

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)** held on **THURSDAY, 23RD MAY, 2024** at 6.00 pm in Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

MEMBERS PRESENT

Panel A Christian and Other Denominations

Ann Boater (Quaker)
Abdul Quadir (Muslim) (on MS Teams)
Sally Hay (Humanist) (on MS Teams)

Panel B The Church of England

Mary Thorne (Chair)
Stephanie Ellner (on MS Teams)
Rev Damien Mason (on MS Teams)

Panel C Teachers

Sarah Richardson (on MS Teams)

Panel D Camden Local Authority

Councillor Julian Fulbrook (on MS Teams)
Councillor Nanouche Umeadi (on MS Teams)
Councillor Judy Dixey

ALSO PRESENT

Claire Clinton	Professional Advisor
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

Broadcast of the meeting

The Chair announced: 'In addition to the rights by law that the public and press have to record this meeting, I would like to remind everyone that this meeting is being broadcast live by the Council to the Internet and can be viewed on our website for twelve months after the meeting. After that time, webcasts are archived and can be made available upon request.'

If you have asked to address the meeting, you are deemed to be consenting to having your contributions recorded and broadcast, including video when switched on, and to the use of those sound recordings and images for webcasting and/or training purposes.'

Any other announcements

There were no other announcements.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Felicity Djerehe, Councillor Jenny Mulholland and Nandarane Naina Parmar.

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

In respect of Item 10, Councillor Nanouche Umeadi declared that she was a governor of Eleanor Palmer school and therefore paid no part in the discussion or decision on that application.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2024.

Further to the discussion at the last meeting, Members were keen to see comparative data for Religious Studies GCSEs in Camden compared with other boroughs. They said this data would be useful if SACRE wished to recommend interventions by the local authority.

RESOLVED –

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF CAMDEN SACRE

Councillor Nanouche Umeadi was welcomed as a new member of SACRE, following her appointment at the Council's AGM on 15th May 2024. It was noted that the

Roman Catholic representative had resigned; and the Professional Advisor said she would contact the Diocese to seek a new Catholic member.

ACTION: Professional Advisor

RESOLVED –

THAT the membership list of Camden SACRE was noted.

6. 2023-24 SACRE PRIORITIES

Consideration was given to the list of Camden SACRE priorities for 2023-24.

The Professional Advisor confirmed that she was continuing to look for Sikh and Buddhist representatives.

It was proposed that governors be invited to a meeting on the agreed syllabus. The Professional Advisor said that in other authorities she worked with, Newham and Barking & Dagenham, governing bodies in schools received an annual report on Religious Education based on the information from a questionnaire she circulated.

The Professional Advisor said she would provide the Clerk with a handout on “35 things an activist SACRE can do” she received at the NASACRE Conference, which could then be circulated to Camden SACRE members.

RESOLVED –

THAT the list of priorities and the comments above be noted.

7. SCHOOL SURVEY DISCUSSION - INSTIGATING AN ANNUAL RETURN ON RE AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP FOR EVERY SCHOOL

The Professional Advisor highlighted the sample survey that she wished to send out to schools over the summer. She said that the information from the survey would be useful for schools in general. She said that many schools did not know what exam boards other schools were using for their Religious Studies exams.

It was suggested that the survey could go to the next Heads’ meeting so that Headteachers were aware of the importance of what was being requested and how it could be helpful to schools.

Members also expressed concern that there was no mechanism to record withdrawals from RE at the borough-level.

RESOLVED –

THAT the questionnaire and the comments above be noted.

8. AGREED SYLLABUS TRAINING UPDATE

The Professional Advisor gave a verbal update on training for the new agreed syllabus.

There had not been many bookings on the secondary schools' training course, perhaps as some schools were waiting until after the GCSE season was over to make a decision to book. A member suggested that a half-day course might be easier for teachers to make time to attend than a full-day course.

Attendees voiced concern that the previous syllabus had been difficult to access online and they wanted the new one to be easier to refer to online.

A councillor queried the legal requirements for the use of the agreed syllabus. She was informed that community schools should be using the local authority's agreed syllabus whereas VA (voluntary aided) schools and academies were free to use their own.

RESOLVED –

THAT the update be noted.

9. READY TO WORK CAMPAIGN

Members were informed of the 'Ready To Work' campaign which was led by Lord Karan Bilimoria and was making the case, from an employers' point of view, for the importance of young people entering the workforce with a greater degree of religious literacy and knowledge of a variety of religions and belief systems.

10. DETERMINATIONS

Consideration was given to the list of schools with and without Determinations, and to the applications from Eleanor Palmer and West Hampstead primary schools.

Eleanor Palmer

Members considered the application from Eleanor Palmer school. The Professional Advisor said she had met with the Deputy Head, Lacey Cousins, and had seen her leading an assembly. She added that Ms Cousins was interested in serving on SACRE as a teacher rep in future.

The Professional Advisor said that the school was strong in what they did, but there was some room for improvement. Some children were not sure what to do in the 'quiet time' set aside for prayer and reflection.

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It was noted that about 40% of the children came from “non-religious” backgrounds and so the school was of the view that a Determination allowed them to better reflect the fact the school’s intake was not predominantly Christian.

A member expressed the view that the requirement for “broadly Christian” collective worship was wide-ranging enough to be inclusive of non-religious pupils and those from other faiths, and so the school should not have been automatically inclined to renew its Determination.

After discussion, the SACRE agreed to grant the school a Determination.

West Hampstead

Members considered the West Hampstead Primary school application. The Professional Advisor said that she felt it was a strong application. She noted that, in her discussion with the Head, he had said he thought that he needed more training on the topic. This could be a sign of the lack of focus on collective worship and RE in ordinary teacher training.

The SACRE agreed to grant the school a Determination.

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT the list of schools with and without Determinations be noted;
- (ii) THAT a Determination be granted to Eleanor Palmer School;
- (iii) THAT a Determination be granted to West Hampstead School.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings would be:

- Thursday, 7th November 2024
- Thursday, 6th February 2025
- Thursday, 1st May 2025

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm.

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CHAIR

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MINUTES END