

HSACRE

HILLINGDON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2009

The current HSACRE was inaugurated on 22 February 1989 and this is its eighteenth Annual Report in accordance with its constitution and statutory obligations.

A copy of this Annual Report can be found on the Hillingdon Grid for Learning/Fronter.

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1. FORWARD BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this eighteenth Annual Report of Hillingdon's Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education [SACRE].

I am pleased to note that meetings of Hillingdon SACRE are well attended and this year has seen a number of important developments including extensive work by an Advanced Skills Teacher in Religious Education, completion of the draft new Agreed Syllabus, ready for launch in 2010 and exciting project work with Brunel University

entitled: 'Youth on Religion'.

Religious Education has a profound contribution to make to the Authority's commitment to developing community cohesion. Hillingdon's SACRE works hard to support every teacher of RE in order to give our young people active and engaging learning experiences of living religious tradition in order to achieve both attainment targets of learning about and from others' faith views. SACRE members believe that a flourishing SACRE is vital to the promotion of mutual understanding of the different communities in Hillingdon.

Hillingdon SACRE promotes open-mindedness, respect for all, self awareness and appreciation and a sense of wonder, all of which have much to contribute to young peoples' development. Contacts with faith organisations throughout Hillingdon have enriched this. For children of the 21st century multicultural Britain, to learn about the plurality of religions and the beliefs that inform them is essential for them to become responsible citizens.

I would like to conclude by thanking the whole membership of the SACRE for being so active over the year. Thanks also to those who serve the SACRE, Gill Brice and now, Natasha Dogra for clerking meetings and Eric Blaire, the Professional Adviser to SACRE, but particular thanks must go to Duncan Struthers who continues to chair SACRE and drives forward most of the SACRE's work.

2. MEMBERSHIP

HSACRE members are from four distinct groups and the committee is only quorate when representatives from every group are present:

GROUP A – Representatives of all faith groups in Hillingdon, including representatives from the Christian community not members of the Church of England. HSACRE works at ensuring that along with representatives from all the major world faiths, it works with all communities within the borough and welcomes their representation so long as they recognise the emphasis placed on inclusion by HSACRE.

GROUP B - Representatives from the Christian Church of England.

GROUP C - Representatives from each of the teachers' professional associations.

GROUP D - Hillingdon Councillors

A list of members of each committee is included as an appendix.

Gill Brice (Democratic Services) continued to serve HSACRE until the end of October 2009 and we are grateful for her enthusiasm and support over more than

twenty years. We welcome Natasha Dogra (Democratic Services) as her replacement.

Eric Blaire has been the professional adviser to SACRE, initially as a member of the authority's School Improvement Service and from September 2007 as an independent consultant, working on behalf of the authority's Children's Services and its Corporate Director, Chris Spencer. SACRE has been delighted with this support.

Duncan Struthers has continued as Chairman and Mike Gettleson as Vice-Chairman.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The main business for the year has continued to be the work on the Agreed Syllabus, the development of the new 'Faith Strand' and the completion of the individual sections for the main faiths. The comments from schools in the final round of consultation have been very encouraging and the document has now moved to the design and proof-reading stages.

Cllr Simmonds joined me in presenting Vyners school with a cheque for the RE department along with a framed certificate, celebrating the school in it being the 'most improved' school for its RE GCSE results for 2009. It would be good to explore other ways for SACRE to engage and encourage pupils and staff.

The lead specialist school, Swakelys continues to be an enthusiastic partner and has been instrumental in running the High school Inter Faith events which now attract most of the schools in the borough. I was invited by the visiting HMI to give evidence as to the work of the school in its specialism during its RE inspection and we congratulate the school on the outcome of the HMI visit.

An additional Inter Faith School event was the cross-phase Inter Faith meeting of the schools in the Yeading cluster. It was amazing to watch how the pupils of infant, junior and high schools collaborated on faith issues.

The government has initiated a review of the work of SACREs under the 1/94 Act, with the exception of those parts which cover 'Acts of Collective Worship'. I believe Hillingdon is unique across London in not having any school seeking a 'determination' to be exempt. There was one school which asked for advice on this and then concluded they were serving their community correctly within the understanding of the act.

Another exciting venture has been the discussions with the research team at Brunel University. The first discussion was in supporting them in determining the format of the project. All High schools in the borough will be invited to participate in this 'Youth and Religion' study.

The last meeting of the year was unique in our history. Many past SACRE

members and council officers returned to a celebration of the work and strength Gill Brice has been to us on SACRE. I doubt if there are many other members of the Democratic Services team who would become involved with running school events or fitting out a 'Religious Education' tent for the Middlesex Show! We will miss her and we all wish her well for the future.

MEETINGS OF HSACRE IN 2009

Full meetings of HSACRE were held on:

February 18 th	- Civic Centre
March 25 th	- Civic Centre
May 20 th	- Civic Centre
June 17 th	- Civic Centre
November 4 th	- Ruislip Baptist Church
November 10 th	- Hillingdon Baptist Church (special farewell meeting)

All meetings were quorate. In addition to the full meeting of SACRE, there were a number of subgroup meetings and the continuing progress of the Inter-Faith Forum and of Youth Events.

4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

HSACRE was delegated a budget of £2220 for the year.
Major items of expenditure to date (December 2009) are:

Consultancy	1700
Conference attendance	70
NASACRE	85
Successful School Award	200

HSACRE is grateful for the financial support it receives and its development plan is guided by comments received from schools and faith communities.

5. ADVICE GIVEN TO THE AUTHORITY BY SACRE

SACRE gave advice to Healthy Hillingdon on the revision of their document entitled: 'Managing Loss, Trauma and Crisis' which was published in 2009.

Advice is given annually to the authority on Religious Education and Worship paragraphs in its information booklets to families entering a particular phase of education.

6. PUBLICATIONS AND EVENTS

Extensive work was carried out on the new syllabus with consultation taking place with all groups and faiths and it reached its final draft ready for preparation for publication in 2010.

Hillingdon SACRE completed the consultation document on the replacement for Circular 1/94 and submitted this to the Dcsf.

Continuing support is given to both Inter-faith Events locally and nationally and similarly to the Week of Peace.

7. ADVANCED SKILLS TEACHER

Dharmini Shah is an RE teacher at Bishop Ramsey CE school and SACRE is fortunate to have some of her dedicated time for support. Dharmini is an Advanced Skills Teacher and that means that she is a teacher in a maintained school in England or Wales who has passed a national assessment and been appointed to an AST post. ASTs concentrate on sharing their skills, through outreach work, with teachers in their own and other schools.

As part of her AST work Dharmini has been closely working with SACRE in the re-writing of the Hillingdon Agreed Syllabus. This has involved checking the content of the syllabus and thinking about ways in which some of this can be delivered.

Another part of her AST work has involved 'outreach' whereby she has been deployed by the local authority to help RE Departments across Hillingdon. She has been actively involved in training and providing strategies for NQT's and GTP's to improve their teaching. She has also been involved in writing and updating several schemes of work in some of Hillingdon's secondary schools.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

GCSE AND GCE RESULTS FOR 2008

SACRE has received the results of public examinations in RE for all schools. It is pleased to note that all but one school now appears to be offering RE as a compulsory subject at KS4 as required.

Part of SACRE's role is to monitor the quality of Collective Worship in Hillingdon schools. During the year, the SACRE have remain concerned that the Ofsted inspection reports in respect of collective worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development do not give them information for monitoring standards.

Members of the SACRE have continued to consider ways of obtaining good information about collective worship but to little effect. It is hoped that once the Agreed Syllabus Review is complete SACRE can refocus its efforts on this topic.

10. OTHER ACTIVITIES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR 2010

In collaboration with Brunel University Hillingdon SACRE has played a major role in setting up the pilot for the Youth on Religion Project. This project is to involve students in Years 8, 10 and 12 in both maintained and independent schools plus Uxbridge College. Similar research with young people will be going on in Newham, Bradford and Keighley. There will be a focus on young people with additional needs and Year 12 students in Phase 2 of the project in 2010/2011. Phase 1 will be completed in 2010.

SACRE agreed a statement with regard to secondary school students leaving school for prayer, as follows:

‘Given that there is a permanent Prayer Room available for all staff and students use, safety and security is assured for all students by their remaining on the school site. This would not be the case if students were allowed to leave the school site for prayer and hence such permission should not be granted.’

Further issues around prayer and dress for physical education were expected to arise in 2010, covering primary age as well as secondary students. SACRE had in hearing about BS21 expressed the view that consideration should be given to ensuring that there is adequate provision for prayer/quiet contemplation in any schools developed in future.

No school had sought a determination in 2009 but the issue is likely to arise again in future years as consideration of the ever shrinking numbers of practising Christians in some schools occurs.

Comments on the value of this report are welcomed. These should be sent to Nadia Williams – Democratic Services, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex. UB8 1UW.

APPENDIX**GROUP A**

Baptist	Duncan Struthers
Hindu	Kamal Persaud
Methodist	Angela Lount
Muslim	Amir Ahmed
Quaker	Lucy Russell
Jewish	Mike Gettleson
Roman Catholic	Vacant
Salvation Army	Heather Steady
Sikh	Jasvir Rayat Singh
United Reform Church	
Bahai	

GROUP B

Church of England	Hilary Stone
	Mary Coulhurst
	Graham Marriner
	Vacant
	Vacant

GROUP C

National Union of Teachers	
Association of Teachers and Lecturers	Jan Long
National Association of School Masters/Union of Women Teachers	
Professional Association of Teachers	
National Association of Headteachers	Kevin Guest
Association of Secondary School and College Leaders	Vacant

GROUP D

Local Education Authority	Councillor Shirley Harper-O'Neill Councillor David Routledge Councillor Carol Melvin Councillor Avtar Sandhu Councillor Mike Bull
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CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Mildred Atubo	
Graham Sumbler	
Laura McNamee	
Dharmini Shah	
Jas Virdee	

OFFICER SUPPORT

London Borough of Hillingdon Committee Services	Gillian Brice and then Natasha Dogra, Democratic Services 3E/05 Civic Centre High Street Uxbridge Middlesex UB8 1UW
SACRE Consultant for Hillingdon	Dr Eric Blaire