

Welcome to Barnet SACRE

Summer Term 2015

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Barnet is one of the most religiously diverse Boroughs in England. This diversity provides a rich heritage. It enables children and young people to learn from each other, and from the religious and ethical experiences of Barnet's people.

There is also great diversity within the individual religions represented in Barnet and followers come from many different cultures and traditions. It is important that this diversity and the relationship between religion and cultures is recognised and discussed in our schools.

Movement is a fact of life for many of our children and young people. This can mean travelling into Barnet from another borough or vice versa for their schooling. Many young people have migrated here from all over the world and some return to their place of birth for extended periods.

What is a SACRE?

SACRE stands for: Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education. A SACRE is part of local government & its main function is to advise the local authority on matters related to RE & collective worship in schools. In 1944 Local Education Authorities (LEAs) were empowered by law to set up a SACRE. In 1988 LEAs were legally required to do so. So every local authority must have a SACRE and it must meet to fulfil its statutory duties. Barnet SACRE meets three times a year, once every term.

A SACRE has statutory responsibilities it must:

- advise the local authority on matters related to agreed syllabus religious education (RE) & collective worship (CW) either in response to a referral from the LA or as it sees fit;
 - publish an annual report of its work & actions taken by its representative groups
 - email a copy to the QCDA at sacrereports@nasacre.org.uk
 - meet in public, unless confidential information is to be disclosed;
 - have copies of the minutes of its meetings available for inspection at LA offices.
- Religious education in English schools: non-statutory guidance 2010 DfE*

A SACRE should:

- monitor the provision & quality of agreed syllabus RE & CW
 - provide advice & support on teaching agreed syllabus RE
 - consider whether changes need to be made to the agreed syllabus, in partnership with the LA
 - offer advice to the LA in respect of the agreed syllabus & its implementation.
- Religious education in English schools: non-statutory guidance 2010 DCSF*

A SACRE must:

- consider appeals from schools wishing to modify the legal requirements for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character; this procedure is called a 'determination'.

SACRE's remit for schools

SACRE's are responsible for oversight of religious education & collective worship in the majority of maintained schools.

The exceptions are:

- religious education in voluntary aided schools where RE is determined by the governors & taught according to the school's trust deed;
- collective worship in all schools with a religious character where worship can be reflective of that religious faith

Who make up the membership of SACRE?

All SACRE's are composed of representatives from four groups:

Group A

Representatives of Christian denominations & other religions reflecting the principal religious traditions of Barnet

Group B

Church of England representatives from the London & St Albans dioceses.

Group C

Teacher representatives (often from teacher associations)

Group D

Local Authority representatives

All four groups must be represented on SACRE.

The number of members in each group will be determined by the individual SACRE's constitution. The composition of Group A should be broadly proportionate to the religions & denominations in the local area.

A list of the current membership is included as an appendix.

- Each of the four groups has equal voting rights: one vote per group
- Decisions within a group about how that vote is to be cast do not require unanimity. Each group has to regulate its own proceedings, including provision for resolving deadlock.

Code of Conduct for SACRE members

Barnet's Agreed Syllabus and The Law

Religious Education was first included in the school curriculum in the 1944 Education Act devised by RAB (Rab) Bultler who later became the first minister of education. The country was still at war, access to education was limited & in 1938 only one fifth of all children received a formal education after age 14. However, thoughts had turned to a time when hostilities would cease & vision was created for the future of education. The non-confessional approach in RE was innovative & a requirement for spiritual development was also included for the first time. RE has remained a legal requirement for all schools. Under the Education Act 1996 schools must provide religious education (RE) for all registered pupils, although parents can choose to withdraw their children. Schools, other than voluntary aided schools and those of a religious character, must teach religious education according to the locally agreed syllabus. Each agreed syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

Pupils who attend special schools should be taught religious education 'so far as it is practicable'. Education Act 1981.

Providing opportunities for Collective Worship will **not** fulfil the law for delivering Religious Education.

Barnet Aims for Religious Education

The aim of Religious Education in the Agreed Syllabus is to enable students to explore the nature of religion and fundamental questions of human experience.

Religious Education should therefore help pupils to:

- develop and extend knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths, and of ethical beliefs
- develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities and societies
- enhance and reflect on their own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- grow in confidence in their own faith and respect those with a faith different from their own
- develop a positive attitude to living in a religiously diverse society
- develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issue.

The themes included in the syllabus are:

Foundation

Myself & Belonging

KS1

Special places in the home and the community

Story

Celebration

Symbols

Leaders and teachers

Believing

KS2

Religion and the individual

Religion, family and community (places of worship)

Teaching and Authority

(sacred texts)

Worship

Journey of Life and death

Symbols and religious expression

Inspirational people

Pilgrimage and sacred places

Beliefs

Beliefs in Action

Key Stage 3

Transition unit

Interfaith dialogue

Global issues

Religion and Science

Authority

Beliefs and concepts

Expressions of spirituality

Ethics and relationships

Rights, responsibilities and coming of age.

KS4

To follow the short or full course religious studies examination specification provided by one of the awarding bodies.

6th Form

Contemporary issues for religion

- Diversity and Equality
- The Individual and personal quest for meaning
- Ethics and relationships

- Social and Environmental Responsibility.

Aspects of religion and Psychology, Science & the Arts
The Philosophy of religion

What is Collective Worship?

Barnet's Guiding Statement

'The unexamined life is not worth living.' Socrates (469-399 BCE)

The Purpose of Collective Worship

Collective Worship provides the time and the opportunity for everyone in the school:

- To stop and reflect
- To focus on things that are of worth
- To develop a sense of community in which all members are valued and which can contribute to the common good of humanity
- To engage with the wider community in which the school exists
- To develop spiritual, moral, cultural, and social understanding.

Objectives for Collective Worship

Collective Worship should enable children and young people to:

- Build and develop the shared identity of the community of the school and individual responsibilities as citizens
- Share in things of worth and value
- Focus on things which add significance and meaning to the daily lives of pupils
- Provide experiences which go beyond the immediate and everyday
- Consider matters which challenge children and young people to reflect on their own lives and those of others
- Develop a reflective approach to life by providing some quiet, personal time and which offers opportunities for personal, individual reflection or prayer.
- Engage when appropriate in an expression of personal faith
- Have opportunities to consider the broad traditions of Christian belief and beliefs of other faiths and traditions
- Have opportunities to listen to persons who bear witness to the part faith plays in their lives
- Have opportunities to reflect on the teachings and narrative from Christianity, other faiths, traditions and beliefs and how these might impact on their own lives and that of the wider community.

The Act of collective worship as a distinctive part of the school day

The Act of collective Worship should:

- Be seen as a separate and distinct time for the group of children or young people involved and should be signalled by creating a different atmosphere. For example, by playing music as people enter and before any speaking begins.
- To have a content or focus selected so as to contribute to children and young people's learning
- To be explored through a presentation that could involve, listening, looking, talk, narration, drama, showing and the use of all the senses.
- Be an opportunity for pupils to reflect and consider 'What does this mean to me?'

Meeting legal requirements

The Education Act of 1996 requires that Collective Worship in community and foundation schools should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character reflecting the broad traditions of Christian belief. Circular 1/94 on which this guidance is based is to be revised in 2008/9 but the advice on Collective Worship is not to be changed.

- All registered pupils should take part
- The timing and organization is flexible

Schools may apply to SACRE to vary the legal requirements for the Act of Collective Worship by seeking for a Determination to alter their arrangements for Collective Worship.

Suggested code of conduct of SACRE

All representatives:

Should:

- Attend SACRE meetings & take part in discussions
- Participate in SACRE's work for the benefit of the community of Barnet
- Actively challenge & resist using stereotypes
- State views & opinions honestly but at all time politely
- Respect the rights of other members to disagree with your point of view

Faith Group representatives should:

- Make sure that they are adequately qualified & prepared to represent their faith community
- Inform & consult with the faith community they represent
- Provide expertise in matters of faith & practice within Barnet
- Follow Barnet's guidance for visits to schools (see link)
- Recognise that the role of a visitor in schools is to inform children & young people about their religion not to convert them to the religion

Teachers & teacher associate representatives should:

- Provide information & expertise in relation to teaching & school issues
- Represent the interests & concerns of teachers, pupils & schools
- Consult with teachers & students
- Keep colleagues inform of the work of Barnet SACRE

Council Representatives should:

- Represent the wider public interest
- Provide information & expertise to SACRE in their role as elected members of Barnet council
- Inform SACRE of concerns or issues known to Barnet Council
- Support to work of SACRE by representing its interests in Barnet Council
- Endeavour to ensure that SACRE is adequately funded & supported
- Ensure that the legal requirements for the conduct of SACRE are met