

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

Minutes of the joint Lewisham SACRE & AS Conference

which was held on
Thursday 18 June 2020

On Zoom

These minutes were approved by the SACRE & ASC on: 18 September 2020

GROUP	REPRESENTING	NAME	PRESENT
A	Baha'i	Afonso Veiga	✓
A	Buddhism	David Hutchens	✓
A	Free Church A o G	Pastor Nick Hughes (Chair)	✓
A	Free Church	Leanne Rudder (substitute)	
A	Free Church (Baptist)	(Vacant)	
A	Free Churches (URC)	Rev Raymond Singh	✓
A	Hinduism	Vallipuram Bala	
A	Hinduism	Narmadha Saravanan	
A	Hinduism	Mrs Sriskandarajah / Dr Raj	
A	Humanism	VACANT	
A	Independent Evangelical	Nigel Desborough	✓
A	Independent Evangelical	Ray Brown (substitute)	
A	Islam	Dr Ahmed Adem	
A	Islam	Aisha Lodhi	✓
A	Judaism	Gerald Rose	✓
A	Judaism	Joan Goldberg	✓
A	Pentecostal	Layo Segun	APOLOGIES
A	Pentecostal	Cheryl Abbam (substitute)	✓
A	Roman Catholic	Rt Rev Monsignor Nicholas Rotherham	
A	Sikhism	(Vacant)	
B	The CoE – Southwark Diocesan Board of Education	Shaun Burns (Deputy Chair)	✓
B	The Church of England – Secondary teacher	Samantha Alder	✓
B	The Church of England – Primary teacher	Karen Hansen	✓
B	The Church of England – Governor	(Vacant)	
B	The Church of England – Minister	Paul Wynter	
C	NEU	Kim Knappett	✓
C	NEU	Kim Griffiths	✓
C	Academy/Free school	(Vacant)	
C	NEU – NUT	(Vacant)	
C	NAS/UWT	Mandy Keeble	
C	Lewisham Headteachers and deputies	VACANT	
D	Local Authority member	Councillor Jacq Paschoud	✓
D	Local Authority member	Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin	✓
D	Local Authority member	Councillor Hilary Moore	✓
D	School Governors – Primary ½	Isaac Sackey (shared place)	
D	School Governors – Secondary	Adelere Adedeji	
D	Representative of the Executive Director of Education	Angela Scattergood	APOLOGIES
D	Representative of the Executive Director of Education	Ruth Griffiths (substitute)	
Others	Primary Teacher	Judith Nweze	
	Rastafarians	(Vacant)	
	Young Mayor Team	c/o Katy Brown and Malcolm Ball	
	RE School Improvement Officer	Denise Chaplin	✓
	Minuting clerk	Stephen Sealy	✓
Also	Rev David Rome		✓

(Boxed sections in these minutes signify actions, and underlined sections signify decisions)

The meeting began at 6.40pm.

1a Welcomes and introductions

The Chair welcomed all to the first SACRE Zoom meeting, representing a first for the committee.

1b Apologies for absence

These are noted on page 1.

1c Confirmation of order of items for the meeting

It was agreed that points 6 and 7 be brought further up the agenda.

2 Membership update

Denise reported that although Judith Purkiss was not longer teaching she was happy to remain on the committee as a faith representative or to be co-opted in. She will confirm this with Denise.

3a Minutes of previous SACRE meeting held at Trinity school on 28 January

Shaun clarified that the paragraph beginning 'Shaun feedback...' on page 6 of these minutes should say 'in the SACRE annual report'.

(At this point Joan arrived.)

Subject to the correction above, all present accepted the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

3b Minutes of the previous ASC meeting held at the Sivan Kovil on 11 March

Denise noted that the attendance records may be inaccurate as the register hadn't been returned to the clerk following the meeting and that the full name and email address of Dr R were not known.

She requested that members let her know of the names of any of the teachers who had attended the meeting as there was no other record kept to enable keeping in touch with them.

It was noted that Cheryl had sent her apologies.

Shaun advised that the reporting on 'Lift the Lid' was wrongly attributed to him in the minutes. Members were unable to advise who had reported this.

Subject to these changes, all present accepted the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda

Denise noted that events listed in the last meeting wouldn't have happened due to the imposed lockdown restrictions.

Kim K reported that the interfaith forum were planning an interfaith video about the concept of the peace walk.

Jacq enquired whether this event couldn't be postponed until later in the year, as it would be a shame for it to be cancelled.

Kim explained that the unfavourable weather later in the year would render this problematic but emphasised the intention for its return in 2021.

6 Understanding Faith and Belief in Lewisham unit (circulated previously)

Kim K reported that her intention had been to bring copies of all the submissions that members had made to enable small group discussion.

<p>As this was impossible using Zoom, while acknowledging the valid reasons for delay that members may have, she made a plea for members to follow up if they had committed to make submissions and also for it to be kept on the agenda.</p>

Denise acknowledged that neither children visiting places of worship nor representatives from places of worship visiting schools would be likely to happen soon. This created the need for leaders / communities to upload content to websites if able to add real substance to children's understanding of the faiths even if, for faiths etc such as Baha'i or Humanism, this was done in national, rather than local, terms. She added the importance of avoiding children feeling as if they're learning about something "out there".

Sam reported that she had viewed tours for places of worship online, which were a worthy substitute to real life tours. She added that if questions were submitted to the place of worship beforehand, then sometimes these could be answered on the tour.

Gerald reported that he'd conducted a virtual tour of the synagogue for Year 7s, and had emailed Damien Egan requesting funding for this.

Ayesha reported that for the mosque, sermons are delivered on YouTube after which questions can be posted.

Nick commented that the increase of sermons online provide a wealth of learning tools.

Jacq commented that the services for her church are available online and are delivered through Facebook.

Kim K added that there may be opportunities for the use of technology for virtual live sessions for classes; although this wouldn't be without its challenges. She reported that she had asked faith representatives to submit email contact details but that there had been a low response to this. She suggested that the committee think about how others have built up lists of places of worship.

Cllr Hilary commended live sessions, noting that they provide valuable background knowledge for later live visits to build upon.

Shaun recognised a further dimension, the theme of how faiths have responded to the virus. With most faiths having served the community in some way, he remarked that this is how faith in Lewisham responded to a crisis.

Denise reported that she had spoken to David Hampshire at the Inter Faith Network and remarked that the IFN could be instrumental in helping children know how their faith communities function. She reported that David had attended an orthodox Greek Easter service abroad 'virtually', highlighting the availability of easily accessible international services online.

Afonso reported that the Baha'i National Assembly had made similar proposals and that in Italy, where the faith has a larger representation, videos had been produced to show believers.

Kim commented that her issue would be not having the time to look through numerous services to find suitable content. She would much rather be given a link and the video timecode of relevant sections.

She requested that members send useful links and video timecodes to her and Denise.

Black Lives Matter

Nick commented that another matter was that of the killing of George Floyd and how different faith groups have responded to this crisis. He added that he had recorded several interesting conversations he'd had as a white leader of a predominantly black church which would be useful for secondary school. These are available on YouTube.

Kim K suggested that some schools could look at this and how different faith groups have responded as a subject in its own right. She acknowledged how challenging this had been for many faiths, with many faith groups not having many paid employees. Nick suggested that members could encourage their groups to respond by recalling their involvement into the agreed syllabus.

Gerald reported that the Board of Deputies had published content also in which there was a two hour speech with reference made to Ethiopian Jews discriminated in Sudan. He added that this was being looked at as high profile.

Nick asked Kim K if there was any mileage in compiling a list of different faith YouTube links.

Ray reported that his church had looked at the word 'black' in terms of human suffering, in view of the word 'black' incorporating so many varieties of suffering. He commented that there was a collective role in ensuring that second and third generations are heard.

Nick emphasised the importance of having an informed vocabulary, commenting that he had learnt so much from conversations about this issue. This conversation would be pursued in the next meeting.

7 Discussion on how to move forward with supplementary support for the 'Journey of Life and Death' unit (year 6) in the Agreed Syllabus – circulated previously

Kim suggested that the committee could look at more resources around this.

She reported that this unit was one of the committee's best resourced units which she is confident that teachers make use of. She added that this unit is underpinned by how faiths mark death.

She suggested that faith groups re-read their parts and consider how faith groups have marked death in the COVID lockdown.

She asked if any members had encountered any good resources.

Jacq remarked on an image of a wheel in the Christianity document (which she'd access on an i-pad) which was seemingly wrongly positioned, applying to possibly the Buddhist faith instead

Kim K suggested that she access the document through the Lewisham website online, adding that it may be an issue with reading on her ipad.

Denise expressed her concern for the upcoming generation of children with mental health challenges or bereaved due to the Covid situation. She added that children who were previously anxious may suddenly be confronted with the brutal reality of life and death. She referenced parents of her grandparents' generation who may have numerous births expecting that only two-thirds of these would live. She drew a comparison to the current environment of sanitised death which would mean that the scale and experiences of deaths at this time will likely come as a sharp shock to the families and friends of those experiencing it in this way.

She added that she had spoken to David Hampshire about this too and, acknowledging that there would be many local authorities facing this challenge, suggested that the IFN may like to act as a liaison regarding this.

The 'recovery curriculum' would be very narrow and that the committee will need to push for RE and PSHE'S inclusion. She commented that this unit will be a vehicle for children to talk and share. She stressed the importance that RE/PHSE didn't disappear and suggested that members of the SACRE encourage schools not to abandon their RE curriculum.

Liz remarked that she considered the paper to be detailed. She suggested that content should be built in it asking questions about the death of young people that are relevant when young people take ill or die.

Aisha reported that she'd been studying counselling techniques and how sufferers of the virus have been affected by it. She suggested it would be useful to have counsellors on site in schools.

Kim K responded that a lot of secondary schools have counsellors on site, although many primary schools wouldn't. She added that traumatised staff would also be returning to school. She reported that in her role she was dealing with an increased caseload, and that she was asking Lewisham Council what it could provide in view of the expectation of workers returning. Some primary schools would have ELSAs to support staff, but that staff have been phoning children weekly, particularly those who haven't readily engaged.

Kim reported that the National Education union had been offering support and advice but there were GDPR issues regarding school staff phoning homes, an example being the support available if in the process of calling a child from home a teacher finds out information of a highly sensitive nature. She recalled the staff had experienced trauma because of what pupils' parents have opportunistically shared when the staff member had called the family home.

With regard to the unit, she encouraged members to let Denise and herself know if they encountered anything worthy of admission.

Shaun expressed the view that this is probably the most important primary RE unit, sitting also on the Diocesan syllabus. He added that there was a danger with the narrowness of how some people are pushing the recovery curriculum to look like, we need to encourage members to push the message that the inclusion of RE in the syllabus is allowing children to heal. He mentioned that the inclusion of the subject of the corona virus in the curriculum will have value in keeping it relevant.

Kim K added that the committee was aiming for a holistic curriculum.

Sam commented that in her school Year 6s have returned with a zero chance of studying RE. With regard to the earlier point she added that a lot of schools that do not have counsellors on their books have Mental Health first aiders. She added that her school phones all children on a two-week cycle.

She reinforced the view that the currency of the corona virus will help to provide relevant, but also noted that the unit provided a resource for teachers who may not be confident or knowledgeable in broaching the subject.

Denise recalled a time early in her teaching career when, within a relative short period three children in one form group suffered family bereavements while two sixth formers died suddenly just before A level exams. At that time, the school didn't have an end of life awareness program. She suggested there was value in schools having an established program of this nature.

Kim K made reference to a family who had celebrated one of their children reaching a '0' birthday milestone shortly before the lockdown but were unable to celebrate in the same way the younger sibling reaching a similarly significant milestone after the lockdown restrictions had been imposed.

5 Primary RE Assessment advice – circulated previously

Denise reminded the committee that she had shared this earlier, and commended Kim G for her good response to this.

Kim G explained that she is in a federation and had had a feedback sheet approved by the SLT and then sent to all teachers. Her colleague in the other school within the federation had created the chart representing the feedback they'd received, which was overwhelmingly positive.

Kim K explained that when the lockdown restrictions first started, heads were looking for CPD activities for their staff. She had suggested to Denise that this opportunity be used to circulate the assessment advice. She advised Kim that she had suggested her as a contact for others who don't know where to start when approaching a similar activity. She added that some of the suggestions from teachers were helpful.

Denise reported that despite the assessment being sent out to all schools in the Schools Mailing, she had only received one response back. She suggested that Kim G, Kim K, and herself try to meet 'virtually' to discuss these further.

Sam requested that the information be resent to her as she doesn't recall receiving it; which Kim K committed to do.

Kim K reiterated the commendation for the work that Kim G had carried. Karen reinforced this, and committed to email her comments through.

Shaun commended the feedback from Kim G also, noting that Attainment targets 1 and 2 were endorsed.

Denise suggested that a date be fixed when this could be discussed for an hour, as there may be people happy to discuss it even if they weren't minded to write something down; Kim K suggested a Google poll may be the best approach.

8 Information Exchange and AOB

Denise reported that she had a NASACRE zoom meeting on Monday at which she planned to talk about what she considered as the unfavourable narrowing of the curriculum. She also expressed her concern about the plight of young carers, who are likely to return to school with greater emotional loads. She emphasised the need for the Government to listen.

Kim K stressed the importance of remembering the trauma that educators will have to work with. She recalled her experience of children accessing their phones to be informed of the 7/7 tragedy and how in an examination weeks later a student was unable to write anything affected by the thought of his mother returning to work in London for the first time since the attacks. She commented that these struggles are often paralysing for young people.

Sam invited different faith groups to film a 2-minute video for her Year 7s, advising that she would email any interested persons.

She added that she was happy for her email address to be used, commenting that posing the same question to different faiths functions in some way as an interfaith discussion.

Nick recognised that there would be an overlap between this and the information that Kim was requesting.

Karen remarked that her school had used Google Classroom and had accessed a commendable resource on the Church of England website called 'Faith in action, faith at home'. She explained that there is a different theme each week and that a range of formats including videos are utilised.

9 Future meetings

Kim suggested an executive meeting to agree dates.

Nick asked for members' assessment of the Zoom meeting; there were no unfavourable responses.

Shaun commented that he'd be unhappy if Zoom replaced normal meetings.

Kim K added that she would like to return to the arrangements like the most recent Temple meeting whereby teachers attended a session about the place of worship but then remained for the meeting.

Nick opined that he viewed the online meetings as a helpful 'string to the bow' but not a substitute for meeting face to face. Kim thanked all for attending.

The meeting finished at 8.05pm.