

LEWISHAM STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Constitution

The Standing Advisory Council shall be called the Lewisham SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education). It is established under Section 3.90 – 3.97 of the Education Act 1996 as amended.

Interpretation

In this Constitution

'Local Authority' means Lewisham Council acting either independently or through the Education Lead Member and Children and Young People's Directorate.

'The council' means Lewisham's SACRE.

'Member' means a member of SACRE and includes a substitute or co-opted member.

'Elected member' means an elected member of the Lewisham Council sitting on Committee D as a SACRE member

All questions of Interpretation are governed by the "Interpretation Act" 1978 as may be subsequently amended.

Role and functions

- (i) To advise the Local Authority (Lewisham Council) on the religious education to be given in its schools in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus. In particular, the SACRE can offer advice on methods of teachings, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.
- (ii) To advise the Local Authority on matters pertaining to school worship in its schools.

With regard to (i) and (ii), the Local Authority may refer matters to the SACRE, which the latter must then consider and advise on. The SACRE may also take the initiative and make recommendations to the Local Authority on these matters.

- (iii) To receive, determine and review applications from Head Teachers as to whether the requirement for collective worship that is wholly or mainly of a Christian character may not apply. This application to vary the legal requirement for collective worship may be for the whole school or for groups of pupils.
- (iv) To require the LA to set up a Statutory Agreed Syllabus Conference to review the Agreed Syllabus if, in the opinion of SACRE, this becomes necessary.
- (v) To produce an annual report on its work which will, inter alia:
 - a) describe the work that SACRE has undertaken
 - b) specify matters in respect of which the SACRE has given advice to the Local Authority;

- c) broadly describe the nature of the advice given and the response given by the LA;
- d) where any such matters were not referred to the SACRE by the Local Authority, provide the SACRE's reasons for offering advice on the matter.

Copies of the report will be made available to schools and the public on the SACRE and/or other appropriate website.

~~At the discretion of~~ In partnership with the Local Authority, in order to fulfil its responsibilities, the SACRE may:

- (a) monitor the provision of Religious Education in order to inform its advice and reporting;
- (b) monitor the provision of collective worship in order to inform its advice and reporting;
- (c) be involved in Complaints Procedures.
- (d) support the final distribution of the last remaining resources from the South London Multifaith and Multicultural Resources Centre as a continuing means of promoting effective religious and multicultural education within the LA

Officers

The SACRE will have an elected Chair and an elected Vice Chair.

In the absence of the Chair or Vice-Chair at any meeting the Council can elect one of its members to act as the Chair for that meeting.

Membership

A list of those members deemed appropriate for the Lewisham SACRE under the legal framework is in the Appendix 1.

All members shall be delegates who are interested in education in general and religious education in particular.

Delegates as members shall remain until such time as they will have resigned or have been removed from under the rules dictated by their sponsorship group, Governing Body of that class of Members or for any reason stated therein.

Members will work within the SACRE's agreed Code of Conduct (Appendix 2).

Terms of Office of Members

Termination of SACRE membership by reason of non-attendance:

If a SACRE member is absent for 2 or more consecutive meetings without apology or for any reason not acceptable to the SACRE, the clerk will write to the member concerned to check whether their membership has lapsed and whether they would like to nominate a substitute or to refer their membership back to their sponsoring body.

Should they be absent from the next meeting without apologies or for any reason not acceptable to the SACRE there shall be deemed to be a vacated place to be filled by the sponsorship group / governing body for that class of members. The SACRE clerk will write to the lapsed member informing them of the decision and then write to the sponsoring body requesting a new member be nominated.

Vacancies

The Clerk, working on behalf of the LA and the Officers will approach sponsoring bodies for new delegates as soon as a vacancy arises.

Deputies / Substitute members

There can be a substitute member nominated by the absent member and notice of this substitution should be notified to the clerk of SACRE at least 6 hours in advance of the meeting.

Procedure for electing Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council shall be chosen from Members of the SACRE and shall be elected at the first meeting in each education (academic) year.

Nominees for these positions should have served on the SACRE for at least twelve months so that members would have developed a relationship with that person and have confidence to nominate them to such an important position.

Co-options

Co-option – SACRE has the power to co-opt members as agreed by the majority of its members.

Quorum

A meeting will only be quorate if the following numbers of representative/s of the respective groups are present: -

Group A - minimum of 2 representatives (1 Christian and 1 non-Christian)

Group B - minimum of 1 representative

Group C - minimum of 1 representative

Group D - minimum of 1 representative

Meetings

Frequency of meetings

There will be a minimum of 5 SACRE meetings per year. These will be normally 2 in the Autumn and Summer terms and one in the Spring term

An Extraordinary meeting may also be called or convened to deal with urgent matters of national or local importance.

Meetings should be open to the public. Where confidential items related to individual schools or persons are discussed, members of the public will be asked to withdraw.

Notice of meetings

The dates of the main meetings will be decided at the first meeting in the education (academic) year and circulated by the clerk to all members.

Where necessary SACRE meetings may be held online, with notification made public.

Sub-Committees

Occasional sub committees or working parties will be convened for specific pieces of work. These will report back to the full SACRE meeting for the duration of their work.

Agendas

Matters or items for the Agenda of any meeting shall be sent to the clerk / RE Professional at least 21 days in advance of the meeting. The Agenda shall be distributed to reach members at least 7 working days in advance of the next listed meeting.

Voting

All members are entitled to speak and vote on any issue as invited by the Chair but substitute or Co-opted members may speak but not vote at any meeting. SACRE will always seek to reach decisions on a consensus basis but when voting is to be exercised only one vote is allowed from each Group A, B, C or D as mentioned above.

In the event of an equality of votes on any issue the Chair may exercise a casting vote.

Minutes

Minutes will be taken by the clerk and cleared by the Officers. The draft minutes of meetings shall be circulated to members within one month of the meeting taking place where possible or at the latest with the next set of meeting papers

Availability of papers to the public

Papers for each meeting will be made available on the Lewisham Council website

..... (Chair) on behalf of Lewisham SACRE

Dated:

APPENDIX 1 - MEMBERSHIP

Committee A Other Christian denominations and other faiths and beliefs represented in the LA

African-Caribbean Churches	1 representative
Pentecostal churches	1 representative
Baha'i	1 representative
Buddhism	1 representative
Free Churches	3 representatives
Hinduism	1 representative
Humanism	1 representative
Islam	2 representatives
Judaism	1 representative
Roman Catholicism	1 representative
Sikhism	1 representative

Committee B The Church of England

Southwark Diocese	5 representatives
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Committee C Teachers' Professional Associations

NEU	3 representative
NASUWT	1 representative
Lewisham Heads and Deputies	1 representative
Academies	1 representative

Committee D The Local Authority

Elected Members	3 representatives
Representative of the Executive Director	1 representative
Secondary school Governors	1 representative
Primary school Governors	1 representative
The Lewisham Young Mayor's Team	1 representative

Also

Clerk to the SACRE	(non-voting)
RE Adviser to SACRE	(non-voting)
Co-optees	(non-voting)

APPENDIX 2 - LEWISHAM SACRE and Agreed Syllabus Conference

Code of conduct

Please note- where an Agreed Syllabus is currently working, references to SACRE also relate to the Agreed Syllabus Conference, its work, members and its Chair.

All representatives should:

- be nominated by a respected professional body and / or faith and belief community and have the support of their nominating body behind them;
- regularly attend the meetings of SACRE and take part in the deliberations and work of SACRE;
- where attendance is difficult, aim to ensure a substitute member is nominated who can attend;
- ensure apologies are submitted when attendance is not possible;
- demonstrate respect to the work of the SACRE and its Chair;
- participate in and share the work of SACRE for the benefit of the whole community;
- actively challenge and resist stereotyping;
- work with all other members of SACRE, in the spirit of trust and collaboration where all are concerned with the best interests of SACRE and its work;
- state views and opinions honestly, whilst respecting and listening to each other's contributions, not denigrating each other's views or beliefs;
- respect the rights of other members to disagree with your point of view;
- express differing points of view in a spirit of respectful disagreement;
- understand that it is not the place of RE to challenge the beliefs of any member of the school community or to attempt to change those beliefs;
- have respect for the work of SACRE, believing that the RE and collective worship that all students are legally entitled to experience should be of the highest quality.

Belief group representatives should:

- ensure that they have sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to represent authentically their belief, community or sponsoring body
- be able to explain how they intend to inform and consult with their belief community
- feel a sense of responsibility not only to the children coming from their own belief but also to all the children of Lewisham
- provide expertise, or assist in providing access to such expertise, in matters of tradition, theology and practice relating to their own belief for the benefit of the whole school population
- represent to SACRE the interests and concerns of their own belief community
- endeavour to represent fairly the views and interests of the widest possible range of belief positions within their community (*this is particularly relevant if they are the sole representative on SACRE for their belief.*)

- recognise that stating a belief or religious tenet is not the same as advancing an argument for or against any proposal, although it may well be an overriding consideration
- inform members of their belief community of the work of SACRE

Teacher and teacher association representatives should:

- provide information and expertise in relation to teaching and the school environment
- where appropriate provide information and expertise in relation to the teaching of religious education and the delivery of collective worship in schools
- represent the interests and concerns of teachers, pupils and schools
- consult with teaching colleagues and students
- keep colleagues informed about the work of SACRE
- ensure that the welfare and education, particularly religious education, of all the children in Lewisham is the primary focus of SACRE

LA representatives should:

- represent the wider public interest or the interest of the school communities
- provide information and expertise to SACRE in their capacity as an elected member of Lewisham Council or a school Governor
- inform SACRE of concerns or issues known to Lewisham Council relating to education and in particular the provision for SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development), teaching of religious education and the delivery of collective worship in schools
- support the work of SACRE by representing its interests in Lewisham Council and to school Governing bodies
- endeavour to ensure that SACRE and the ASC are adequately resourced, funded and supported
- ensure that the legal requirements for the conduct of SACRE are observed, particularly in relation to the suitability and qualifications required to be a member of SACRE

Members who do not work within the code of conduct will be reminded courteously of the relevant elements of this code that they are ignoring by the Chair.

Repeated examples of working in conflict with the code and therefore disrespectfully or in conflict with the effective work of either body will result in the issue being taken up with their sponsoring body and ultimately to a request for a replacement representative.