

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)** held on **THURSDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY, 2024** at 5.30 pm in Committee Room 3, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

MEMBERS PRESENT

Panel A Christian and Other Denominations

Ann Boater (Quaker) (Vice-Chair)
Abdul Quadir (Muslim) (on MS Teams)
Nandarane Naina Parmar (Hindu)

Panel B The Church of England

Mary Thorne (Chair)
Felicity Djerehe
Stephanie Ellner (on MS Teams)
Rev Natasha Beckles (on MS Teams)

Panel C Teachers

Sarah Richardson (on MS Teams)

Panel D Camden Local Authority

Councillor Jenny Mulholland (on MS Teams)
Councillor Julian Fulbrook (on MS Teams)

ALSO PRESENT

Claire Clinton	Professional Advisor to SACRE
Owen Rees	Head of Governor Services, Camden Learning
Vinothan Sangarapillai	Committee Services

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

MINUTES

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Broadcasting of meeting

The Chair announced: "In addition to the rights by law that the public and press have to record this meeting, the meeting is being recorded and broadcast live by the Council to the Internet and can be viewed on our website for six months after the meeting. After that time, recordings are archived and can be made available upon request.

If you address the meeting, you are deemed to consent to having your contributions recorded and broadcast, including video when switched on, and to the use of these sound recordings and images for webcasting and/or training purposes."

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Dr Lynndy Levin, Rev Damian Mason, Councillor Judy Dixey and Councillor Sylvia McNamara.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY, NON-PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 19th October 2023.

A query was raised about whether the Professional Advisor had been able to ascertain whether there was prayer provision for Muslim pupils at Edith Neville School. The Professional Advisor, Claire Clinton, said she had checked with the school and there was provision available for Muslim teachers but not for pupils, as it was a primary school and the children there would therefore be 11 or younger.

RESOLVED –

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 19th October 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF CAMDEN SACRE

Nandarane Naina Parmar was welcomed as a new member of Camden SACRE. Rev Natasha Beckles announced that she would be leaving SACRE as she was taking up a post in another borough.

RESOLVED –

THAT the membership list and updates be noted.

6. DETERMINATIONS

Consideration was given to the list of schools with Determinations.

The Clerk and Professional Advisor informed the meeting that West Hampstead School had submitted a request for a renewal of their Determination. Members would be contacted closer to the time of the next meeting to see if they were available to visit the school.

It was noted that Eleanor Palmer School's Determination would expire in June 2024 and Gospel Oak School's Determination would expire in November 2024. The Clerk would write to them to inform them of this.

ACTION: Clerk to SACRE

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT the list of schools with Determinations be noted;
- (ii) THAT arrangements be made for a visit to West Hampstead School;
- (iii) THAT Eleanor Palmer School and Gospel Oak School be contacted to inform them of the forthcoming expiry of their Determination.

7. RE HUBS UPDATE

The Professional Advisor informed the meeting of the RE Hubs initiative. They were offering "kitemark" accreditation for school speakers. She encouraged SACRE members to contact potential speakers for schools that they knew and encourage them to become accredited.

She added that she was liaising with Council staff and local faith leaders to draw up a local list of speakers who could go to schools in the borough.

RESOLVED –

THAT the update be noted.

8. NASACRE WEBINAR PROGRAMME FOR 2023-24 AND CONFERENCE

The Professional Advisor informed the meeting that the NASACRE Conference would be in York on 20 May 2024. Camden SACRE was invited to send a representative and if someone was interested they were advised to contact the clerk.

**TO NOTE: All
ACTION: Clerk to SACRE**

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Members were also informed of upcoming NASACRE webinars. There would be one on death and dying in late February and one in June for new members of SACREs.

RESOLVED –

THAT the information be noted.

9. CAMDEN SACRE PRIORITIES FOR 2023-24

Consideration was given to a report of the Professional Advisor to SACRE.

The Professional Advisor highlighted a potential “train the trainer” event for the primary RE network. She also informed members of the ability of the SACRE to apply for a NASACRE Westhill grant.

A member expressed the view that tackling erroneous views about religion was important, especially in light of the situation in the Middle East.

A teacher member highlighted that the NEU would be holding an event for members on 23th March at Hamilton House on the Israel/Palestine question.

There was a discussion about GCSE and A-level results. The Camden Learning representative, Owen Rees, said that this was something that the organisation was focusing on on a wider basis, with an aim of raising its results in comparison to other Inner London boroughs, and would welcome suggestions from SACRE as to how to support schools in improving their results in Religious Education so that these were a strength.

The Chair asked Mr Rees how the Religious Studies GCSE results for the borough compared to other subjects. He said he would provide this information to SACRE.

ACTION: Owen Rees (Camden Learning)

RESOLVED –

THAT the report and discussion above be noted.

10. CAMDEN SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to the annual report for Camden SACRE.

It was noted that Councillor Judy Dixy had not been a member of SACRE for meetings during the last academic year (2022-23) and so the statistics should be amended for her.

There was a discussion about the figures for the religious demographics of the borough as recorded in the 2021 census. It was noted that “No Religion” was the

largest group at 35%, although that could cover people who had been brought up in a range of religious traditions and had different views on spirituality. It was also noted that 9% of respondents had not answered the question which made them a larger category than all religious groups other than Christians (31%) and Muslims (16%).

RESOLVED –

THAT the report as amended be agreed.

11. NATIONAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE) STANDARD

Consideration was given to a report of the Professional Advisor.

The Professional Advisor explained that this was non-statutory guidance from the Religious Education Council for England and Wales. As RE was not in the National Curriculum, national guidance like this was not compulsory to adhere to, but good practice would be to ensure that locally agreed syllabus complied with its principles.

RESOLVED –

THAT the guidance be noted.

12. OFSTED COMMENTS ON RE

Consideration was given to a report of the Professional Advisor.

Members noted Ofsted's comments that RE in schools tended to be of poor quality and under-valued. Ofsted also emphasised the need for high-quality professional development for teachers to teach RE well. Camden's primary and secondary RE networks were an arena through which some of this could be provided.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report be noted.

13. RAMADAN ADVICE

Consideration was given to a report of the Professional Advisor.

The meeting agreed the Ramadan guidance. It would be sent to the Headteachers of Camden schools and to the Camden Faith Forum lead officers. The Professional Advisor had sent it to the RE leads in primary and secondary schools.

RESOLVED –

THAT the Ramadan guidance to schools be agreed.

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14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 6.55 pm.

CHAIR

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MINUTES END