

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.00 pm on 4 July 2018

Present:

Reverend Roger Bristow (Chairman)

Councillors Kevin Brooks, Robert Evans and
David Jefferys

Mrs D Angell, Mrs V Corbyn, Mr R Hagley,
Mr S Mahmood, Mr A Nandra and Reverend S Varney

Also Present:

Julia Andrew, LBB Head of School Standards
Carol Arnfield, LBB Head of Service for Early Years,
Schools Standards and Adult Education
Gillian Palmer, LBB Interim Director of Education
Dr Omar Taha, Al-Emaan Centre (Keston Mosque)

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Reverend Roger Bristow be elected as Chairman, and Councillor Kevin Brooks be elected as Vice-Chairman, of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the 2018/2019 municipal year.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Gilliam Palmer, LBB Interim Director of Education attended to express her gratitude for the work the SACRE undertook and offer the Local Authorities continued support. Particular thanks were extended to the Chairman for the presentation he had delivered at the School Governor Forum on 7th June 2018, where he had informed Governors about the SACRE, the role of Collective Worship in schools and strongly promoted the review of the Bromley Agreed Syllabus.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Keith Onslow, Councillor Chris Pierce, Samantha Barnett, Christopher Town and Edlene Whitman.

Ray Hagley and Reverend Steve Varney apologised for having to leave the meeting early due to other commitments.

Dr Omar Taha was welcomed to the meeting, and the Chairman advised members that he would be discussing a report that he was currently editing later in the meeting. Dr Taha had initially been due to attend the meeting as

Mr Mahmood's substitute, as he had not expected to be able to be present. The Chairman asked members to consider if they were willing for Dr Taha to attend any future meetings as Mr Mahmood's agreed substitute.

RESOLVED that Dr Omar Taha attend future meetings of the SACRE as Mr Mahmood's substitute.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman informed SACRE members that he had been appointed the Church of England representative on the London Borough of Bromley's Education, Children and Families Select Committee.

4 A) MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21ST MARCH 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.

B) MATTERS ARISING

Minute 20: Apologies for absence and notification of substitute members
The Chairman advised that he had been unable to persuade Mr Jed Stone to return as a member of the SACRE.

Minute 24: Oral update & publications – a) SACRE Advisor
The LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education advised members that a meeting had taken place in April 2018 to produce a job description for an RE Advisor to the SACRE, which, following a few tweaks, had been agreed by the LBB Interim Director of Education. Organisations that provided SACRE Advisors had then been contacted, and two had responded and submitted quotes. The LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education was currently writing an exemption from competitive tender report, which, once approved, would allow an RE Advisor to be in post by September 2018.

The Chairman informed members that he had spoken with Mr Kieran Osborne regarding his proposed 'wider schools network' that the SACRE could link in to. Mr Osborne was keen to assist, and it had been agreed to wait until September 2018 to discuss this further, when it was expected that a new RE Advisor to the SACRE would be in post.

Mr Mahmood enquired what the SACRE was doing to increase the number of teachers that sat on the committee. The Chairman agreed that this was something that needed to be encouraged, and he was actively asking teachers to consider joining the SACRE. A positive response had been received from a teacher at Trinity CE Primary School, to whom the Chairman had suggested that they come along and observe a SACRE meeting, but she had been unable to attend tonight. The Chairman advised members that he had highlighted this to Governors at the School Governor Forum, and asked them to take the message back to their schools that teacher input was needed

on the SACRE. Members suggested that a letter could also be written to Headteachers, particularly of secondary schools, asking them to persuade RE teachers to join the SACRE. **ACTION: Chairman**

Minute 24: Oral update & publications – b) SACRE Annual Report
The Chairman confirmed that the SACRE Annual Report had been submitted to the meeting of Full Council on Monday 9th April 2018.

5 COMPLIANCE OF THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) had come into effect on 25th May 2018. The Chairman informed members that the compliance of the GDPR would be a standing item on SACRE agendas, reminding members to be careful how they handled data. No breaches had taken place, but if necessary, this would be the point during the meeting where they would be reported.

6 REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

SACRE members had been provided with a copy of the London Borough of Bromley Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Terms of Reference, which had been agreed in March 2007 and were last revised in July 2016. The Chairman advised members that these were largely generic points, which were likely to appear on most SACRE's Terms of Reference, although some may add in extra detail.

The Chairman highlighted to members '*2.6 – Decision-making – Voting at SACRE shall be on the basis of one vote per Committee and formal resolutions to the LA shall be passed only if all four Committees are in agreement. Within each Committee, voting shall be by a single majority.*' It was noted that this could be kept as it was, or relaxed to be compliant with other SACREs, who stated that resolutions could be passed with a majority vote.

The Chairman confirmed that the SACRE meetings were considered quorate if one-third of SACRE members were in attendance, currently seven members, with at least one member from each of the Committees A, B, C and D. Following a discussion, members considered that as formal votes very rarely took place, there was no need to change the current voting procedure. It was felt that if there was prior notification to members that a resolution regarding an issue was needed to be made, there would be time to ensure that enough Committee members were able to attend the meeting, or an alternative date could be arranged.

RESOLVED that the SACRE Terms of Reference be agreed.

7 ORAL UPDATE & PUBLICATIONS

The Chairman informed members that he had delivered a presentation to the School Governor Forum on 7th June 2018. A fascinating response had been received from the attendees, and the time for questions had been considerably lengthened as the Governors were engaged and asking good quality questions. SACRE members requested that a copy of the presentation be circulated to the Committee. **ACTION: Clerk**

8 SCHOOL VISITS

The Chairman informed members that as the SACRE did not currently have an RE Advisor, no school visits had taken place since the last meeting.

The Chairman introduced Dr Omar Taha of the Al-Emaan Centre (Keston Mosque) to SACRE members. Dr Taha expressed his thanks for the invitation to attend the meeting and informed members that he was in the process of editing a guide for schools regarding the month of Ramadan, which had been produced by the Lewisham Mosque and Lewisham SACRE. It was hoped this would help the schools develop an understanding about the essence of Ramadan, especially as the fasting month was now falling during the summer when exams, sports days and more extra-curricular activities took place. It would allow schools to work with local community members in regards to Collective Worship and assemblies, and develop more community cohesion.

In response to a question, Dr Taha confirmed that the guide would be generic, and would be relevant for both primary and secondary schools. Members expressed that they felt this was a very good idea – to enhance awareness and impact on schools and the wider community, and it would open up a sensitivity around it.

The LBB Head of School Standards confirmed that she could be contacted with regards to supporting the distribution of the completed school's guide. Members considered that for wider credibility, the document should state that it was endorsed by the Bromley SACRE. Following a discussion, it was agreed that a completed draft of the school's guide would be provided to the meeting of the SACRE on Wednesday 31st October 2018. This would allow for members to comment and clarify anything they felt was unclear, before the final document was provided to the meeting of the SACRE on 27th February 2019, allowing circulation to take place in the months prior to the 2019 month of Ramadan. It was further noted that it may be useful to circulate the finalised document to members of the Health and Wellbeing Board for information.

9 NASACRE CONFERENCE AND AGM

The Chairman had attended NASACRE's 'Silver Jubilee' 25th Anniversary Conference and AGM which was held on Thursday 24th May 2018 in the Merchant Taylors' Hall, City of London. The conference theme was 'Stronger Together – Celebrating the power of Community'. There were two Keynote

Speakers; Rt Hon Charles Clarke, Patron of NASACRE and Dr Vanessa Ogden, CEO of Mulberry Schools Trust, a Multi Academy Trust. SACRE members were provided with NASACRE's summary of the day, and the speeches of the two key speakers.

The Chairman said that it had been an interesting conference, and the presentation by the Rt Hon Charles Clarke had been powerful and well put together. Dr Vanessa Ogden had delivered a well-researched and full presentation, and a copy of the PowerPoint could be viewed on the NASACRE website. Overall it had been a good day, the highlight of which had been the session which allowed SACREs to share things that they had produced. This had included Lewisham SACRE sharing its guide for school about Ramadan, as mentioned by Dr Taha previously, and other SACREs had produced calendars listing religious festivals, and contacts within the community.

Members queried the reference to the removal of the faith schools' cap in the speech of the Rt Hon Charles Clarke. The Chairman responded that the previous cap had been 50%, but that he understood that the present Government had removed it. *(Subsequent to the meeting, the LBB Head of School Standards advised that with reference to the cap, "the Government had decided to retain the 50% cap. However, there is a capital scheme to support the creation of new voluntary aided schools. Faith voluntary aided schools may have 100% faith-based oversubscription criteria in their admissions. Information on arrangements by which proposer groups could apply for capital funding is expected later in 2018." – Faith Schools in England: FAQs, House of Commons Library – Briefing Paper, 6th June 2018).*

10 SACRE SELF EVALUATION

It was suggested that prior to the meeting, members look at the following sections of the SACRE Reporting and Evaluating Toolkit and come ready to discuss their thoughts:

Group A members (representatives of other faiths and Christian denominations) were asked to focus on Section 5 – Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community.

Group B members (representatives from the Church of England) were asked to focus on Section 3 – Collective worship.

Group C members (teachers) were asked to focus on Section 2 – The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus.

Group D members (Councillors) were asked to focus on Section 4 – Management of SACRE.

The LBB Head of Services for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education and LBB Head of School Standards would complete Section 1 – Standards and Quality of Provision of RE.

At the meeting SACRE members were invited to divide into their membership groups to discuss and come to a consensus. Results of the self-evaluation can be seen in the table appended to these minutes.

Additional points arising from the discussion are listed below.

Section 2 – The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus

The teaching group highlighted that for *Key Area 2A – The review process*, only the developing criteria could currently be met due to budget restrictions. *Key Area 2D – Membership and training of the Agreed Syllabus*, was considered to just meet the established criteria, as it was felt that currently the SACRE only met the basic membership requirements, as with three teachers they did not feel there was enough representation on the Committee.

Section 3 – Collective worship

The Church of England group noted that for *Key Area 3A – Supporting pupil entitlement*, the SACRE met the lower end of the established criteria, as although publications had been given to schools, they were in a hard-copy format, which could have been misplaced, and the SACRE was unable to evaluate the impact of its advice and support. *Key Area 3C – Responding to requests for determinations* remained in the same criteria as previous years as no determinations had been received.

Members enquired if the 'Reflective Pools – Refreshing Collective Worship in Bromley Schools' publication could be provided in an electronic format. The LBB Head of School Standards confirmed that it was available on Fronter, and would see if a PDF version could be produced.

ACTION: LBB Head of School Standards

Following a discussion, members considered that they would like to be provided with further information regarding determinations, and it was agreed that this could be an agenda item at a future SACRE meeting.

ACTION: Chairman / Clerk

Section 4 – Management of SACRE

The Councillors group considered that *Key Area 4B – Membership and training*, currently fell within the developing criteria, as the SACRE fulfilled its basic statutory obligations, and there were limited introduction and training opportunities for members. *Key Area 4D – Professional and financial support* was felt to be in the established criteria as the SACRE had a modest budget, and communication was maintained with the clerk, Chairman and SACRE members between meetings. *Key Area 4G – Relations with the Academies sector*, was considered to just about reach the establish criteria as there was no specific academy group representation on the SACRE. Teachers attended, but no 'decision makers' from any Academy Trusts were present at SACRE meetings.

Section 5 – Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community

The other faiths group considered that for *Key Area 5A – SACRE's membership*, Bromley SACRE met the advanced criteria as Group A

(representatives of other faiths and Christian denominations) had the largest number of members and was inclusive. *Key Area 5C – SACRE’s engagement with the community cohesion agenda* was felt to be at the higher end of the established criteria through visits to schools and the Chairman’s presentation to the School Governor Forum. It was also suggested that the same presentation could be delivered to Headteachers.

11 SACRE DRAFT ACTION PLAN

The Chairman advised members that the SACRE Draft Action Plan for 2018-19 that had been provided, was produced to reflect that the SACRE did not currently have an RE Advisor. As it was hoped that an RE Advisor would now be in place by September 2018, members were asked to consider which areas they would like to see added to.

Members queried which SACREs were anticipated to be involved in *Objective 5 – share best practice with local SACREs*. Members suggested that those boroughs neighbouring the London Borough of Bromley should be considered, and highlighted that there would be benefits to speaking with boroughs with similar circumstances, as well as those that were very different. In response to a question, the Chairman confirmed that the Annual Reports of SACREs should be able to be sourced, and that it would be good to invite neighbouring boroughs to attend future SACRE meetings.

ACTION: Chairman / Clerk

The teacher representative noted that for *Objective 6 – provide information on curriculum to school*, Fronter was not the best platform to use. The Head of School Standards agreed, and confirmed that other ways to provide the information were being considered.

Following a discussion, the Chairman suggested that once appointed, he would meet with the new RE Advisor, the LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education and LBB Head of School Standards, to consider what it would be feasible to deliver. A revised Action Plan would then be presented to members at the SACRE meeting on 31st October 2018.

ACTION: Chairman

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

13 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

6.00pm, Wednesday 31st October 2018

6.00pm, Wednesday 27th February 2018

The Meeting ended at 7.45 pm

Chairman

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Bromley SACRE Self Evaluation July 2018 results

Key Area		Developing	Established	Advanced
Standards and Quality of Provision of RE				
1A	RE provision across the LA		x	
1B	Standards and achievement		x	
1C	Quality of learning and teaching		x	
1D	Quality of leadership and management	x		
1E	Recruitment and retention of skilled specialist RE staff	x		
1F	Relations with academies and other non-LA maintained schools		x	
The effectiveness of the locally Agreed Syllabus				
2A	Review of the Agreed Syllabus	x		
2B	The quality of the Agreed Syllabus		x	
2C	Launching and implementing the Agreed Syllabus	x		
2D	Membership and training of the Agreed Syllabus Conference		x	
2E	Developing the revised agreed syllabus		x	
2F	Making best use of National Guidance		x	
Collective Worship				
3A	Supporting pupil entitlement in LA's schools		x	
3B	Enhancing the quality of provision of collective worship		x	
3C	Responding to requests for determinations		x	
Management of SACRE				
4A	How purposeful, inclusive, representative and effective are SACRE meetings?		x	
4B	Membership and Training	x		
4C	Improvement/development planning		x	
4D	Professional and financial support		x	
4E	How well informed is SACRE to be able to advise the LA appropriately?	x		
4F	Partnerships with key stakeholders		x	
4G	Relations with the Academies sector		x	
Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community				
5A	Representative nature of SACRE in the local community			x
5B	SACRE's understanding of the local community in its religious, cultural and ethnic dimensions		x	
5C	SACRE's engagement with the community cohesion agenda		x	
5D	SACRE's Links to LA initiatives promoting community cohesion	x		

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