

**THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - SACRE**

MINUTES

Meeting RBKC SACRE
Date 29th September 2022
Time of meeting 5-6:30pm
Venue Christmas Room, Kensington Town Hall / Microsoft Teams (hybrid meeting)

Present:

Committee A (Faiths and Denominations):

- Laurence Julius (LJ), Board of Deputies of British Jews (Chair)
- Lady Singh (LS) (Kanwaljit Kaur), Network of Sikh Organisations
- Susan Jaff (SJ) (Vice-Chair), Islamic Faith
- Alex Stacey (AS), Diocese of Westminster

Committee B (Church of England):

- Kathryn Kane (KK), London Diocesan Board of Schools

Committee C (Teachers):

- Celia Platt (CP), National Education Union (*joined at 5:20pm*)

Committee D (Local Education Authority): N/A

Co-opted Members:

- Gillian Berg (GB), Kensington and Chelsea Baha'i Community

Local Authority Servicing Officers:

- Natalija Sorokina (NS) (Clerk)
- Jackie Saddington (JS)

RE Consultant Adviser:

- Lesley Prior (LP)

Item Number	Minute Content
Item 1: Welcome and apologies	<p>Chair LJ welcomed everyone to the meeting. LJ gave a special welcome to AS, a new member on the SACRE representing the Diocese of Westminster.</p> <p>Clerk NS informed that, before the meeting, formal apologies had been received from Rev Ken Persaud (Group A) and Katrina Quinton (Group B).</p> <p>Clerk NS advised that the meeting was not quorate as Group D was not represented. A further update will be provided on this under Item 2.</p>

**Item 2:
Membership
Update**

Clerk NS informed the following:

- AS was appointed to represent the Diocese of Westminster on Group A to replace Jane Griffiths who resigned at the end of the summer term.
- No appointment has yet been made for Group D to replace Cllr David Lindsay, who resigned from the SACRE following having been elected as Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea in May 2021. NS has been liaising with the Governance Team about this, who have advised that an appointment should be made at the Council meeting on 12 October.

Chair LJ noted a vote of thanks to Cllr Lindsay on behalf of the SACRE for the contributions that he had made to the SACRE over the years that he had been a loyal member.

- A nomination form was received from the Network of Buddhist Organisations (NBO) putting forward Jo Backus for a position on the SACRE. As there were no vacancies for representatives of 'other non-Christian faiths', a proposal was being made to the SACRE to appoint Jo Backus as a co-opted member in accordance with the constitution. As the meeting was not quorate, the SACRE could agree in principle to the co-option with a formal decision to be made at a future quorate meeting. In the meantime, Jo Backus could be invited to join SACRE meetings as a member of the public.

LP informed that she knew Jo Backus as a religious educator who sat on the RE Council of England and Wales representing the NBO. Jo could bring a wealth of knowledge in terms of Buddhism and she also has a lot of experience of schools, teaching and RE more widely. Buddhism is a significant part of the RE curriculum and is required for study at each key stage of the current Syllabus.

Below are some key points of the discussion that followed the above co-option proposal:

- It would be important to have Buddhism represented on the SACRE in view of the past challenges with the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- It would be important for the Buddhist member to be representative of all Buddhist communities, of which there is a variety. It was noted that this should equally be true of representatives of all other faiths and denominations on the SACRE.
- The RBKC SACRE has a history of having the Buddhist Society as the nominating body for a Buddhist representative. It may therefore need checking that they would be happy with the proposed co-opted member.

→ Proposal to co-opt Jo Backus as a Buddhist representative to be deferred to the next SACRE meeting where it can be considered again if the meeting is quorate.

→ Clerk NS to write to Jo Backus to explain the above and invite her to the next meeting as a public observer.

	<p style="text-align: right;">→ Clerk NS and JS to confirm the nominating body position for Buddhism.</p> <p><u>Post-meeting update:</u> The Local Authority does not have a list of approved nominating bodies. All nominations are reviewed individually, which means that the Local Authority will consider nominations for Buddhist representation from organisations other than the Buddhist Society. The Buddhist Society were approached for a member nomination on several occasions over 2021-22; however, no nomination was received. In the meantime, a nomination from the NBO came in. In view of no Buddhist representation on the SACRE and having looked at the profiles of the NBO and their nominee Jo Backus, the SACRE agreed to consider this at their next meeting.</p> <p><u>Census 2021 Data Update</u></p> <p>JS informed that the Census results broken down into categories (including religion) were due to be published in October. JS is also a member of the working group at the Council looking at the Census data, so she would communicate to the SACRE any relevant information received through that stream of work.</p> <p>It was noted that it would be useful for the SACRE to review its membership once the Census results were published to ensure its relevance to the local communities.</p> <p>Chair LJ commented that it was important to be diverse and have minority faiths represented recognising the challenges of building a strong society without prejudice in a key inner London borough.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">→ Clerk NS to keep Census 2021 Data on the agenda for the next meeting.</p>
<p>Item 3: Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising</p>	<p>Minutes of the summer term SACRE meeting in June 2022 were reviewed, with no comments made by the SACRE members present. The minutes could not be formally approved due to the meeting not being quorate.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">→ Minutes of the SACRE meeting on 9th June 2022 to be signed off at the next meeting if it is quorate.</p> <p><u>Locally Agreed Syllabus: feedback from the briefing session with Hampshire on 8 September and next steps</u></p> <p>LP highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The session with Hampshire colleagues about their revised <i>Living Difference IV</i> was arranged following the request from SACRE members in the four London boroughs who previously adopted Hampshire's <i>Living Difference III</i> syllabus.

- LP has very recently received the presentation slides from Hampshire and will share them with SACRE members via Clerk NS.
- The presentation focussed on the key changes that Hampshire introduced in their *Living Difference IV*. To make these changes, Hampshire assured that they had consulted a wide range of people, including members of Hampshire's SACRE and Agreed Syllabus Conference as well as senior figures in education in a range of religions and beliefs.
- Hampshire also assured that their distinctive approach to teaching (i.e., cycle of enquiry) had been retained in *Living Difference IV*.
- Hampshire confirmed that when the syllabus expired in any of the four London boroughs, it would not be possible for them to re-adopt their current versions from Hampshire. If they would like to continue with Hampshire's syllabus, it would be the *Living Difference IV* version that would need to be adopted. It will not be possible to change it in any way except for adding the relevant council logo and putting in a personalised foreword. This means that change is inevitable but the degree of change will depend on the option chosen (e.g., adopting a different local authority's syllabus, buying a commercially available one, or creating one from scratch).
- If the general wish was to stay in an arrangement with Hampshire, the question would be how soon to move to the new version, i.e., whether to do it earlier, or wait until the Syllabus was up for review at the 5-year mark.

Chair LJ reminded that in previous discussions the SACRE wished to be guided by teachers, and the teachers' feedback (from CP and the teachers at the RE Good Practice Network) was to avoid unnecessary change and disruption especially as the existing Locally Agreed Syllabus seemed to be working well.

CP reiterated again that she did not feel there was a need to rush. She also felt that it would be easier to adopt Hampshire's new version as it would be more familiar to local teachers than a different syllabus. It also helps if teachers attending the RE Good Practice Network meetings are working to the same syllabus. However, she added that she would like to know if more support could be provided by Hampshire with the delivery of some of the materials, such as the golden concepts, to ensure that the information felt fresh to children and that they were engaged with it (this is in view of them needing to be taught twice per key stage).

LP agreed to feed this back to Hampshire but reminded that it would be the Local Authority that would be able to confirm how much of support materials/training for schools it would be able to fund from Hampshire.

Chair LJ advised that it would be helpful to look at other options during the next syllabus review process and to build in sufficient time.

	<p>LS made a comment about Hampshire’s syllabus having Sikhism as part of Dharmic traditions alongside with Hinduism and Buddhism. She felt it stood independently of them as the emphasis in Sikh beliefs was on one God and oneness of all humanity rather than on gods and goddesses or the caste system. LS further added that the religion in India was very politicised and it would, therefore, be incorrect to refer to all Indians as Hindus. LS advised it would be interesting to see if Buddhists had a point of view.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">→ Locally Agreed Syllabus to be a standing agenda item at future meetings.</p>
<p>Item 4: Standards and Achievements in RE in Schools</p>	<p>RE Report Card</p> <p>LP informed that many organisations worked together to produce it. It is a useful summary of where RE is currently. NASACRE thought very highly of this resource, and it was recommended that SACREs should look at it with a view to sharing it with their local schools.</p> <p>CP advised that in many smaller primary schools RE teachers had a number of other subjects to teach. Hence, they often feel that they do not know enough about RE and they worry about offending anyone. In many schools, RE is not valued as a subject, which is why teachers get very little support.</p> <p>LP suggested that the RE Report Card would be an important document for teachers to highlight to their senior leaders, especially where they do not get enough support with the teaching of RE. The research shows that RE is at its strongest in faith schools where it is a core subject. At its weakest, RE is in non-faith academies.</p> <p>As the Card was a collection of facts and data, Chair LJ suggested it should be shared with RBKC schools and he would write a covering note to go with it.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">→ Chair LJ to provide a covering note (now completed) to be shared with schools along with the link to the RE Report Card. Clerk NS to ensure it is included in the school comms.</p>
<p>Item 5: Draft SACRE Annual Report 2021-22, including a review of KS4 and KS5 exam results</p>	<p>The draft Annual Report 2021-22 was circulated to members ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>Chair LJ and LP thanked Clerk NS for putting it together.</p> <p>Clerk NS informed that no published KS4 and KS5 exam data 2022 was yet available and that she would continue liaising with the Council’s Education Data team about it. Once the data is available, it will be included in the report in the relevant section.</p>

	<p>Although no comments were made about the draft report by the SACRE members present, it was agreed to defer the approval of it to the spring term meeting in the hope that it would be quorate.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">→ Draft SACRE Annual Report 2021-22 to be signed off at the next meeting if it is quorate.</p>
Item 6: SACRE Self-Evaluation: Projects for SACRE	<p>Chair LJ advised that, from previous discussions, the general feeling was that the RBKC SACRE would fall in the <i>established</i> category as per the self-evaluation tool by NASACRE.</p> <p>The group discussed that, with the number of vacancies on the SACRE's membership, it would be a challenge to get up to the next level of <i>advanced</i> and whether it would be effective use of resources.</p> <p>LJ reiterated again that the SACRE in RBKC were fortunate to be well supported by LP, JS and NS.</p>
Item 7: Ramadan Guidance 2023	<p>LP informed that, in 2023, Ramadan would begin in the evening of 22nd March and finish in the evening of 21st April.</p> <p>CP informed that her school found the Ramadan Guidance a useful document, especially in communication with parents.</p> <p>Clerk NS confirmed that no other feedback had been received from schools about the Guidance previously.</p> <p>The group discussed that the 2023 guidance document should be made available to schools early in the spring term to allow schools time for planning.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">→ SJ to liaise with Naif Sheikh, Discover Islam, to ensure that a draft guidance for 2023 is shared with the SACRE members for comments via Clerk NS in early January.</p>
Item 8: Review of Collective Worship and Determinations	<p>LP explained about the requirement for Collective Worship and what a determination was. All of this information is at the back of the SACRE's every Annual Report, including the process that schools would need to follow should they wish to apply for a determination. LP would be available to help schools with their application if needed.</p> <p>LP suggested that if the SACRE were interested in working on a project, they could look into producing a guidance for schools around Collective Worship.</p> <p>Clerk NS confirmed that there were no determinations in place in RBKC.</p>
Item 9: NASACRE/RE	<p>LP provided the following updates:</p> <p><u>Education White Paper Update</u></p>

<p>Updates – Lesley Prior</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Government wants all schools to become or be in the process of becoming academies by 2030. This will mean that local authorities will not have any ruling over RE then. - NASACRE have been in contact with the DfE to highlight to them the ramifications for RE that the changes in legislation would have. This seems to not have been thought through by the DfE before the introduction of the White Paper. <p><u>Ofsted</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ofsted will be soon publishing a new report on RE that SACREs may wish to discuss when it is available. <p><u>NASACRE Training Programme</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SACRE members are reminded to check the training offer by NASACRE for the current academic year. The Local Authority has purchased the training subscription, so the RBKC SACRE members can attend as many sessions as they like, and they are all virtual. Recordings of training sessions can also be made available. <p><u>NASACRE/Westhill Award for 2023-24 (application by 31/03/23)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The award is available for SACREs to apply for to help them get additional funding for a project that they may be working on. If the RBKC SACRE wanted to explore this, it could be done through a working group, for example. If desired, LP would be available to have a conversation with Chair LJ about any possible projects outside the meeting. <p>CP made a suggestion to raise this at the next RE Good Practice Network meeting to see if there would be any thoughts from teachers.</p>
<p>Item 10: Update from Chair</p>	<p>Chair LJ had no additional updates to add to what was already on the agenda.</p>
<p>Item 11: Freedom of Information Requests</p>	<p>NS confirmed that no freedom of information requests had been received.</p>
<p>Item 12: Dates and Venues of 2022-23 Meetings</p>	<p>The future meeting dates are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spring: 5pm, 16th March (Thursday) - Summer: 5pm, 8th June (Thursday) <p>For the meeting in March, CP offered Colville Primary as a venue and advised that there would be some scope for it to be a hybrid meeting.</p> <p>Clerk NS advised that a room at Kensington Town Hall would also be booked as a back-up.</p>
<p>Item 10: AOB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inter Faith Week will be taking place between 13-20 November.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Holocaust Memorial Day will be 27 January 2023. Most activities and training opportunities would be more appropriate for secondary schools. The Lessons from Auschwitz Project by Holocaust Educational Trust is a fantastic opportunity which is greatly subsidised. |
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