

Foreword and Summary

By the Chair of SACRE

Foreword

To be added by Chair

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

ANNUAL REPORT OF BRENT STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2019 - 20

1.0 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1.1 Agreed Syllabus

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in the London Borough of Brent was produced in 2002. The document was issued to schools in a ring binder format and is also available via:

http://www.brent.gov.uk/media/946060/agreed_syllabus_for_religious_education.pdf

It remains the legally binding document for all local authority maintained and voluntary controlled schools in the Borough.

1.2 Agreed Syllabus Revision

Brent's current Agreed Syllabus was originally produced in 2002. On 16th June 2011, SACRE called for an Agreed Syllabus Conference. It was apparent that, in spite of being fundamentally sound, the Brent Agreed Syllabus had become somewhat dated and not wholly compatible with the types of curriculum developments some schools wanted to make. Therefore, Brent set up a new Agreed Syllabus Conference to amend or replace that syllabus.

Following a meeting of Brent SACRE and Brent's Agreed Syllabus Conference on Wednesday, 14th March 2012, The Agreed Syllabus Conference concluded that it would be premature to proceed in developing a new syllabus until certain national developments, which might influence

aspects of Religious Education in schools, had become clearer. These developments included the publication of:

- new national curriculum guidance
- the Review of RE by the RE Council of England and Wales

A briefing paper for schools, outlining this position was issued in April 2012.

At the SACRE Meeting held 18th March 2014, members indicated that their preference was likely to be a revision of the existing syllabus. It was also agreed that any new document should be made available to schools electronically.

At the SACRE Meeting held on 7th March 2016, members noted that in developing a new agreed syllabus there should be:

- a revision of the description of the local religious and cultural context taking into account changes in the demographics over the past decade or more
- meetings with teachers and children and young people to enable them to express their needs in relation to RE so that these can be reflected in the new document
- flexibility so that it can be used by all schools in Brent, including those not legally obliged to do so.

The first meeting to discuss the revision of The Brent Agreed Syllabus was on 27th June 2017. Initial discussions focused on:

- the need for Brent to build on the existing syllabus to ensure coherence for pupils and staff
- the necessity for a document that reflects the exceptionally diverse nature of the local community, both now and in the future
- the requirement for a concise syllabus within a clear structure, but allowing scope for various modes of delivery
- a syllabus which emphasises both sameness and diversity within religions and beliefs as well as between them
- the need for enquiry led learning in RE to equip children and young people with knowledge, understanding and skills
- a syllabus that is introduced with suitable training events and supported later on by supplementary materials.

During 2019-20, work continued on the development of the agreed syllabus and in the summer, there were opportunities for members of Groups A and C to give their feedback about the draft materials.

1.3 Standards in RE

SACRE used to monitor standards in RE by carrying out an annual analysis of OFSTED reports. In 2019-20, SACRE members continued to regret the fact that current OFSTED arrangements make it extremely difficult for them

to carry out this statutory duty, as the necessary evidence is no longer available. SACRE members therefore sought other ways in which to monitor standards in RE, such as supporting RE teachers in LA schools.

2.0 IN-SERVICE TRAINING: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2.1 Short Courses

The Authority offers a basic programme of in-service training.

SACRE members were pleased to note that there continue to be termly meetings for Subject Leaders for RE in primary and special schools, funded directly by the Local Authority. These have been delivered by Lesley Prior, Adviser to Brent SACRE and LDBS Adviser for RE in Community Schools and Stacey Burnam, an Adviser for RE who is leading the work on the revision of the agreed syllabus and the production of supplementary schemes of learning which will support its implementation.

During 2019 -20, these meetings took place on:

- 10th October 2019 at Brent Civic Centre
- 6th February 2020 at Wembley Conference Centre
- 28th April 2020 online

All meetings included:

- a few brief business items, including information about national and local RE news, resources and updates
- information about key aspects of the RE Subject Leader's role to support participants and their colleagues in school in delivering the statutory requirements of the locally agreed syllabus - including opportunities to learn about different communities of faith and belief as well as pedagogies of RE
- a continuation of collaborative work on contributing to the development of the new locally agreed syllabus and the sharing of good practice from local schools.

Feedback from these meetings is extremely positive.

2.2 Additional Training and Support

The SACRE Adviser also provided one to one support for RE Subject Leaders in various schools particularly during the lockdown period when many of them had been given more time to focus on developing curriculum plans for RE and various support materials.

There is a regular newsletter, usually issued once a term which informs RE Subject Leaders about relevant news, events and resources, but the number of issues was increased to two or three a term as the pandemic took hold. During this time, there was a clear focus on the sharing of suitable RE materials to be used for remote teaching and home learning. The SACRE Adviser was also available to answer queries by telephone or email. The majority of these queries related to RE, but others focused on issues arising from the interface between religion/belief and school life more generally.

3.0 COMPLAINTS

No complaints on either Religious Education or Collective Worship were referred to SACRE for investigation in the year 2019 – 20.

4.0 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

4.1 Determination Renewals

The following determination renewals were formally ratified at the SACRE Meeting on 17th October 2019:

- Leopold Primary
- Park Lane
- Wykeham Primary.

The following determination renewals were formally ratified at the SACRE Meeting on 25th June 2020:

- Barham Primary
- Carlton Vale Infants
- Harlesden Primary
- Kingsbury Green Primary
- Roe Green Infants
- Roe Green Juniors
- Uxendon Manor Primary

Some of these applications/decisions had been delayed because of the pandemic.

On the advice of an official at the DfE, schools with a renewal pending during this challenging period were granted a 'period of grace' and were permitted to continue with their existing arrangements until such time as they were ready to submit their applications. Any renewal granted would be for a period of five years from the time the previous application lapsed, NOT the date of the renewal.

4.2 Accord Coalition Award

Brent SACRE has previously won a national award from the Accord Coalition (<http://accordcoalition.org.uk/>) to discover those SACREs that work hardest at

promoting the growth of mutual understanding between those of different beliefs. SACREs have a crucial role in boosting the growth locally of respect and empathy between those of different religions and other worldviews.

Aspects of Brent SACRE's work that drew particular praise from judges included its innovative approach to Collective Worship. The SACRE's material designed to support local schools in seeking a determination was recognised for its ground-breaking approach. Chair of the judging panel, Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain MBE praised the way in which the SACRE enables schools to promote opportunities for pupils to communally explore and forge shared values in a way that is workable and respectful. The Model Approach can be found here: https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/946260/collective_worship_model_approach.pdf

Brent SACRE also earned praise for the contribution from some of its members to a local anti-bullying campaign and PREVENT teacher training, along with the diversity of its makeup. The committee includes as full members both humanists and multiple representatives from the Jewish and Muslim faiths, to reflect major denominations.

A link to the Brent SACRE publication can be found here:

https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/946362/Brent_SACRE.pdf

5.0 MATTERS REFERRED TO SACRE

During the year, SACRE considered the following key items and issues:

- A self evaluation exercise and the identification of its key priorities
- A revision to its Constitution with a particular focus on membership to be referred to the LA for approval
- Examination results in Brent schools during 2018-19
- Recent Ofsted Reports on Brent Schools and any references within them in relation to RE, as well as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- National research about references to RE in Ofsted Reports.

There were also opportunities for members to participate in agreed syllabus workshop activities.

6.0 LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

Brent SACRE is affiliated to The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

The Adviser to SACRE is a former Chair of NASACRE (2013-15) and now Assistant to and member of the NASACRE Executive Group.

It was not possible for the NASACRE AGM to take place in May as originally planned.

The Adviser to SACRE is also a member of many other RE professional bodies

and shares information from them at SACRE Meetings.

7.0 CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Basma El Shayyal took on the role of Co-Chair in February 2013 and has steered SACRE Meetings as Chair throughout 2019-20. Basma brings a wealth of practical experience as an RE teacher and as a longstanding member of Group A.

In October 2019 SACRE agreed to appoint Shaun Cremin as a co-opted member under Group C (Associations representing Teachers). In addition Roger Butler's term as RE Advisor to SACRE also ended during the year with all members of SACRE thanking him for his service and support.

8.0 SACRE CONTACT OFFICERS 2019 – 20

SACRE Chair: Basma El Shayyal

SACRE Vice-Chair: Helen Mooney

LA Lead Officer: Helen Tulloch (Governor Services Co-ordinator)

Clerk to SACRE Clerk: Kunwar Khan (Brent Governance Team)

SACRE Adviser: Lesley Prior

9.0 MEETINGS

Meetings of SACRE were held on:

- **17th October 2019** at the Civic Centre
- **30th January 2020** at the Civic Centre
- **25th June 2020** online in accordance with unofficial advice from the DfE.

The Local Authority Adviser, the Clerk and the SACRE Adviser also met between meetings where and when necessary.

10.0 SACRE MANAGEMENT

Basma El-Shayyal (Group A) chaired SACRE Meetings in 2019 -20.

Brent SACRE has produced a document entitled **Welcome to SACRE: Information and Code of Conduct**. It is available via this link:

https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/946362/Brent_SACRE.pdf

ANNEX A

London Borough of Brent SACRE membership 2019/20

Group A: Christian and other religious denominations reflecting the principal religious traditions in the area.

Baha'i	Abraham	Wilson
Baha'i	Farjad	Farid
Buddhism	Rupa	Monerawela
Hinduism (Brent Hindu Samaj)	Deva	Samaroo
Hinduism (Saiva Siddanta)	Santanam	Swaminathan
Islam (Shi'a)	Andleeb	Naqvi
Islam (Shi'a)	Basma	El Shayyal
Jainism	Manhar	Mehta
Judaism	Tamar	Bennett
Roman Catholicism	Dawn	Titus
Christina Orthodox	Gillian	Crow
Pentecostal Churches	Sarah	Cawte
Sikhism	Bhupinder	Singh
Zoroastrianism	Malcolm	Deboo
Zoroastrianism	Yazad	Bhadha

Group B: Church of England

Graham	Marriner
Steve	Taylor
Andrew	Teather
Mark	Newton

Group C: Associations Representing Teachers

Lea	Murray
Andrew	Bate
Helen	Mooney
Ian	Slade
Florence	Quainoo
Shaun	Cremin (co-opted)
John	Roche

Group D: LA Representatives

Cllr Neil	Nerva
Cllr Tariq	Dar
Cllr Orleen	Hylton