

## LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

### Minutes of the Lewisham SACRE Conference

which was open to the press and public and was held on  
Tuesday 28 January 2020

At Trinity School, Taunton Road, Lee, London SE12 8PD

**These minutes were approved by the SACRE on: 18 June 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 Sri	
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	Judaism	Rev David Rome (substitute)	
A	Pentecostal	Layo Segun	
A	Pentecostal	Cheryl Abbam (substitute)	✓
A	Roman Catholic	Rt Rev Monsignor Nicholas Rothon	APOLOGIES
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	Judith Purkiss	✓
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 1/2	Isaac Sackey (shared place)	
D	School Governors - Primary 2/2	VACANT	
D	School Governors - Secondary	Adelere Adedeji	
D	Representative of the Executive Director of Education	Angela Scattergood	✓
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	✓

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

The meeting began at 6.30pm.

### **1a Welcomes and introductions**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Gerald lit two candles as part of the Holocaust Memorial in memory of all those who lost life in the Holocaust and more recent atrocities.

### **1b Apologies for absence**

In addition to the apologies as indicated on the attendance list on Page 1, Denise reported that Msgr. Nick Rothon was at another meeting and that Cllr Jacq Paschoud had apologised in case she was unable to attend the meeting.

### **1c Confirmation of order of items for the meeting**

The order of items for the meeting was confirmed.

## **2 RE at Trinity – Samantha Alder**

Samantha welcomed the committee to Trinity.

She reported that there were between 500 and 600 pupils at the Secondary site. RE is a core subject at the school, with all pupils studying the GCSE full course. She added that the school were in the process of moving examination board. She informed the committee that RE hour allocation is less than other subjects and, that for the KS3 curriculum, a combination of the SACRE and the Diocese advice is used.

She reported that the team was currently facing some staffing challenges due to maternity leave, and further explained the RE staffing structure as comprised of around six, which should be at its full complement in September.

She added that there was a considerable amount of outreach in the community, such as an upcoming Year 7 'church crawl' day out to map RE sites. She commended Denise and Gerald for their contributions to the success of trips like this, adding that the school has regular worship sessions and frequent RE visitors.

She reported that she had only been in post since September 2019, mentioned the positive contribution that the chaplain Paul made, and invited the faith representatives in the meeting to contact her to arrange visits.

Denise proposed that Afonso liaise with Sam with a view to visiting the school. Cheryl also agreed to do this.
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Shaun enquired about the benefits for an RE perspective of coming from an all-through school.

Samantha replied that she also teaches at the Primary school, and that it was a seamless system with a consistent message with the effect of pupils knowing what to expect.

## **3 Minutes of previous meeting held on 30 October 2019 at Emmanuel church**

These were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### **4 Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda**

##### **A WEBSITE**

SACRE were informed that the website was now up and running. She added that there were ongoing hiccups about adding new resources given new regulations about the accessibility of documents which had resulted in a hiatus about uploading new content amid ongoing discussion about how amendments are managed.

She added that the previous year's Annual report couldn't yet be uploaded due to new requirements around table formatting.

##### **4B SACRE SELF EVALUATION**

Denise reported that she had made the amendments that had been discussed at the previous meeting, and that further discussion of the evaluation document will be tabled for the next meeting rather than this one.

She requested that the committee feedback on any inaccuracies at the next meeting.
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##### **4C ANNUAL REPORT 2018 – PROGRESS**

Denise reported that this was on the NASACRE website, and that she had emailed it to all committee members and would forward it onto sponsoring groups.

##### **4D SRE TRAINING**

Denise reported that this had hit a rock in terms of the collaboration with Greenwich and that she needed to speak further with Angela with a view to progressing this.

Angela highlighted the connection between this project and the Public Health consultation.

Denise committed to meet with Angela, alongside Shaun.
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Angela emphasised that this theme had been renamed Relationships and Sex, with the significance of 'Relationships' first.

Kim requested clear guidance and help regarding the new website regulations.

Angela explained the new commitment that published information be clear and in plain English but added that there was no need to review previously posted information.

Kim voiced a concern about the SACRE report, questioning whether the committee needed to employ someone to redo the graphs.

Denise reported that she had enquired of Suhaib if there would be training round the new requirements but that there wouldn't be. She reported that she had migrated graphs into the

previous year's report but that MIME hadn't been asked this year to produce their work in the new accessible format.

She explained some of the requirements, e.g. that text should have proper headings, all columns should be the same width and that headings shouldn't straddle more than one column.

Angela acknowledged that it was a new initiative and committed to identify the appropriate person to refer this onto.

Denise commented that the point of change was the previous year but that, despite the headache that this situation had caused, the committee needed to find the most time-efficient way forward. David commented on the irony of suppressing the document in the cause of accessibility.

Cllr Johnston-Franklin reported that several practices had been recently reviewed in the Local Authority which should hopefully lead to much clearer communication in the future; she expressed empathy with this situation.

Denise added that she had provided notes to teachers which didn't meet the new standard of accessibility. She commented that she had sought advice on the template but that those she asked were equally confused by it. Cllr Johnston-Franklin replied that an attempt would be made to rectify this. Angela added that the audience was key and that an explanation of these notes may be sufficient.

Shaun questioned what 'accessible' meant, to which Denise replied that it meant accessible to all, drawing attention to the necessity of formatting documents.

Angela added that there was an ongoing discussion about how far one goes back into historical documentation to ensure compliance.

## **5 SACRE Training**

Denise explained this item as either a revision course or 'starter for 10', using NASACRE's 'About SACREs' resource, before guiding the committee through the presentation.

The roles and responsibilities of SACRE and the LA in relation to SACRE were explored and discussed at length.

Kim Griffiths expressed surprise as the breadth of the SACRE's scope.

Denise commented that she had circulated the NASACRE reference document to SACRE members; also citing the SACRE members handbook as a useful material.

Denise committed to resend the NASACRE password, advising that the password changes every year and is communicated until payment of the annual subscription charge.

Kim Knappett reported that when she first became chair she found this resource really useful.

Nick commented on the usefulness of the presentation, commenting on how it piques interest when explaining to others what the SACRE does and emphasising that it is a significant body (rather than a mere quango).

Shaun echoed this sentiment, commenting on the unique role that SACRE has in the community and how other subjects would envy the trust within the committee, and thanked Denise for the presentation.

Denise commented on the importance of the committee refocusing on the core role of the SACRE having been as occupied as it was with the Agreed Syllabus.

## **6 Progress on the SACRE Constitution**

Denise informed that the SACRE constitution was on the Lewisham website, located at the tail end of Lewisham's constitution, and that no changes had been made to the version that had been submitted.

## **7 Summer 2019 exam data report**

Samantha provided an analytical summary of the data report noting that the big dip was after 2017 but that 2018 was the first assessment of this change. She noted that many schools had started to decrease the number of students registered for courses, and that this had had a knock-on effect on RE as well as other subjects.

Samantha expressed optimism that when schools were more comfortable with the workings of the curriculum pupil numbers would increase but remarked that schools changing examination board would lead to volatility in the near future.

Kim Knappett reported that in her community school, RE had been taken by all pupils then the numbers decreased to the current position of a significant low. She remarked on the change in perception that the subject could be covered in an hour.

Samantha added that teachers in a lot of schools had been told that they could deliver RE but would have less time to deliver it in.

She remarked how interesting it was to see the comparison between different subject areas but expressed her personal view that RE was not comparable with English language or history, as others had considered.

She added that the new specifications mean that it's hard for RE to score as well as was previously the case, commenting also that History and English have a greater weekly hour allocation than RE.

Cllr Moore further commented on how unlikely it was to hear of RE booster classes.

Denise remarked that the report also reflects that fact that MIME do not have access to short course data.

Samantha commented that it would be interesting to see if the short course is taken up when the GCSE numbers are fewer. She commented that the reduction in SEND numbers reflected the fact that it was significantly harder than before. She also commented on the national gender difference in FE, with a greater female representation.

Samantha added that short courses don't count for the schools in terms of key performance data, presenting a conundrum in terms of their benefit for the school and the pupil. In her

experience, students whose first language isn't English tend to have a greater desire to succeed in this subject.

She referred to Table 10, evidencing that schools underperforming in Maths and English tend to reduce their RE registrations.

Denise reported that historically the SACRE had asked schools for feedback before the report was widely published, advising that this would be her next step, also asking if they had entered pupils for the short course.

She remarked that the syllabus states that at KS4 pupils should be taught an accredited examination course. She suggested that the two options of resolving non-adherence to this was pushing schools to do this or rewriting the syllabus to accommodate a wider perspective. She emphasised the importance of considering the entitlement of pupils to access the course. She highlighted that this was the dilemma facing the committee whose need was to identify the solution that would best help the children.

Afonso queried whether it would be possible to add Samantha's commentary to the Annual report, to which Denise replied that the tabled report was for the committee, produced as a data report by a data company.

Kim Knappett suggested that the data report be sent out as such to the schools, with a request that they contextualise this data. She suggested they be told that the SACRE has concerns about what is taught in years 10 and 11 and specifically asked to expand on what they teach in these years.

Angela suggested that the schools that have seen large increases also be asked how they've achieved this.

Kim Knappett remarked on the struggle she had experienced in engaging the Sixth Form students.

Shaun feedback that what had leapt out at him was the variation in the data with there being some significant increases juxtaposed with significant decreases. He added that schools needed to be informed that information would be included in the SACRE annual report.

In relation to Shaun's earlier point, Angela remarked that in schools with small numbers a change of just one or two can make a significant difference. Shaun elaborated that the fluctuations in the numbers entered had left an impression on him. There was general discussion about various schools and the size of their cohorts.

Angela emphasised the need to formulate the questions rather than speculate. Kim Knappett suggested that schools where less than 50% of students are entered could be asked if RE is taught in its own right or does it sit with, say, history and Geography as an option?

Kim hoped that the committee would agree for Denise, Shaun, Nick, Angela and herself to draft a document to be sent to schools. Angela acknowledged this as a positive starting point.

Nick commented that the SACRE had talked about getting this data in the previous July, recognising this as bedrock for the committee's work. He highlighted the importance of not making assumptions when asking questions.

Cllr Moore remarked that the new inspection framework looks at personal development, mentioning – among the framework's new aspects – its focus on British values, diversity,

commonality and promoting respect. She commented that there may be a hook for schools to look at what they're doing to develop individuals if they're not running an accredited course in RE etc.

Kim acknowledged that this was mentioned in the previous meeting in relation to deep dives in schools. She reported that at a recent event she had asked Ofsted if schools were more prepared for deep dives. Ofsted had said that they were considering doing more RE deep dives as KS4 is underperforming KS1 to 3 in RE. She suggested that schools be warned of this. She also reported how inspections had rejected faith schools' proposal of RE as their deep dive subject.

Cllr Johnston-Franklin remarked, under table 7, on the concerns for the white demographic but the positive performance of the black demographic.

Samantha advised that, as an A' level exam marker for the last six years (despite the fact that her school doesn't currently offer this) she had noted that the A' level course was akin to a degree course, in terms of its difficulty and the amount of work required. She recognised the national increase in uptake in private and grammar schools but the decrease in state schools.

She referred to the fact that there is no longer an AS level, and that with students only permitted to study three A level subjects there is less choice. RE is often students' fourth choice but having to select the three subjects alone that stand them in best stead for the future means that RE is omitted. She reported that in the previous year, markers had been instructed to be more positive when marking as their expectations had been unreasonably high.

Kim Knappett remarked that RE has always been a subject that had a significant pick-up at A' Level. When students hadn't studied this as KS4, this represented a large jump for them. She opined that RE was now among the other subjects whose exams were known for their rigour.

Cllr Moore added that if there was a drop in the number of students doing GCSE RE, there would be a subsequent drop in the number of students doing A' Levels..

## **8 Information Exchange & AOB**

Gerald apologised for not letting the Chair know but reported that he had been invited to a reception at Buckingham Palace in December at which he spoke about his interfaith work.

### **HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

He reported that Lewisham had hosted a moving HMD event called 'Stand together' which was a culmination of the work that Lewisham schools had carried out. 'Small nose productions', of which Mark Curtis is the representation, had been contracted to run professional workshops in schools which extend beyond Holocaust education to developing positive relationships.

He encouraged members to see the production at Broadway theatre if they haven't yet seen this.

Describing the performance, he reported that this had been mainly a primary school activity with two classes from Forster Park and one from St William of York. There were also ten girls from a Year 10 Bonus Pastor class. Gerald described how the girls had delivered a

piece that linked all of the primary schools utilising parts of the Rachel Levy and previous mayor's' story. He added that the primary schools' presentation was pupils' own words.

He remarked that there had been a stronger flow to this event than previous years' events, adding that the event had developed to such an extent that Greenwich had now started using Small Nose Productions also.

Cllr Moore suggested that there were about 400 in attendance with 1000 taking part over all.

Representing Lewisham Interfaith Forum, Kim Knappett notified the committee of the following events:

24 March 2020, 6.30pm	Event on Hate crime (the next LIF meeting) in the Town Hall
17 June 2020	Peace walk
16 March 2020	Planning meeting for the Peace walk at the Islamic Centre

It was announced that the information on the Chariot Festival is on the Temple website.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm.

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