

## **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.08 pm on 1 November 2023

### **Present:**

Reverend Roger Bristow (Chairman)  
Deborah Corcoran (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Jonathan Andrews, Graeme Casey,  
Robert Evans, Dr Sunil Gupta FRCP FRCPATH,  
David Jefferys, Chris Price and Rebecca Wiffen  
Ms Cilla Larbi, Mrs Caroline Ringham, Mr Lee Kings,  
Mrs Katie Burtonshaw, Mr Sanjay Gupta,  
Mr Saiyed Mahmood, Dr Omar Taha, Dr Katie Turner

### **Also Present:**

Julia Andrew, (LBB Head of School Standards)  
Mrs Iqbal Klimo, and Dr Parisa Pirjamali  
Stacey Burman, SACRE RE Advisor

## **14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence had been received from Denise Angell, Hannah Arnold, Alex Hamill and Arvinder Nandra.

Mr Mahmood gave prior notification that he would need to leave the meeting by 7.00pm.

## **15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was a new declaration of interest from Councillor Robert Evans. He stated that he was the Vice Chairman of Governors at St Olave's and that he was also a Board Member of the Impact Trust.

Mr Sanjay Gupta said that he ran a Yoga school in the Borough.

The SACRE RE Adviser reminded Councillors that they had previously been asked to promote SACRE and networking in the schools in which they were Governors. The SACRE RE Adviser was keen to involve as many schools as possible to engage in network meetings, and so reiterated her request that Councillors endeavour to promote school engagement. She asked that the email contact details for RE subject leads be provided so that emails did not just go to Head Teachers.

**ACTION: Councillors**

In connection with MATS (Multi Academy Trusts), it was noted that NATRE (National Association of Teachers in Religious Education) and AREIAC

(areiac.org.uk) were running sessions for RE subject leads across Multi Academy Trusts.

## **16 COMPLIANCE OF THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**

No breaches of the GDPR were reported.

## **17 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14TH JUNE 2023**

The Chairman stated that there were no matters arising from the previous minutes that needed to be discussed at this point.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.**

## **18 REVIEW DETERMINATIONS**

No determinations had been received.

## **19 LOCAL AND NATIONAL UPDATES**

SACRE members had been provided with a document drafted by the Religious Education Council—this was the ‘National Content Standard for Religious Education’. The document outlined the proposed plan for religious education called the ‘National Plan’ which would in turn explain the proposed National Content Standards that would be required to be adhered to. A significant emphasis in the National Content Plan would be on pupils’ worldviews and how these were influenced by various factors including religion. The new guidance was non-statutory, but the ‘RE World’ was supporting it. All RE school syllabuses going forward would need to take into account the new National Plan with its proposed content. The SACRE RE Adviser explained that the subject content was categorised into three areas which were Content, Engagement and Positionality.

The SACRE RE Adviser mentioned the RE Hubs Website and that schools were now beginning to use it. It listed individuals who were available to speak about RE in schools. It was noted that only one member of Bromley SACRE was currently listed on the website, and she encouraged the other SACRE members to enrol.

**ACTION: SACRE Members**

A SACRE member said that she had tried to enrol on the site, but that she had not received a response, and that the course had been scheduled for 11pm. The SACRE RE Adviser explained that the time listed was an error, and advised re-enrolling for a different date and time. It was explained that once a person had enrolled, the SACRE RE Adviser would receive an email and would get in touch.

Members were informed that NASCRE would be holding an ‘In Conversation’ event. SACRE Chairmen and Vice Chairmen had been invited.

This would be held in London online on 8<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30pm. The SACRE RE Adviser stated that she was hoping to make the best use of this as a networking opportunity, and possibly for collaborative project working. The NASACRE Executive had set the agenda.

The SACRE RE Adviser stated that a briefing/guidance paper had been written to support schools with the current conflict in the Middle East, the document, 'Teacher Support Notes during the Israel Palestine Crisis' had been sent to primary and secondary schools in the borough on behalf of the Bromley SACRE. The paper had then been presented to the Director of Children's Services and was also sent to the employees of Children's Services by the Director. A request was made that the paper should also be circulated to Councillors. **ACTION: SACRE RE Adviser or LBB Head of School Standards.**

The paper provided guidance on the importance of using unbiased language. It was felt that teachers would benefit from a workshop to enhance their skills and confidence in promoting dialogue with pupils. The SACRE RE Adviser felt that it would support teachers if there could be an online workshop so they could talk about their concerns, and receive relevant guidance and training. Funding was required for the workshop. **ACTION: SACRE RE Adviser or LBB Head of School Standards.**

The SACRE RE Adviser expressed the view that an interfaith conference with pupils was desirable. She wondered if teachers thought this would be viable and a good idea. It was commented that pupils were asking questions in politics, RE and history, so this would be a good idea, as it would help teachers to understand how to navigate these conversations. It was hoped that a date for an online workshop could be found soon. It was anticipated that this workshop would take place in either January or February 2024. Doctor Katie Turner asked if she could be involved in these discussions and the workshops.

It was advised the Bromley had received a Freedom of Information request that was in three parts:

- 1) To look at the agreed syllabus
- 2) A request for the last 5 SACRE reports
- 3) A summary of what the local authority had done in respect of those reports

It was believed (subsequently confirmed) that this request came from NASACRE. The recommended response from the chairman was that the local authority had sent all SACRE reports to the DfE. The Chairman invited two attendees who were representing the Bahai faith to introduce themselves. These were Mrs Iqbal Klimo and Dr Parisa Pirjamali. It was agreed that Mrs Iqbal Klimo be appointed to Bromley SACRE as the representative of the Bahai faith.

It was noted that Caroline Ringham had hosted an RE Network meeting earlier in the day. This had been very helpful for sharing and networking.

The meetings were funded by School Standards. There was a Secondary RE Teacher Network Meeting scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> November. Members were reminded that a Governor Survey had been sent out and responses were still outstanding.

**ACTION: SACRE members who are School Governors.**

**RESOLVED that Mrs Iqbal Klimo be appointed to Bromley SACRE as the representative of the Bahai faith.**

## **20 'REAL' RESOURCES**

The SACRE RE Adviser provided an update in relation to the 'REal Resources'.

An inter-faith conference had been arranged to allow pupils of different faiths to engage with each other. Video clips had been recorded from the conference. The intention was to cover key questions and responses. Teachers could then use them as a resource in their classrooms. Funding had been received for this which had now been used. The video clips had been uploaded to the LBB Sharepoint Site. In response to a question, it was explained that funding was required to cover the SACRE RE Advisor's time. It was suggested that going forward, some of the clips could be shown at a meeting of the SACRE.

## **21 INTER-FAITH CALENDAR COMPETITION**

The SACRE considered an update from the SACRE RE Adviser on the Inter-Faith Calendar Competition. The calendar detailed various interfaith religious holidays and holy days. A calendar was already in circulation and another would be prepared for 2024/25. The SACRE RE Adviser asked if SACRE members could check that all the dates were correct. **ACTION: SACRE MEMBERS.**

Dr Katie Turner expressed the view that Hannukah was not a highly significant Jewish holy day, and suggested that the artwork for Judaism be something else. The SACRE RE Adviser acknowledged that care needed to be taken in terms of what sort of art and imagery that should be used to represent different faiths. In this case Hanukkah was the pupil's choice.

## **22 SACRE SELF-EVALUATION**

The Committee considered an update from the SACRE RE Adviser regarding the SACRE Self-Evaluation.

The SACRE RE Adviser explained that there were 5 sections in the evaluation. If there was a dark green response, then that was good—red was bad. The SACRE was pleased to note that a greater number of dark green responses had been received. Areas that needed improvement were in developing collective worship in schools and in promoting the work of SACRE in schools alongside the local authority.

## 23 SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the SACRE Annual Report 2022/23 for approval. It was pointed out that on page 13 of the report, Councillor Kennedy-Brooks was listed as Vice Chairman. It was noted that this was incorrect, and that the Vice Chairman was Deborah Concoran.

**RESOLVED that the SACRE Annual Report 2022/23 be approved subject to amending the document to list Deborah Concoran as Vice Chairman.**

## 24 SACRE ACTION PLAN (INCLUDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS)

The Committee considered the SACRE Action Plan.

The Action Plan had been drafted before the conflict had broken out in the Middle East and the SACRE RE Adviser said that she would now need to amend the Action Plan. **ACTION: SACRE RE Adviser.**

It was noted that the development of the Action Plan was always limited by the SACRE RE Adviser's time and funding. The Chairman stated that he would like to see SACRE members supplementing the SACRE RE Adviser's work, and take on broader responsibilities and issues. He asked SACRE members to consider this, and to report back at the next meeting if they felt there were any areas that they could help with. **ACTION: SACRE Members.**

The SACRE RE Adviser said that she would like a Councillor to take on the responsibility of getting responses back from School Governors. Councillor Chris Price agreed to take this on. **ACTION: Cllr Chris Price.**

Katie Burtonshaw said that she would be glad to help with collective worship. The SACRE RE Adviser said that NASACRE were developing a variety of online webinars, and one of them would be regarding collective worship. She would forward the details to Katie to see if she would be able to attend as a representative of Bromley SACRE. **ACTION: SACRE RE Adviser and Katie Burtonshaw.**

## 25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

## 26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.00pm, Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024

The Meeting ended at 7.30 pm

Chairman