

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

Minutes of the Lewisham SACRE meeting

which was open to the press and public and was held on
Wednesday 24 April 2024

At Emmanuel Church, 374-376 Lee High Road, London SE12 8RS

These minutes were approved by the SACRE on: _____ 2024.

GROUP	REPRESENTING	NAME	PRESENT
A	Baha'i	Aaron Ayala	Ap
A	Buddhism	David Hutchens	y
A	Free Church Substitute	Rev Steve Lawrence	
A	Free Church (Assemblies of God) Chair	Pastor Nick Hughes	y
A	Free Church (Baptist)	Vacant	
A	Free Churches (URC)	Vacant	
A	Hinduism	Sharmila Manoharan	
A	Hinduism	Vallipuram Bala	
A	Humanism	Jennifer Sutherland	y
A	Humanism	John Turner	y
A	Independent Evangelical	Elizabeth Maxted	y
A	Islam	Imam Ashraf	y
A	Islam	Imam Sabir	y
A	Judaism	Gerald Rose	Ap
A	Judaism	Joan Goldberg	Ap
A	Pentecostal Layo's Substitute	Cheryl Abbam	
A	Pentecostal	Layo Segun	
A	Pentecostal Substitute	Deacon Ogbu Olu	
A	Roman Catholic	Rt. Rev. Monsignor Nicholas Rotherham	y
A	Sikhism	Vacant	
B	CofE Diocesan Board Diocesan RE Adviser (Primary) (Deputy Chair)	Shaun Burns	y
B	The Church of England Minister/Governor	David Osborne	
B	The Church of England	Ms Gwen Carney	Ap
B	The Church of England Primary teacher	Karen Hansen	y
B	The Church of England Minister/Governor	Vacant	
C	Academy/Free School	Vacant	
C	Lewisham Headteachers & Deputies	Vacant	
C	NAS/UWT	Korkor Burnett	Ap

C	NEU	Janey Joaovel	
C	NEU Chair ASC	Kim Knappett	y
C	NEU	Sian Blackwood-Carlyle	
D	Director of Education	Angela Scattergood	
D	LA members	Cllr Aliya Sheikh	Ap
D	LA members	Cllr Hau-Yu Tam	y
D	LA members	Cllr Liz Johnston-Franklin	y
D	Director of Education substitute Substitute for Angela Scattergood	Ruth Griffith	
D	Elected member substitute	Cllr Jacq Paschoud	
D	School Governors (Primary)	Caroline O Kalu	
D	School Governors (Secondary)	Vacant	
D	Substitute for Angela Scattergood	Anthony Doudle	y
OTHER	Primary teacher	Judith Nweze	
OTHER	Rastafarian (co-optee)	Vacant	
OTHER	RE School Improvement Officer	Denise Chaplin	y
OTHER	Young Mayor Team	Katy Brown	
OTHER	Young Mayor Team	Nicholas Gunner	y
OTHER	Visitors/members of the public	Arnold Maleco	y
OTHER	Parent/media co-optee	Daisy Scalchi	y
OTHER	Visitors/members of the public	Daniel Mayer	
OTHER	Visitors/members of the public	Maxine Walcott	y
OTHER	SACRE Clerk	Stephen Sealy	y

Boxed text signifies action to be taken, while underlined text signifies decisions that have been made.

The meeting began at 6.45pm.

1 WELCOMES AND INTRODUCTIONS

Nick welcomed all to the meeting.

He noted that this was Kim's last in-person meeting. Members collectively thanked her for her hard work and commitment, recognising that the agreed syllabus was a legacy of her involvement.

Kim mentioned that her family's history with SACRE was lengthy, and that the committee had consistently represented teamwork.

1A APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

These are noted in the above table.

1B CONFIRMATION OF ORDER OF ITEMS FOR THE MEETING

This was confirmed.

1C MEMBERSHIP UPDATE - ELECTED MEMBERS FOR THE NEXT YEAR

Denise reported that David Osborne and Kim Knappett would both be leaving the committee. Cllr Hau-Yu Tam had been nominated as a new councillor representative whilst Cllr Jacq Paschoud would be remaining as a substitute for all Councillors. Shaun Burns expressed thanks for the contribution made by Cllr Jacq.

2 Minutes of the previous SACRE meeting held in March 2024 on Zoom

These were proposed and seconded as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda

3A PRIMARY AND SECONDARY NETWORK MEETINGS

Denise reported that she had discussed Secondary network meeting with Korkor and they had concluded that the end of June was the best time for this afternoon or twilight session, although a venue still hadn't been decided. Arrangements for the primary session had progressed and this would probably take place after the SATS in the second half of the summer term. The Hindu Temple had been discussed as a venue but, were this not workable, she hoped that the Emmanuel Church or the neighbouring NTCG Lee was a possibility.

Maxine committed to look into this.

Denise advised that the Mosque was still the desired venue for an autumn meeting of SACRE. The Committee would consider inviting teachers for session immediately prior to the meeting to familiarise themselves with the building and meet the community.

Imam Ashraf expressed appreciation for this gesture; he recognised the value of being part of SACRE and the interfaith projects. Imam Sabir reported that the mosque experiences a large number of primary school visits but very few secondary.

Shaun added that he had known the leaders of the Mosque for years and emphasised the importance of the Committee's return to using the Mosque as one of the meeting venues.

3B NASACRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM - ATTENDANCE

Cllr Tam signalled her interest in attending the NASACRE conference.

Denise reported that she would attend the hybrid event virtually, particularly in view of the length of time it would take to attend in person.

She invited Cllr Liz to let her know if she wanted to do the same, and committed to communicate privately with Cllr Tam about this also.

Denise advised that the committee couldn't pay travel expenses for anyone not already set up as a supplier or employee on the Council's system. Elected members or union representatives could be funded by their sponsoring groups and any other members desiring funding would have to approach their sponsoring bodies.

Denise had emailed members about this, and reported that this had been submitted to the Department of Education and to NASACRE where this be analysed alongside the other authorities' submissions.

She requested that elected members draw the attention of the new mayor to this report, noting that in the absence of an education committee there was no prescribed process for this document being reviewed at a higher level.

Anthony suggested that the report be raised in the Young People and Children's Select Committee.

Denise advised that the report had been uploaded to the Council website as well as Services 4 Schools and could also be referenced in the weekly newsletter.

She reported that Daisy had asked about progress on the National Holocaust Day activities.

Cllr Liz reported that she had contacted Cllr Amanda Dewry emphasising the importance of this, and that securing funding for this was one of the key objectives.

Denise advised that when the National Holocaust Memorial Trust launches next January's theme - likely in September - the LA and SACRE could then draw schools' attention to it, as these are usually issues that school communities can engage meaningfully with and there are usually very good resources on the HMD Trust website that schools can make use of.

4 Key Stage 4 update from 2023 (Anthony Doudle)

Anthony presented an overview of Lewisham's education landscape highlighting the following data:

98.9% of its schools are good or better compared to 90% nationally. This equates to 100% of primary schools, and 93% of Secondary schools (with one Requiring Improvement) against a national secondary average of 83%.

Prendergast School has converted to Academy status while Bonas Pastor and Our Lady and St Phillip Neri have converted to academy status and are now part of the St Benedict MAT. Conisborough College is now a part of the United Learning MAT.

This leaves only five secondary schools that with Local Authority-maintained status.

He expressed the importance of liaising with these institutions in such a way that ensures that prioritised the needs to Lewisham personnel.

2023 outcomes were most similar to those of 2019 so, for example in attainment the 2023 performance of 46.5 is comparable with 2019's 44.4%.

He reported gains in English 4-9 grades and 5-9 grades; there was a combined gain of 5%, while the eBaccalaureate saw a 3% gain.

These was evidence that young people had recovered well from the impact of the pandemic.

There was varied RE performance regarding schools' grades 4-9 performance, ranging from between 50% to 93% attainment. The challenge was effecting more balanced performance.

Denise questioned if schools still had non-specialist teachers, citing this as a concern of hers, and questioned what the level of entries were.

In terms of 6-9 grades, not many Lewisham schools were above the national average.

Progress from KS2 - KS4 for all schools was above the national average with the exception of two schools.

For grades 7-9, there was a 4% difference compared to 12% in 2019.

Denise suggested that teachers not being given adequate time on the curriculum and lack of specialists would lead to reduction of the status of the subject and reduced teacher morale; this suggested that questions about recruitment needed to be asked. SACRE had advised the LA two years ago and Giles, the School Improvement partner, had been asked by Anthony's predecessor to investigate and feed back to SACRE and Denise, but he hadn't produced any report.

Anthony suggested that how the committee engages with School RE leaders was critical.

Kim mentioned the lack of RE teacher and specialists in schools but acknowledged that now schools were in a better position post Covid a positive difference in relation to outcome could be achieved.

Denise emphasised a need for the committee to have a message in response to insufficient RE timetabling in schools, and proposed that the committee look at the Ofsted report in the next meeting.

Anthony committed to check the school census which would show the time allocated to RE.

Kim suggested that an effective approach for schools would be one-on-one conversations, mentioning that a lot of schools were open to support but simply didn't know where to access it. She advised that positive impacts wouldn't be seen for a couple of years.

Cllr Tam asked whether Anthony's data report would be circulated, questioning what questions she should be asking the school on whose governing board she sits.

Denise advised that a SACRE website investigation pro forma existed from which questions could be produced. She expressed willingness to guide her through the syllabus.

Anthony agreed to circulate his report and also offered to send Cllr Tam the set of 13 questions he had used when meeting with a school.

David questioned whether the five maintained schools were considering academisation. Anthony confirmed that he was not aware of any plans by governing bodies to convert to academy status, but explained that some of the Church of England primary schools were contemplating this.

He added that Lewisham Learning are meeting with the five schools to agree a way of working effectively with the allocated School Improvement Partner.

Monsignor Rotheron reported that academisation was on his school's agenda but expressed a desire to work with the Local Authority.

Shaun reported academisation was being considered by the borough's Church of England schools although the matter was not being forced. He stressed the importance of emphasising how strong the Lewisham syllabus was.

Denise committed to table this in a future meeting.

5 Updated letter from DfE about non-compliance – and discussion

This discussion was deferred for a future meeting.

6 SACRE Self evaluation

Due to time constraints this was deferred for the next meeting.

7 Updating the Places of Worship directory (Attachment)

Denise urged all members to review the Places of Worship directory, notifying her of any changes, highlighting the need for its currency if schools were to be encouraged to meet faith communities. She advised that the version on the website was temporary, although Catford community Church had been removed.

8 Jewish Life Exhibition – information and PowerPoint presentation

Denise advised that Sheila Gewolb a fellow NASACRE Exec member, had made her aware of this exhibition coming to Lewisham. The Jewish Board of Deputies who have developed it will be offering training to teachers considering taking children to it.

SACRE watched the powerpoint presentation about the exhibition with information explaining that Synagogue personnel would be on hand to show people around the exhibition when in situ.

Gerald is aware of the need to discuss the exhibition to explore how SACRE and the local authority can support this.

Kim advised the necessity to set and communicate dates promptly.

Anthony expressed concern that it was unlikely to engage younger children for long.

In answer to some of the questions that Gerald had sent in for SACCRE to discuss, the following answers were suggested:

- Q3 While Lewisham Schools could be given preference, this shouldn't exclude other authorities;
- Q4 Time for session: – to negotiate with school;
- Q5 The length of the session would depend; Kim suggested two hours between the groups (check the hardcopy)

Others The number of people would depend but it would need to accommodate a full class.
Special schools should be included although the exhibition would have to be adapted to engage those with special educational needs
Visitors should be encouraged to visit other areas of the synagogue
The event should take place this term as early as possible because of weather issues

Shaun suggested that the exhibition seemed to be more suited for KS2; he questioned how the content would be developmental for students if they'd already learnt it.

Denise advised that this exhibition appeared to represent a slimmed down version of its predecessor.

John questioned whether there was a sufficient level of parity between the different faith and non-faith groups represented on the committee and whether SACRE should address this.

Kim responded that the committee would engage at the same level with any group wishing to host an exhibition, and that this exhibition fitted with the SACRE's encouragement of schools to access local places of worship.

Monsignor Rotheron added that the exhibition seemed a good resource for schools.

Denise added that, as an additional benefit, training for teachers would be offered before the exhibition.

Cllr Tam suggested that other communities could benefit from doing this, encouraging members to take this up with their sponsoring bodies.

Denise advised that the Hindu community also invited visitors to participate in its festivals and processions

Kim acknowledged the scale of the work undertaken on the Agreed Syllabus Committee and encouraged all members to explore and promote quality resources such as exhibitions, videos and speaker

9 Information Exchange & AOB

9A THE INTERFAITH NETWORK AND INTERFAITH WEEK NEWS

Denise advised that the InterFaith Network was dissolving at the end of the month. She reported that at a recent meeting she'd attended on behalf of NASACRE, several national associations had expressed a desire to continue the InterFaith week event this year. Members had discussed selecting a theme that the community could give their support to and promote unity, such as 'better working together' or 'building bridges'.

Denise committed to keep SACRE apprised of this.

Imam Ashraf commented that reduced budgets sometimes allow the force of passion to come to the fore with different faith communities uniting in these situations. He suggested an in-person interfaith event every two of three months would help to counter damaging online content.

Denise suggested this be pursued outside of the meeting.

9B TRAINING FOR NEW OR LESS EXPERIENCED SACRE MEMBERS – PLEASE SEE AGENDA PAGE 2, BELOW

Denise reminded committee members that she had supplied details of these training opportunities.

Monsignor Rotheron cited a recent legal ruling that had been reported upon in the news of prohibiting Muslim children being prohibited from praying at a school, and commented that all schools should accommodate students' practice of what they believe.

The Chair advised this would be taken forward to the next meeting.

10 Dates of future meetings

Tuesday 25th June 2024 - Live meeting, venue to be decided.

The meeting ended around 8pm.