

**MINUTES OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
 (SACRE)**

Held as an online virtual meeting on Thursday 13 July 2023 at 5pm

Attendees (in remote attendance):

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| <p>GROUP A <i>(A committee of persons representing such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area)</i></p> | <p>Basma ElShayyal (Sunni Islam, Chair) Sheralyn Snaith (Baha'i) Bhupinder Singh (Sikhism)</p> |
| <p>GROUP B <i>(A committee of persons representing the Church of England)</i></p> | <p>Steve Taylor (Church of England)</p> |
| <p>GROUP C <i>(A committee of persons representing such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area)</i></p> | <p>Kim Wilson</p> |
| <p>GROUP D <i>(A committee of persons representing the authority)</i></p> | <p>Cllr Tazi Smith Cllr Neil Nerva</p> |
| <p>In attendance:</p> | <p>Nadia Nadeem (SACRE/RE Advisor) Shirley Parks (Brent Council - Safeguarding Performance and Strategy) Jen Haskew (Brent Council - Head of Setting and School Effectiveness Service) Helen Tulloch (Brent Council – School Effectiveness Service) James Kinsella & Abby Shinhmar (Brent Council - Governance Team) Shaun Cremin (Associate Member)</p> |

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair noted apologies had been received from Group A membership: Suzan Tokan and Michelle Goldsmith (Humanism), Sally Strauss (Judaism), Sarah Cawte

(Pentecostal Churches) and Dawn Titus (Roman Catholic) & Group C membership: Helen Mooney (Vice Chair) and Ian Slade.

Given the number of members present, it was confirmed that the meeting was not quorate. It was, however, agreed by those members present that the meeting should continue on the basis that any formal decisions made would be subject to formal ratification at the next quorate meeting.

2. **Election of the Chair and Vice Chair**

In view of the meeting not being quorate and apologies for absence submitted by Helen Mooney (Vice Chair) it was **AGREED** that the election of Chair/Vice-Chair for the 2023 - 24 academic year be deferred until the next SACRE meeting with Basma ElShayyal to continue as chair pending the outcome of the next election process.

ACTION: Abby Shinmar

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting and Matters Arising**

It was **AGREED** to approve the minutes of the previous SACRE meeting held on Thursday 9 February 2023.

4. **Determinations (if any)**

Basma ElShayyal, Chair, advised that there was one determination to be considered at the meeting – Stonebridge School.

In considering the determination application, SACRE noted the limited detail which had been provided in support. Given the incomplete nature of the application it was **AGREED** that consideration should be deferred to the next meeting, pending submission of the required supporting information.

Members were advised the supporting information required to complete the application had already been requested from the school which Helen Tulloch advised would be followed up after the meeting. **ACTION: Helen Tulloch**

5. **General SACRE & RE Update**

SACRE considered a summary factsheet detailing the results of the 2021 National Census relating to a breakdown of Brent's population by religion. Jen Haskew provided a brief overview and SACRE noted:

- The insightful nature of the detail and key points outlined along with the relevance to the membership and operation of SACRE. In noting the breakdown by population, the Chair felt it would also be useful to compare against any similar data available on the breakdown of the school population across the borough by religion. **ACTION:** Jen Haskew to review available data and update next meeting.
- The usefulness of the data in seeking to support wider policy development and teaching support with members specifically highlighting the low % of population across the borough and individual wards recorded as having “no religion” when compared elsewhere.

- The additional work being undertaken by the Council in regards to the breakdown of Census data by ward, which could also be shared with SACRE once available.

SACRE **AGREED** to note the Census Factsheet detailing the breakdown of Brent's population by religion, which it was felt provided a useful reference point for the future consideration of wider policy development and teaching support.

6. **General NASACRE Update**

SACRE welcomed Nadia Nadeem to the meeting as newly appointed SACRE/RE Advisor who provided a brief update on the NASACRE Annual Conference that had taken place in May 23. Members noted the outline of the main focus of discussion during the Conference, which had included the shortage of RE teachers and work being undertaken to address community cohesion along with the summary of the keynote address provided by Dr Kathryn Wright (Chief Executive Culham St Gabriel's Trust).

In considering the update provided the Chair welcome the lead being taken by NASACRE in seeking to strengthen and raise the profile of activities designed to promote wider community cohesion through schools including engagement around the content of assemblies. Members also welcomed the focus on the shortage of RE teachers, which it was felt further highlighted the need to ensure appropriate training and ongoing professional support remained available. Basma ElShayyal (as Chair) felt it important to also recognise the support which had been provided within Brent through the RE Advisor provision.

In terms of available training and professional development, Nadia Nadeem highlighted the extensive range of CPD training and webinars available through NASACRE for SACRE members with the training offer and information available through the RE Hub focussed specifically on teaching staff in schools. As a result, it was **AGREED** that further details on the training programme available would be provided for inclusion within the Headteacher Bulletin. **ACTION: Nadia Nadeem**

As no further issues were raised the Chair thanked Nadia Nadeem for the update provided.

7. **Any Other Business**

7.1 **SACRE Membership**

Basma ElShayyal advised that she had been made aware of interest amongst teaching representatives in joining SACRE, should any vacancies in that membership group become available. It was **AGREED** that details would be provided for review, as any vacancies were identified.

7.2 **Links between Brent SACRE & Multi Faith Forum**

Reverend Steve Taylor (who was joined online by Reverend Ali Taylor as a member of the Brent Multi Faith Forum) highlighted the potential scope for SACRE to consider in establishing closer working relationships with the Brent Multi Faith Forum given the Forum's interest in the RE Hub and wider

engagement and links with faith communities across the borough. The potential benefits in terms more joined up working were highlighted, particularly in terms of the membership of both bodies and engagement with schools, which was supported as an approach to be developed by members of SACRE. In recognising the need to ensure Head Teachers were fully involved in proposals relating to engagement with schools, Shirley Parks advised that she would be willing to attend a future meeting of the Multi Faith Forum to advise on the role of SACRE. In order to progress the approach, it was therefore **AGREED** that a further discussion be undertaken at a future SACRE meeting on the scope of any partnership working and links that could be established between the Multi Faith Forum and SACRE (including any programme of school visits) **ACTION: Shirley Parks/Jen Haskew**

7.3 Dates of Future Meetings

AGREED the remaining programme of dates identified for meetings during the 2023-24 academic year, as follows:

- Wednesday 11th October 2023 at 5pm
- Thursday 8th February 2024 at 5pm

It was noted that these would continue to be undertaken as online meetings, unless otherwise indicated.

The meeting closed at 5:46pm

Basma ElShayyal
Chair