MINUTES OF THE SPRING TERM MEETING OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) HELD ON 14 MARCH 2017 AT THOMAS ARNOLD PRIMARY SCHOOL

(10:00 am – 12:05 pm)

Present: Ms R K Sahota (Chair)
Mr M Goodyear
Ms S Khan
Rabbi I Shillor
Mrs B Stanley-Hunt

Also present: Ms S Pradhan, Head of RE, Eastbury Community School (Borough Consultant for RE)
Ms O Brown, Interim Principal Primary Adviser (Director’s Representative)
Miss J Day, (Minute Clerk)
Mr J Lester (Observer, Baha’i faith)

MINUTES – PART 1

629 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted as follows:
Dr Beheshti
Mr P Fing
Mrs J Hoepelman

The following members was absent and apologies had not been received:
Councillor S Ashraf
Mr J Sowerby

Members noted that a letter was sent to Mr Sowerby about his non-attendance and there had been no reply. It was agreed that a new NUT representative should be appointed.

Action: S Khan to contact NUT branch for a nomination

630 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2016 were confirmed as a true record. Arising therefrom the members:

631.1 SACRE Minutes (Minute no. 621.1 refers)

were informed that minutes of SACRE meetings had been circulated to RE co-ordinators and were published on the Council website.
631.2 **Membership of SACRE** (Minute no. 621.2 refers)

a) welcomed Rabbi Irit Shillor who had been appointed to serve as a Jewish Representative on SACRE.

b) were informed that the Cabinet Member for Education had been informed of the vacancies for Local Authority Representatives but no nominations had been received yet.

c) were informed that the Chair of the local Secondary Headteachers’ Association had been asked for help to fill the current vacancy but there had been no response yet. Ms Brown agreed to make further enquiries.

d) noted that the 2011 census indicated that Black African and Bangladeshi were the fastest growing groups in the borough and they were not currently represented on SACRE. It was agreed that a Pastor on a school governing body or the Inter-Faith Forum could be approached before the next meeting.

**Action:** O Brown

e) note that the Bishop of Barking had been approached with a request for assistance in filling the vacancy for a Church of England representative and a reply was awaited.

631.3 **Sex and Relationships Education/PSHE** (minute no. 621.4 refers)

asked what had happened to the proposed guidance document for schools after the advisory teacher for PSHE had left.

631.4 **Srebrenica Memorial Day** (Minute no. 621.5 refers)

noted that this had been included on the agenda as requested.

631.5 **RE Reports** (Minute no. 621.6 refers)

were informed that schools have been reminded to present an annual report on RE provision to their governing bodies. They noted that reports were often included in the headteachers’ reports or were presented to appropriate sub-committees. It was agreed that the Chair of SACRE should write to headteachers and governors to request copies of the annual reports. It was also agreed that it would be helpful to provide a template of suggested headings for the reports. MG offered to circulate these to headteachers through the Barking and Dagenham Headteachers’ Association, and to invite feedback.

631.6 **SACRE Attendance** (Minute no. 623.3 refers)

asked for a record of attendance at SACRE meetings be compiled from previous minutes, as part of the SACRE Development Plan.

**Action:** J Atkinson/J Day

632 **SACRE ANNUAL REPORT**

Members received the latest draft of the SACRE Annual Report for 2016 which was almost ready for publication. They noted that the following information had been added:

- Secondary schools’ results data
• Three Year Development Plan
• Ofsted comments on RE/SMSC provision extracted from inspection reports

Members approved the draft report for publication.

633  RE ASSESSMENT

Members received copies of the Religious Education Assessment Guidance produced by Ms Pradhan. Arising therefrom the members:

633.1 noted that the guidance contains examples of key content, key questions, and assessment tasks. It is not a syllabus but can be adapted by teachers to generate questions to be used in assessing knowledge and understanding.

633.2 asked about the example question for Lesson 3 “Why is love important?” which was felt to be mainly a Christian concept. Other religions such as Judaism and Islam have more emphasis on rules and justice. Ms Pradhan explained that this was a typing error and should have read “Why is life important?” Members held a discussion about the variable meanings of concepts in different religions or cultures, and the need for a balance in the teaching of RE. Children should be free to express their own beliefs while learning about other religions.

633.3 asked how the assessment guidance will be disseminated to schools because it contained some good ideas and a lot of work had obviously been put in. They were informed that some schools had already received it during INSET sessions with Ms Pradhan and the feedback had been positive. It was agreed that Ms Pradhan and Mr Goodyear should ask the Headteachers’ Association how they would prefer the guidance to be circulated. It could be put on the borough website for schools to access.

634  REMEMBERING THE HOLOCAUST AND SREBRENICA

Ms Khan presented the report of her visit to Srebrenica which took place in the Summer Term of 2016. Ten members of the National Union of Teachers had been selected by the charity “Remembering Srebrenica” to raise awareness of the genocide of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995. Ms Khan had been selected on the basis of her role as an International Solidarity Officer.

Members noted that the Srebrenica genocide had been one of a number of atrocities in the states of the former Yugoslavia. In July 1995, over 8,000 men and boys were killed by Bosnian Serb soldiers.

The four day visit included a tour of Sarajevo, a visit to the Sarajevo Tunnel Museum, and a visit to the Tuzla-Podrinje Identification Project. The project has taken on the task of identifying the human remains from the communal graves where the genocide victims were buried. DNA analysis is used to identify the body parts so they can be returned to the families for burial. 7,000 bodies have been identified so far.

The visiting group had the opportunity to meet one of the Mothers of Srebrenica who told how she had lost her husband and son in the genocide. The Mothers of Srebrenica encourage teachers to help their pupils learn about respect and tolerance for different nationalities and faiths.

Members noted the events which were planned by a working group to spread
awareness of the genocide within local schools and organisations, e.g. Ms Khan will be discussing her experience with Year 4 children and at the EAL Forum as part of the memorial events on 11 July.

Ms Khan hoped to show a video which was made for the 21st anniversary of the genocide but it wasn't possible to follow the web link. It was suggested that the link be emailed to members, or the video could be viewed at the next meeting.

RE AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT THOMAS ARNOLD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr Goodyear presented his report on RE and collective worship at Thomas Arnold Primary School. The report had been presented to the school governing body at the meeting for the Spring Term 2017. The members:

635.1 noted how the school's provision had been reorganised since September 2016.
635.2 were informed of the school's plans for future provision to make the best use of time. Although there is a lot of pressure on the curriculum in primary schools RE will be stand-alone lessons rather than linked to other subjects. Lessons will be broad and balanced with time for discussion of the big questions.
635.3 noted that teachers will be given enough subject knowledge and resources to teach about different faiths and encourage discussions.
635.4 received the school's assembly timetable for the Spring Term. It is difficult to hold whole school assemblies due to lack of space. There are themes for assemblies each week and assemblies are also used to celebrate pupil achievements. There is always time for reflection and the school prayer.
635.5 noted that Mr Goodyear would like to use Ms Pradhan's guidance documents for staff on how to cover the big issues.
635.6 were informed that there is a daily act of worship in class.
635.7 asked if teachers find it easy to develop the themes from assemblies and were informed that they do.
635.8 thanked Mr Goodyear for his presentation and commented that RE provision looks positive in this school.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Havering SACRE Visit

Members were informed that Ms Brown had attended the Havering SACRE meeting as an observer. She reported that there were more board members present with broader representation from across the community. The meeting had been held in the evening. It was interesting to see what others are doing. Barking and Dagenham SACRE should consider how to build up numbers and representation, but this will take time.

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members agreed to hold future meetings as follows:
Ms Brown agreed to contact the headteacher of All Saints Catholic School to ask if they could host the meeting.

**Action**: O Brown