

# MINUTES OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Wednesday, 25 June 2014 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT: Rev John Rev John Ackland, Fay Allen, Vallipuram Bala, Mohammed Barrie, David Britton, Shaun Burns, Gurbakhsh Garcha, Joan Goldberg, John Goodey, Griffiths, David Hutchens, Kishan Manocha, Jacq Paschoud, Gerald Rose, Monsignor N Rothon, Nobhule Thebe and Lorna Trodd.

ALSO PRESENT: Denise Chaplin and Beverley Stanislaus

Apologies for absence were received from Sarwoar Ahmed, Angie Arnell, Gail Exon and Pastor Nick Hughes

## 1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the new members to the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves and to say which faith group or interest group they represented.

Tour of the School -Members had been promised a tour of the building but before this was undertaken John Goodey (the Executive Headteacher) gave a brief account of the recent history of the school and its current situation. The school had had 16 headteachers in the last 20 years; 90% of the pupils do not have English as their first language; there are high levels of SEN, high pupil mobility; there had also been a breakdown in relationships at the school. The governing body sought a partnership with another school because of recruitment difficulties. The school was now partnered with St John Baptist. Since January a lot of work had been done on vision and values — this had been apparent in the displays around the school. An Ofsted inspection in April had validated the school's own judgment of its progress. As part of the healing process a mosaic had been made by members of the school community. SACRE members were invited to attend the blessing of the mosaic on 14 July.

## 2. Apologies for absence and membership issues

### *Apologies for absence*

- Received from Sarwoar Ahmed, Angie Arnell, Gail Exon and Nick Hughes.

### *Membership Issues*

- It was reported that Gerry Cohen now had a job in Camden so a new representative was needed from the NAS/UWT. Denise Chaplin would chase this up.

- Denise Chaplin reported that she was still waiting to hear from the 'free churches' about two more Free Church representatives.

- It was noted that Beverley Stanislaus was replacing Sue Tipler in Group D.
- It was noted that there was still a vacancy for a secondary governor. It was reported that the vacancy had been advertised in the termly Governors' Information Pack issued by Lewisham but there had been no expressions of interest. David Britton would approach the governors of Trinity School to see if anyone would be willing to take on this role.

### 3. Minutes

The following amendment was noted: (page 6,4th paragraph from the end to read:

DG suggested the meeting with Alan Docksey...

With the above amendment the minutes of the last meeting held on 30 April 2013 was AGREED as an accurate record.

### 4. Matters Arising not on the full agenda

**Annual Report** — Members were pleased to hear that the SACRE Annual Report was now on the Council's website. The membership of SACRE had been included but Denise Chaplin assured members that no personal contact details had been shown. Denise would be working on a plan for the next report during the summer holidays with a plan to have a draft in time for the late Autumn SACRE meeting.

**Clerking Arrangements** — Dinah Griffiths reported that she would be meeting with the local MP (Heidi Alexander) and would raise this issue with her.

**SACRE request for census data** — A paper giving details from the census giving ethnicity of the people in the borough and their declared religion had been circulated with the agenda.

**Standards in Lewisham Schools 2013** - Beverley Stanislaus reported that the LA was looking into the matter of incorrect data about RE examination results. It was felt that SCARE needed to be sure of its information before contacting schools about their exam results.

It was **AGREED** that the matter of incorrect data should be an item considered where relevant for the next few agendas.

**APPG**—John Goodey reported on the meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) meeting. It had been a good meeting and especially interesting had been children's opinion of RE. John had spoken at the meeting about RE at St John's — and he now shared with members details of what was being done there. St John's has built links with the local Muslim school, a special school (Greenvale) and with a hospice (St Christopher's). The aim was to help build children's emotional strength and self belief and the programme also encouraged children to disagree without rancour. A member of the group confirmed the positive value of the hospice connections — a relative had experienced links with children while in the hospice and had found this very positive.

## **5. Confirmation of order of business for the meeting**

No changes were made to the order of the business.

## **6. Multifaith Centre Update**

Denise Chaplin reported that a DEP requesting money for the movement of some of the artefacts had been submitted. This was to move items particularly from schools. Fay Allen sought and received confirmation that this included the items held at Athelney School. With regard to the building of the new centre; it was reported that an architect had now been appointed.

## **7. NASACRE AGM**

Gurbakhsh Garcha, Denise Chaplin and Dinah Griffiths who had attended reported on the conference. One of the main discussions involved a presentation about SACREs working as a 'hub'.

Dinah Griffiths spoke about some of the advantages — the saving on travelling; it allowed, for example, Chairs of the different SACREs in an area to work together on topics or for the sharing of training. Dinah planned to contact the member who had spoken about the Hampshire 'hub' to learn more.

Denise Chaplin spoke about the Redbridge SACRE initiative where 6th Form pupils go to primary schools to talk about their personal experience of their faith. For the older pupils this is part of volunteering.

They had also learned about Bromley SACRE where every year there is a competition for children from all sorts of schools. The competition had been about what pupils know about the Muslim religion and the final event had been held at the Bromley based Muslim boarding school.

A paper from the NASACRE AGM giving 20 Ideas for SACRE had been circulated.

## **8. SACRE Constitution**

A draft document had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members were asked for their comments. A number of suggestions were made about the order of the items. After discussion it was AGREED that the following members — Denise Chaplin, Shaun Burns and Kishan Manocha would engage in email correspondence about the agreed changes.

## **9. Ramadan advice to schools**

A paper giving schools advice about issues around children fasting during Ramadan had been circulated. Members felt this was a very useful document but that it needed to be sent to schools without delay in order for it to reach them in time. Denise Chaplin would send this out in the next mailing to schools.

## **10. Any other Business and Information Exchange**

Resource Material - Cllr Britton reported that he had at home a library of resource material for use in collective worship which he wished to donate to SACRE. He was thanked for this but asked to hold on to them for the time being until the distribution of R.E. resources to the Renewal project had been completed.

Radicalisation — David Britton raised the issue of radicalisation of young people.

**AGREED** that this would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

**Afro-Caribbean Pentecostal Church** — Fay Allen said she would be contacting them about a representative for SACRE.

BalaVallipuram gave notice of the London Sivan Kovil 4th Annual Festival 2014. This will take place at the Temple situated at 4a Clarendon Rise Lewisham SE13 5ES, beginning on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August and ending on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September. It includes a number of events to which SACRE members are invited. Please note that there are many events taking place over this period and SACRE members are welcome to attend any of them. However the Temple is closed on the following dates and times:

28th August at 9.30 p.m.  
29th September at 9.30 p.m. ::  
30th August at 9.3-0 p.m.  
16th September at 9 30 p m  
17th September at 930pm  
18th September at 9 30 p m  
19th September at 9 30 p m

Of particular interest to SACRE members are:

29th August 2014: The Flag Hoisting Ceremony at 11.00a.m.

14th September 2014: the Chariot Festival. This starts early in the morning but the main event begins at 10.00 am. when the Chariot sets off from the Temple to progress around Lewisham. The procession finishes at 12 noon when the Chariot arrives back at the Temple premises and this is followed by prayers and temple decorating before the arrival of the Deities.

The Chair of SACRE commented that she has attended the Chariot Festival on several occasions and it is a stunning experience as the chariots wind their way through the centre of Lewisham. Members of the Tamil community come from all over the U.K to attend. Other SACRE members agreed. N.B it is impossible to park around Lewisham Centre and the vicinity of the Temple on the Chariot day as surrounding roads are closed off or already completely full of cars. Dinah will check the availability of public transport on that day and e-mail SACRE members about it.

**Jewish Experience Exhibition** — Gerald Rose gave members details of this event which would be taking place in July; members could contact him for more information if they planned to attend

## **11. To consider dates**

Next Meeting: It was AGREED that the next meeting would be held on Monday 22 September 2014 at 6.30pm. A venue would be confirmed at a later date. Training for SACRE members — This would take place on 16 September 2014. Further information will be sent to SACRE members