



MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2017

Members

Group A: *Patricia Alder, Dr Bernard Arambepola, Muhammad Ibrahim, Rabbi Yuval Keren, Rabbi Emanuel Levy, Jill Saxton, Ruth Serner, Navaratnam Shanmuganathan, Rubbina Umar, vacancy x 8*

Group B: *Margaret Coleman, The Revd. Ian Crofts, The Revd. Gordon Giles, Margaret Hobbs (Chair), Sally Moore, vacancy*

Group C: *Naomi Franks, Sabah Raza (Vice-Chair), Lucia Silva-Clark, vacancy x 5*

Group D: *Cllr Eric Jukes, Cllr Suna Hurman, Cllr Nneka Kaezor, Cllr Michael Rye OBE, Clara Seery, Jenny Tosh*

Italics denotes absence

Also Attending

Anna Sallnow – RE Consultant

Pauline Swain – SACRE Administrator

Janet Balfour - Minute Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members and visitors were welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Group A: Patricia Alder, Dr Bernard Arambepola, Muhammad Ibrahim;

Group B: Sally Moore.

NOTED the importance of members' attendance at meetings to ensure that the essential work of the SACRE was completed effectively. If individual members found it difficult to attend meetings, they may wish to consider whether an alternative member of their community would take on the role.

2. MEMBERSHIP AND WELCOME

REPORTED

- (a) the resignation of Revd. Trevor Smith, Group A, representative of the Pentecostal Church;
- (b) the appointment of Margaret Coleman, Christ Church Cockfosters, to Group B;
- (c) that Jenny Tosh, Chief Education Officer, would be leaving the Local Authority at the end of March;

On behalf of the Enfield SACRE the Chair thanked Ms Tosh for her past support of the work of SACRE.

RESOLVED to contact Tony Theodoulou, Director of Schools and Children's Services, to request a commitment to the continued support and funding of the SACRE to enable it to effectively undertake its statutory role.

ACTION: CHAIR

- (d) that a member of the Bahai faith, Zehra Balman, had indicated an interest in being involved with the work of the SACRE;

NOTED that a review of the constitution in 2013 had agreed that Group A should as far as possible be in proportion to the religious faiths of Enfield's population and this had not included a Bahai representative. However, a representative of a significant faith community within the Borough could be appointed as a Co-opted member (one year term of office).

RESOLVED to initially invite Zehra Balman to attend SACRE meetings as an observer.

ACTION: CHAIR & SACRE ADMINISTRATOR

- (e) Steve Saville, Police Community Faith Officer, had reported that the Imam of the Mevlana Rumi Mosque was interested in joining the SACRE;

NOTED that Group A had three positions allocated for Islamic representatives and SACRE had agreed that a long-term aim was to fill these with Sunni, Shia and Alevi representatives. Currently the SACRE had two Sunni representatives and therefore did not have a vacancy for a further Sunni representative.

RESOLVED

- (i) to invite the Imam of the Mevlana Rumi Mosque to attend SACRE meetings as observer;

ACTION: CHAIR & SACRE ADMINISTRATOR

- (ii) to contact the Alevi community to invite them to nominate a representative to join Group A.

ACTION: SACRE ADMINISTRATOR

- (f) that the SACRE had previously agreed that any member who missed three consecutive meetings, without sending apologies for absence, would be removed and the appointing body be requested to provide a replacement. This did not currently affect any members;

- (g) that under the SACRE's constitution SACRE members had a three year term of office and this would affect a number of SACRE members in June 2017.

RESOLVED that

- (i) affected members refer their appointment to the relevant appointing body, asking them to confirm their re-appointment or provide a replacement, and inform the SACRE Administrator before the June 2017 meeting;

- (ii) SACRE members notify the SACRE Administrator of possible candidates for vacant positions.

ACTION: SACRE MEMBERS

3. **SPEED FAITHING**

Members participated in one to one sessions with colleagues in order to get to know each other and understand more about other Members' faith.

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2016**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2016 were confirmed as a correct record.

5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The following issue arose through consideration of the Minutes' Action Points:

(a) **Faith Ambassadors** (Minute No. 3(e))

REPORTED that

- (i) Naomi Franks had arranged for the Chair to visit Winchmore School to meet with pupils involved with the Faith Ambassador project. The Chair had thanked the pupils for their involvement in the pilot project and asked for their feedback. She also received some of their journals from the project and viewed one of their presentations.

NOTED that

- (A) the majority of pupils had felt their involvement in the project had been a good experience and would recommend that it be repeated in future;
- (B) the Chair had asked pupils what had been the most important issues they wanted to communicate about their faith, and responses had included:
- to explain why we believe what we do - and that this was a result of the influence of parents and family and others as well;
 - to illustrate how important their faith was to them;
 - for Muslim pupils it was important to explain that Islam was a peaceful faith and not what was portrayed on the news, as illustrated by the generosity and welcome expressed in celebrations such as Eid al Fitr;
 - to talk about traditions and customs not taught in the RE syllabus, for example Orthodox Easter;
- (C) the Chair considered that it would be very beneficial if a similar project work was part of the Year 8 RE curriculum. Pupils could make presentations to their peers and/or local primary schools and pupils without a faith could speak about a non-religious world view or another topic important to them.

RESOLVED that the Chair's feedback report be made available on the SACRE's website.

ACTION: SACRE ADMINISTRATOR

- (ii) Anna Sallnow had attended a Barnet Headteachers' briefing session to discuss the pilot project and she was pleased to report that a number of Barnet schools would be repeating the project this year;

- (iii) Sabah Raza had been in contact with two Enfield secondary schools to try and extend the project in Enfield, but had not received any responses. Naomi Franks explained that RE teachers were currently under considerable pressure due to the implementation of the new curriculum.

NOTED that a Project Pack had been produced which could be utilised in the future. The Pack was also available on the Westhill/NASACRE Awards website.

SACRE thanked all those involved with the successful pilot project.

- (b) NASACRE (Minute No. 5)

REPORTED that the Chair had responded to the NASACRE constitution consultation on behalf of the Enfield SACRE, confirming that it agreed the proposed changes subject to subscribing SACREs being able to vote by proxy on items on a meeting agenda, if unable to attend.

- (c) Locally Agreed Syllabus (Minute No. 6(B))

REPORTED that

- (i) the Chair had attended an Enfield Headteachers' Conference and asked for feedback regarding the current Locally Agreed Syllabus. Headteachers of Community schools had confirmed that they followed the Locally Agreed Syllabus, although for some schools it was arranged in blocks, others worked week by week, while others had a combination of both;
- (ii) Headteachers had highlighted that they were receiving an increasing number of requests from parents to withdraw their children from various aspects of the curriculum, including RE;

NOTED that

- (A) Headteachers had indicated that they did not find the SACRE Pack particularly helpful when dealing with such requests. Parents' reasons for requesting their child's withdrawal from RE were varied, but often requests were from people without a faith and appeared to be due to dogma or fear;
- (B) SACRE members considered that parents should not be permitted to remove their child from RE, it should be an entitlement for all pupils to learn about and from different religions and religious traditions. SACRE members highlighted the importance of young people becoming religiously literate. If literate, a person would appreciate the importance of learning and understanding another person's background thus enabling open, informed dialogue;
- (C) the Clarke and Woodhead report had recommended that the right to withdraw should be removed.

RESOLVED that

- (I) Cllr Rye, as Prevent Champion, would feedback to the Government Minister that the SACRE did not feel it was now appropriate for parents to be able to withdraw their child from RE;

- (II) Headteachers' requests for guidance and additional support from the SACRE on this issue be considered during the review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- (iii) Headteachers had asked if the SACRE could provide a list of faith representatives willing to visit schools to discuss their faith with pupils.

NOTED

- (A) that the SACRE had produced a list of individuals willing to undertake visits to Schools and places of worship which welcomed visits from school and this was available on the website. However, the information may require revisiting to ensure it was current;
- (B) the SACRE had produced Visit Guidance and a Visitors Code of Conduct for use by schools and this was available on the SACRE website;
- (C) Members discussed the various practical difficulties experienced with arranging and undertaking visits.

RESOLVED that

- (I) the list of individuals willing to undertake visits should be reviewed and updated. It was highlighted that faith representatives could be proactive and approach their local schools offering to visit and speak to pupils;
ACTION: SACRE ADMINISTRATOR, MEMBERS
- (II) SACRE members canvas members of their faith community to see if they would be willing to visit schools to speak about their faith and refer their details to the SACRE Administrator;
ACTION: MEMBERS
- (III) a response to issues raised by the Headteachers be given in the next Local Authority's briefing, explaining that:
 - Visit Guidance and a Visitors' Code of Conduct was available on the SACRE website;
 - the list of individuals willing to visit schools was being updated and would be available on the SACRE website.**ACTION: CHAIR**

- (d) SACRE Annual Report (Minute No. 7)

REPORTED that the Enfield SACRE Annual Report and Summary Report 2015-16 had been forwarded to the DfE and NASACRE.

- (e) SACRE Development Plan (Minute No. 8(a))

REPORTED that

- (i) Local Authority School Aspect Reviews of community schools now included consideration of RE provision;
- (ii) Aspect Reviews were undertaken on a rolling programme and of those undertaken since the SACRE's last meeting all schools had evidenced that RE was taught in School and that they were using the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

NOTED that

- (A) it was queried whether the Local Authority monitored the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus' Schemes of Work in schools;
- (B) in response to a question regarding Academies responsibilities to teach RE, it was confirmed that Academies were not required to follow the national curriculum, but were required to teach RE. Ofsted Inspections would consider whether an Academy was compliant with this requirement.

Ms Tosh explained that the Local Authority had no role in monitoring what was being taught in an Academy, but if a concern was raised it would refer this to the Regional Schools Commissioner.

- (f) Contribution of SACRE to Community Cohesion: Faith Forum (Minute No. 8(e))

NOTED that

- (i) SACRE members would be kept informed and invited to future Faith Forum events;
- (ii) nominations were invited from anyone interested in representing the SACRE on the Faith Forum as an official SACRE link.

- (g) Holocaust Memorial Day 2017 (Minute No. 9)

NOTED that all SACRE members had been invited to the Local Authority's 2017 Holocaust Memorial Day event. Ruth Serner confirmed that it had been a very moving occasion and that a Faith Ambassador from St Anne's had spoken at the event.

- (h) Inter Faith Week (Minute No. 10)

Navaratnam Shanmuganathan had attended the Inter Faith Week "Faith's Got Talent" event on 26 November 2016. It had been very successful and included activities from different faith groups, for example: Hindu dancing, Jewish musical pieces including blowing the Shofar horn, and singing and a Muslim talk.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Improving standards in religious education and collective worship

6. LOCALLY AGREED SYLLABUS

Every five years the Local Authority has to convene a Locally Agreed Syllabus Conference which would review and agree the Syllabus for Enfield non-denominational schools. The review was now due and the SACRE needed to agree how it would progress this matter, in the most cost effective way.

The SACRE discussed the options available, for example:

- purchase an established Syllabus, for example Newham, Somerset, Staffordshire;
- maintain the current Syllabus;
- revise the current Syllabus.

It was highlighted that the production of the current Locally Agreed Syllabus 10 years ago had involved a considerable amount of work by a large number of people, teaching professionals and faith representatives. In addition there was currently a national debate regarding whether there should be a National RE Syllabus.

Given the above circumstances SACRE considered whether it was appropriate to continue with the current Agreed Syllabus, following any essential review and revision.

NOTED that

- (a) previously SACRE had highlighted the importance of assessment arrangements within the Agreed Syllabus and agreed that there needed to be sufficient flexibility to enable students were prepared for the GCSE Syllabus;

REPORTED that

- (i) various work was being undertaken regarding assessment in RE, for example the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC) and All Parliamentary Group on RE;
 - (ii) members of Group C highlighted the inconsistency in assessment between schools in the Borough and that revisions in the Agreed Syllabus would have to effectively reflect this. Clara Seery highlighted that most primary schools were now using similar assessment language: Age Related Expectations, ie. if pupils were working towards ARE, were at ARE or exceeded ARE.
- (b) it may not be possible to have the revised Locally Agreed Syllabus available for September, but the SACRE would aim to have it finalised within 2017,
 - (c) the section regarding withdrawing pupils from RE required expansion, as discussed earlier in the meeting (Minute No. 5(c)(ii) refers);
 - (d) a number of SACRE faith representatives had recently reviewed the Schemes of Work faith units;
 - (e) professional advice was required to ensure that current pedagogy was adequately reflected in the document. It was highlighted that if input from teacher colleagues was required, it was unlikely that they would be able to devote any time until external examinations and SATs were completed;

RESOLVED to retain the current Locally Agreed Syllabus subject to review and revision of:

- (i) assessment arrangements;
ACTION: ANNA SALLNOW & MEMBERS OF GROUP C
- (ii) expand the guidance provided regarding withdrawal of pupils from RE;
ACTION: SABAH RAZA
- (iii) current pedagogy to be correctly reflected within the document.
ACTION: SABAH RAZA

The revised document would then be considered at the next or subsequent SACRE meeting, which would convene the Agreed Syllabus Conference to adopt it.

ACTION: SACRE ADMINISTRATOR

7. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

RESOLVED to defer consideration of this agenda item to the next meeting of the SACRE.

ACTION: SACRE ADMINISTRATOR

8. THE BIG NASACRE SURVEY

RECEIVED the Big NASACRE Survey 2017, a copy of which is available on the SACRE website. SACRE members considered and feedback views regarding some of the questions. It was recognised that questions could be interpreted in different ways. The underlying issue for the majority of questions was seeking SACREs views regarding a Locally Agreed Syllabus compared to a national Agreed Syllabus.

NOTED that

- (a) Question 6: a strength of a locally agreed syllabus is that it enables pupils to learn about religions where they live: Members highlighted the following points:
- the important role of the SACRE in bringing together representatives of different local religions and faith groups;
 - that the Locally Agreed Syllabus focused upon the six main faiths in the UK, not in Enfield;
 - Nevertheless it also allowed scope for modules which reflected local minority faiths such as the Alevi;
- (b) Question 14: Would your SACRE favour a nationally agreed RE Syllabus, in place of the current locally agreed Syllabuses. Members responded (without a formal vote):
- Group C – would favour a nationally agreed RE Syllabus, perhaps with an appendix providing a local component;
 - other Groups represented would not favour a nationally agreed RE Syllabus;
- (c) Question 24: the Chair read out a proposed response: “RE is both an academic discipline and an environment in which young people can explore their own roots and culture, and those of their fellow citizens. A curriculum which allows both to flourish will build up spiritual sensitivity and national citizenship”. This was considered appropriate subject to inclusion of “beliefs’ and “religious literacy” and national citizenship being amended to British Citizenship;
- (d) Questions 51 and 52: the answer would be “more than £10,000 but less than £50,000”. Clara Seery could provide the Chair with the amount spent to support the SACRE; previously it would have been towards the top end of that bracket, but now towards the bottom end;
- (e) Question 53: it was confirmed that advisory time was additionally funded, but over time the amount available had reduced significantly due to budget limitations;
- (f) RE was now higher on the Government’s education agenda and entries for RE GCSE had increased, while RS A Level was the fastest growing subject behind maths.

RESOLVED that the Chair complete the questionnaire taking into consideration comments made at the meeting and then consult with Members prior to its return to NASACRE.

ACTION: CHAIR

INFORMATION ITEMS Improving SACRE’s effectiveness

9. REC INDEPENDENT COMMISSION ON RE

REPORTED that SACRE members had received notification of the REC Independent commission on RE consultation. The closing date for responses had been 13 February 2017.

10. NASACRE CONFERENCE AND AGM 2017

REPORTED that the next NASACRE Conference and AGM 2017 was on 16 May 2017. Any Member interested in attending was asked to contact Clara Seery to arrange attendance.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

REPORTED the resignation of Margaret Hobbs as a member of SACRE as she was moving away from the area.

SACRE members thanked Margaret for all her hard work and commitment to the SACRE during her time as a Member and in particular as Chair over the last 6 years and wished her well for the future.

RESOLVED that the SACRE consider the election of Chair and Vice-Chair at the next meeting and nominations be invited prior to that date.

ACTION: SACRE ADMINISTRATOR

12. FUTURE MEETINGS

REPORTED

- (a) the date of the Summer Term 2017 meeting was Thursday 22 June 2017 at 5.30pm, in Committee Room 1, Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield, EN1 3XQ;
- (b) the following proposed date:
 - Autumn Term 2017 – Thursday 9 November 2017.
- (c) that SACRE Groups were warmly invited to make recommendations, through the SACRE Administrator, on matters and topics of business for future meetings.

CLOSE OF MEETING