. Reason for Report;

The practice of Bromley SACRE is for SACRE members to visit local schools in order to see how RE is taught and to offer support to the RE Coordinator of the school. In the Spring term 2016 the RE Consultant and members of the SACRE visited two schools as a result of invitations from the RE Coordinators. A report of the two visits is attached along with guidelines and evaluation sheets for visiting schools.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

Members to read the reports of the visits and comment as necessary.

SACRE 29th June 2016

School visit reports

Visit to St John's CE Primary School on 9th March 2016

This visit was undertaken by The Chair, Reverend Roger Bristow and the RE Consultant, Mrs Penny Smith-Orr, having been invited by the RE Coordinator Mrs Shirley Crampsie. This school is currently a one and a half form entry moving to two forms.

We were greeted warmly and had a discussion on the way RE is taught in the school. We also met Lee Kings who is on a term's secondment from Bishop Justus Secondary School and the Aquinas Trust, as St John's is a church school in the Trust. Mrs Crampsie suggested some items that we could look at the RE Coordinators meetings including book scrutiny and the specific skills needed for observing a lesson.

We had a tour of the school and saw the prayer corners and RE displays in each classroom and a big display on RE and SMSC in the corridor. The displays were on a theme of 'Think Values' with the core Christian values in the centre of a jigsaw. We observed a collective worship led by Mr Marsh from year 6, this was a very uplifting time and the children 'sang with spirit and understanding' and obviously very much enjoyed the time together. The school goes to the local church for some services and were going there for an Easter service a few days later.

There was an opportunity to look in on two RE lessons that were taking place in Y3 and Y5 simultaneously. Both these lessons were very engaging, in Y5 a couple of pupils were leading the class and explaining aspects of Islam using a PowerPoint display. When a pupil was asked to read from the display one of the leaders helped with a laser pointer and when the teacher intervened with comments the pupil clearly, but respectfully, treated her as a pupil. The other class were thinking about the story of Jesus cleansing the Temple and this was done in a very interactive way with a lot of role play and discussion. The pupils then made posters about Jesus' actions and when it is ok or not ok to be angry. The teacher marked their work using a 'visualiser' so that the criteria for marking were there for pupils to follow.

We also discussed assessment with members of staff and the need to return to a concept if the pupils had not understood the first time. They are using the 'I Can' statements until such time as a new national RE assessment comes.

This was a very enjoyable visit and we noted that the behaviour of the pupils was good and they were very enthusiastic.

Visit to Marjorie McClure Special School on 10th March 2016

This visit was undertaken by the Chair, Reverend Roger Bristow, the RE Consultant, Mrs Penny Smith-Orr, and two members of SACRE, Mrs Edlene Whitman and Councillor Mary Cooke.

We met at the school which is situated in the grounds of Coopers Academy and is a school for pupils with physical, sensory and medical needs. The RE coordinator Melissa Keer met us and showed us round the school where we met some pupils doing activities. Many pupils go on trips including horse riding and on visits to places of worship and on outings to help with learning life skills. The school has a number of artefacts for teaching religious education and uses the Bromley syllabus as far as they are able to.

In the Primary section RE is taught in 'days' and involves a lot of dressing up and active learning. Displays that we saw included a Thank You wall, a display of kind and caring actions, a Thinking Tree which was there for the duration of Lent and displays from festivals of Raksha Bandhan, Diwali, Holi and Purim as well as the Chinese New Year.

The pupils of secondary age have an inclusion programme with Coopers and some go on to do the AQA short course RE GCSE. Others take a WJEC accreditation focusing on Islam. We saw some of the pupils doing revision work and a test in preparation for the exams.

We did not see an actual RE lesson but were able to observe the collective worship. This was really quite exceptional, led by Ms Byrne the music teacher, with pupils of all ages present and members of staff sitting amongst the pupils. It was a singing practice with a member of staff signing at the front and a number of pupils called out to the front to make up actions to go with the songs. A song about the family was learned and then pupils were asked to think for a quiet moment about their own family and the school family to which they belonged.

The pupils and staff were all very friendly and made us feel very welcome. It was agreed that the RE Consultant would send the Coordinator a document on special needs RE which has many ideas for further activities in lessons.

Guidelines for Bromley SACRE members when visiting schools

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.

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.

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.

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?

Commentary on an RE lesson

Visit to.....

Class/Year group.....

Name of Visitor.....

Are Pupils...	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	

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.

Theme:

Led by;

Date:

Age of pupils:

Music: (live/recorded/singing)

Organisation:

Resources:

Comments on;

Atmosphere

Effectiveness

Engagement

Age Appropriate Content