



Barnet Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6th November 2024 at 5pm

Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

Constitution and Attendance

GROUP A: Christian denominations other than the Church of England and principal religions represented in Great Britain	Present/Apologies /Absent	GROUP B: Church of England	Present/Apologies /Absent
Mrs Vicky Golestaneh (Baha'i)	Present	Ms Sue Watts (London Diocese)	Present
Ajantha Tennakoon (Buddhist)	Absent	Rev Robin Sims-Williams (London Diocese)	Absent
Mrs Catherine Salinger (Free Churches)	Apologies	Maria Constantinou (Diocese of St Albans)	Present
Mrs Mary Karaolis (attending on behalf of Very Revd AC Damiano: Greek Orthodox Church)	Apologies	Lisa Bonfield	Apologies
Mr Sury Khatri (Hindu)	Present		

Mrs Veena Bedi (Hindu)	Absent		
Dr Mukal Shah (Jain)	Absent		
Vacancy (Jain)			
Rabbi Mark Goldsmith (Jewish)	Absent		
Vacancy (Jewish)			
Vacancy (Sikh)			
Vacancy (Sikh)			
Nicola Santamaria (Roman Catholic)	Present		
Norah Flatley (Roman Catholic)	Present		
Vacancy (Salvation Army)			
Vacancy (Salvation Army)			
Mr Mark Leach (Methodist)	Present		
Mr Martin Wellings (Methodist)	Absent		
Nuzhat Akhtar (Muslim)	Absent		
Gohar Akhtar (Muslim)	Absent		
Panos Fellas (Humanist)	Present		
GROUP C: Teachers Associations, including representation from Academy Schools	Present/Apologies /Absent	GROUP D: Local Authority, including elected Councillors LA	Present/Apologies /Absent
Mr Kevin McSharry (Chairman & ASCL)	Apologies	Agnes Slocombe (L.A.)	Present
Vacancy		Cllr Humayune. Khalick	Absent
Vacancy		Cllr Joshua Conway	Present
Dr Alan Shaw (NAHT)	Apologies	Cllr Lachhya Bahadur Gurung	Absent
Ms Sandra Teacher	Present (left at 5.30pm)	Cllr.Linda Lusingu	Absent
Sally Giovanelli (Danegrove Primary School)	Apologies	Cllr.Nagus Narenthira	Present
Jack Robertson (NEU)	Apologies	Cllr Ella Rose	Absent
Other		Co-opted non-voting members	
Maria Gabrielczyk – Clerk	In attendance	Jan McGuire Independent RE Advisor to Barnet SACRE	Present
Tim Sanders	Absent	Mr Neil Marlow Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning	Present
Ruth Marx	Absent	Jennifer Brodtkin	Present
Sophie Tapis	Absent	Reuben Thompstone	Apologies

1. Apologies for absence

The Vice-Chair welcomed everyone present to the SACRE meeting and informed that the Chair was unwell. A card and flowers have been sent to the Chair. SACRE Members wished the Chair a speedy recovery.

Apologies were received and accepted from: Alan Shaw, Sally Giovanelli, Jack Robertson, Kevin McSharry, Lisa Bonfield, Reuben Thompstone and Mary Karaolis. Sandra Teacher would be leaving earlier.

2. Minutes of the 25th June 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising

JMcG and AS reviewed the Agreed Syllabus document, making sure it provided more clarity. Action **completed**.

JMcG made the agreed amendments to the documents and new appendix templates were created to support the AS and these were shared with SACRE to complete. Action **completed**.

3. SACRE involvement locally

The following updates were provided:

Jewish Living Experience Exhibition

The Board of Deputies of British Jews has a travelling exhibition of Jewish beliefs and culture, including the festivals, traditional clothing, kosher food, etc. presented in an interactive way. The exhibition is made up of 15 colourful banners with child friendly text and photos, along with tables of handling objects and a couple of activities and optional worksheets. This is being hosted at Edgware United Synagogue, Parnell Close, Edgware HA8 8YE in November. A number of Barnet schools have already signed up to attend and we would be delighted to welcome SACRE Committee members at the following dates/times:

- Wednesday 20th or Thursday 21st November - 9:45-11:45 (includes synagogue tour and time in the exhibition).
- Monday 25th November - 12:45-2:45 (includes synagogue tour and time in the exhibition).

Please liaise with Alan Shaw if you would like to attend so that I can let the organisers know to expect you.

Barnet SACRE Interfaith Choir

Members may be interested to hear that I have been invited to bring our choir to perform at the Faith and Belief Forum Interfaith Awards Ceremony on 26th November 2024. This is a prestigious event in Central London at the Guy Whittle Auditorium of the Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole St, London W1G 0AE. It will be attended by His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Greater London, members of His Majesty's Council of Faith, religious leaders and representatives of 100 communal organisations. This will be a fantastic opportunity to promote ourselves to a wider audience and to spread our message that 'We Can All Get Along.'

National Bahá'í Centre Open Day

Members are warmly invited to the National Bahá'í Centre Open Day at 27 Rutland Gate, Knightsbridge, SW7 1PD.

The theme is the Covenant and highlights of the progress of the British Bahá'í community.

A time slot at 10am on Saturday 23rd has been reserved for those interested and Debbie Tibbey of the National Baha'i Education Task Force will be present to accompany the 90 minute tour and presentation.

Please let Vicky know if you are interested to attend by this weekend.

Training

Free Training by Solutions Not Sides has been signposted to schools. NM has put the training details in the briefing out to schools. The RE Syllabus sessions can be booked via the BELS website:

<https://belstradedservices.uk/BPSITraining>

Jewish Community

ST informed that the Jewish community are going through difficult times and need all the help and support they can get with the continuing rise in anti-Semitism. Only this past weekend, a number of buildings in Jewish areas in Barnet were attacked, smashed and defaced. ST thanked NM and his team for all their work and support given.

LDBS update

SW shared an update from the LDBS. The focus is on developing nursery units and looking at developing strategies. Ofsted had picked up that global Christianity is not taught enough and needs to be developed further. Whilst theology is covered, but social science is not and it will be brought into the curriculum. The LDBS have their own syllabus which is used in their schools.

St. Albans Diocese

MC added that whilst the St Albans Diocese does not have its own RE syllabus, but it has excellent resources and practices for CW.

4. Local and National Updates

JMcG provided a snapshot of the local and national issues.

- NASACRE has requested that SACRE's nationally look to their development plan and the focus in Barnet needs to be on CW.
- NASACRE is offering members a free webinar programme of training, and SACRE members are encouraged to sign up.
- The Westhill grant was received and the Ann Taves work has now been completed- Barnet has no current bids under consideration.
- There are £10K bursaries for new RE trainees hoping to be RE teachers. We hope that Barnet schools will be able to offer these new teachers placement opportunities.
- Catherine McKinnell, the Minister for Schools Standards, is charged with a responsibility to curriculum areas. SACRE members are welcome to look at the gov.uk website and contribute comments to the Curriculum Assessment Review call for evidence closing on November 22nd 2024.
- SACRE members are encouraged to write letters to MPs on 4 areas – improving recruitment, investment in initial teacher training and professional development for RE teachers, curriculum benchmarking of RE standards and insisting that everyone is taught RE in schools.
- There are RE Hubs in every region in the country. The London Hub will be having an online RE event on 26th November 2024 from 6.30pm-8pm- registration details will be sent.
- JMcG is waiting for the Ofsted Annual Report, until it arrives she will use the Ofsted Annual Report 2023 (REC). It contains the damning report about the support being

given to RE teachers, where it was found that statutory RE is not being delivered at the moment. There is poor quality of RE across the country and there was criticism of so few teachers coming through with RE as a specialism.

- JMcG has just started to write the Barnet SACRE Annual Report. KMcS will write the foreword and NM will send through the examination data once it has been processed by the team in Barnet. SACRE members **approved** the report to be voted through electronically. **ACTION: JMcG/KMcS/NM**

Q. When will the data be available?

A. There is a delay this year and it will now come out later in November. It was previously due to be published before the Half-Term.

ST informed that she is part of the DfE Faith Group. She will be meeting with Catherine McKinnell and will feedback at the next meeting. **ACTION: ST**

5. RE statutory responsibilities: Agreed Syllabus Update, Collective Worship statutory responsibilities including:

Agreed Syllabus Update

JMcG thanked all SACRE members for their help and support with the Agreed Syllabus. She continues to work with the Ann Taves writing team and is finalising the material with teachers. Teachers are responding to the 6 big questions and the work is beginning to be taken to Barnet schools and training sessions are starting.

There is a high Jewish, Christian, Muslim and non-religious population in Barnet. The syllabus is responding to this richness, which is why the choice was made to adopt the Ann Taves 6 big questions approach. These six big questions allows for sequencing and progression from age 4 -19years.

The aims of the syllabus are for pupils to enter into a rich discourse about the religious and non-religious traditions that have shaped Great Britain and the world. It is a legal responsibility to deliver RE and community schools must follow the Barnet syllabus. The legal time requirement is 5% of curriculum time for pupils from KS1-KS4. More clarity may be needed around the new syllabus. The syllabus is supported by a growing bank of materials and guidance documents. There are exemplars for each of the year groups for both primary and secondary pupils. These will be uploaded onto the Barnet BELs learning area for teachers to access.

A full programme of training including launch events, syllabus drop-in and support sessions and three face to face workshops have been planned to support the implementation of the new syllabus. The dates are on the BELs training area.

Q. How is the information and graphics being made accessible to people with additional needs? How is inclusivity being addressed?

A. Just the basic texts and materials are ready. At the next stage everything will be in formats accessible for teaching staff.

JMcG reported that the bank of resources is growing in addition to the documents at the end of the Agreed Syllabus. A lot of progress has been made and everything now needs to be sent through to the DfE. SACRE thanked the team for the work completed and agreed that an additional fee of one day should be supported for the development of the launch presentation material and time given by JMcG. **ACTION: NM/JMcG/VG**
The Agreed Syllabus will legally be required to be reviewed again in 2028.

Q. How do you tackle issues of prior knowledge? How do you navigate the learning if the curriculum has been in place over a long time?

A. There aren't many teachers that have been trained in RE, so as many teaching notes as possible have been put in for the teachers, with the assumption that they do not have the knowledge, as well as adding resources, videos and worksheets. There are also written exemplar lesson plans, which teachers can take and use them as they are and then they can write their own lesson plans and build a resource bank.

Q. This is brand new learning and lessons plans. Is there an assumption that pupils have prior learning? What about the pupils who do not have the knowledge?

A. There is difficulty with the transition of bringing in something new, so it has to be done through training and implemented slowly as it takes time to embed the knowledge. NM offered to speak with JMcG outside of the meeting and MC was welcome to join the conversation. **ACTION: NM/JMcG/MC**

Q. Does the syllabus include inviting visitors into schools from community faiths, or places of worship in the community to help support teachers with enthusiasm and subject knowledge?

A. Visits to places of worship are encouraged and everyone will be reminded of this at the launch.

Q. The syllabus is being launched with teachers. Is the training ongoing or just once a term? Will there be feedback about the syllabus?

A. The syllabus is being launched with teachers and it will start with a series of launch events over a range of dates. There will be 3 workshops for teachers looking at the materials. There will be one workshop event every term for teachers, and will include sharing of issues and best practice.

PF volunteered to come and speak to schools or provide advice with lesson plans from a Humanist perspective. PF is registered on the RE Hubs website as an official speaker and has had training. MG to share the link for RE Hubs website training. **ACTION: MG**

Standards and monitoring of CW

As a SACRE this area still needs to be addressed.

Determinations: Withdrawals and how the SACRE monitors, advises or supports schools with this: complaints

There have been no letters of complaint and no schools are requesting determinations or withdrawals.

6. Update from Neil Marlow on behalf of Barnet

NM informed that the Local Authority (LA) continues to support the Barnet SACRE and is proud of the work it does. NM attended the Cabinet meeting where Cllrs had to approve the syllabus. Cllrs are proud of a thriving Barnet SACRE.

The SACRE are part of the Barnet Council website, which is looked after by the LA and the syllabus will be uploaded to the website once it is approved by the DfE. The Microsoft Teams channel will be accessible for the resources and documents free of charge for Barnet schools. It is hoped to market the syllabus outside of Barnet for a fee. The RE syllabus documents are being completed and will be sent off to the DfE for approval. The data delayed for the examination results will be circulated once received and they will be fed into the Annual Report.

Ofsted changes – There have been changes to the Ofsted framework and Ofsted handbook. This has come about after Martin Oliver's Big Listen, with a strong engagement from Ofsted resulting in tweaks being made by Ofsted. The overall effectiveness judgement has been

removed (Outstanding, Good, etc) and separate judgements for EY and Sixth Form. There are no deep dives for ungraded inspections, but there are in graded ones. Schools can defer inspections if they have a SIAMS inspection in the same week. There will be report cards for next year for post September 2025. NM reported that all 3 inspections in Barnet were ungraded.

7. Actions and responsibilities for members this year:

- RE Hubs website – SACRE members are asked to take a look and see if they would like to engage. MG to send out link. **ACTION: MG/All SACRE Members**
- SACRE members to be aware of the launch dates and they are welcome to attend. The dates are on the Barnet Council website. **ACTION: All SACRE Members**
- Additional fee of one day should be supported for the development of the launch presentation material. **ACTION: NM/JMcG/VG**
- SACRE members are asked to vote via an electronic poll on the Annual Report once the examination data is included. **ACTION: All SACRE Members**

8. AOB

Anti-Semitism – Interfaith Forum – Walks were carried out and Co-Chairs responded quickly with supportive statements. The Interfaith Forum was linking up to get the best out of all the forums.

Barnet Multi Faith Forum is doing a lot of work with community cohesion, but is open to other offers of support.

SACRE members sent their best wishes to KMcS wishing him a speedy recovery.

9. FUTURE DATES

Meeting dates for 2024-2025

- Wednesday – 5th March 2025 at 5-7pm (virtual meeting)
- Wednesday – 11th June 2025 at 5-7pm (in person – venue TBC)

The meeting closed at 6.28pm

Chair of Barnet SACRE:

Date: