Haringey Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
Minutes of the meeting of 6 June 2024 at 5:00pm
Held in person at Hornsey School for Girls

MEMBERSHIP

Group A: Christian denominations other than Church of England, and principal religions represented in Great Britain

James Chiriyankandath (JC), **Chair**	Unitarian
Stephen Agilinko (SA)*	Baptist Churches
Norman Bacrac (NB)*	Humanist
Maitripushpa Bois (MB)*	Buddhist
Hasret Bozdogan (HB)	Alevi Cultural Centre
Bibi Khan (BK)*	Islamic Community
James Lane (JL)*	Roman Catholic Church
Tonye Philemon (TP)*	The Peace Alliance and Pentecostal Churches
Judith Prinsley (JP)	Board of Deputies of British Jews

Group B: Church of England

Eddie Griffiths (EG)*	Lay Church of England member
Sally Moore (SM)	Primary RE Advisor, London Diocesan Board of Schools
Helen Spiby-Vann (HSV)	London Diocesan Board of Schools

Group C: Teachers' Associations, including representation from Academy Schools

Miriam Ellen (ME)*	Teacher, Highgate Wood School
Glenford Johnson (GJ), **Vice-Chair**	Teacher, Hornsey School for Girls

Group D: Local Authority, including elected councillors

Ibrahim Ali (IA)*	Councillor
Ian Blaney (IB)*	Governor representative
Cathy Brennan (CB)	Councillor
Makbule Gunes (MG)*	Councillor
Fay Jackson (FJ)	HEP Advisor
Anna Lawton (AL)*	Councillor
Alessandra Rossetti (AR)*	Councillor

Co-opted non-voting members

Jan McGuire (JMcG)	Independent RE Advisor to Haringey SACRE

Also in attendance

Kanza Jbara (KJ)	RE Lead, Mulberry Primary School
Dilay Atlas, Ali Osoy	Observers; Alevi Cultural Centre
Dr S Kajansivakumaran (SK)	Observer; Chair of Shakthivel Hindu Association
Hannaa Mohabeer (HM)	Observer; RS teacher at Hornsey School for Girls
Christine Hatt (CH)	HEP Clerk

** Asterisk denotes absence.*

For the meeting to be quorate, at least one member from each of Groups A, B, C and D must be present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 JC introduced himself as the Chair of Haringey SACRE and an elder of Unitarians UK.

1.2 JC led the group in a minute of quiet contemplation.

1.3 JC welcomed everyone to the evening's event, explaining that it was a combination of a business meeting and a celebration of the year.

1.4 JC asked established members to introduce themselves for the benefit of guests and new members. The observers and new members also introduced themselves, as follows:

KJ explained that she was the RE Lead at Mulberry Primary School in Tottenham and would be delivering a presentation later in the meeting.

HM said she was an RS teacher at Hornsey School for Girls. She had been a Serious Crimes Officer but had returned to teaching after 15 years. She was observing today but was thinking about becoming a member of SACRE as a Muslim faith representative.

New Haringey SACRE member CB informed the meeting that she was a Muswell Hill councillor and would act as a Local Authority representative.

[Another observer, SK, also attended this meeting but had not arrived when the introductions were being made. Her details are in the list on page 1.]

1.5 Apologies had been received from AR, IA, IB, JL and TP. AL, BK, EG, MB, ME, MG, NB and SA were also absent.

1.6 Minutes of the Last Meeting
JC asked members whether they approved the minutes of the last meeting, which had been held online on 21 March 2024. The minutes were unanimously **APPROVED**.

1.7 Matters Arising

ACTIONS FROM 21 MARCH MEETING

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
5.1	Tell JMcG/CH if interested in attending the NASACRE Conference. **06.06.24:** JMcG attended on behalf of Haringey SACRE. **CLOSED.**	**Haringey SACRE members**
5.5	Find out how other SACREs work with schools to improve RE teaching. **06.06.24:** This will be discussed at the meeting today. **CLOSED.**	**JMcG**
6.3	Make a plan for capturing pupil voice. **06.06.24:** A plan has been made. JMcG and FJ will tell SACRE members more in due course. **CLOSED.**	**JMcG/FJ**
6.4 (1)	Contact the Haringey school she knows is participating in the Spirited Arts competition to ask if they could support HEP with this and the 6 June event. **06.06.2024:** Contact made and KJ from Mulberry Primary School is attending the event today. **CLOSED.**	**CH**
6.4 (2)	Identify other teachers willing to help with the local Spirited Arts event on 6 June and, if possible, arrange for children to attend. **06.06.24:** Students from Hornsey School for Girls attending today. **CLOSED.**	**GJ/ME**
6.4 (3)	Continue to arrange the SACRE Celebration event. **06.06.24:** Completed and **CLOSED.**	**FJ/GJ**

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 8 JUNE 2023

Agenda		Person

item	Action	responsible
3.1 (3)	Contact Father Staffan Dawkins of St Paul's Church, Northumberland Park, to ask if he would consider joining. **21.03.24:** IA had emailed FJ an alternative contact number for SD. FJ had contacted SD and sent him the relevant documents but had not received a response. IA said he would speak to SD again at the weekend. **CARRIED FORWARD. 06.06.24:** IA was not at today's meeting to discuss. **CARRIED FORWARD.**	**IA/FJ**

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
3.3 (1)	Share Church schools contact list with the group. **21.03.24: CARRIED FORWARD. 06.06.24: CARRIED FORWARD.**	**SM**
3.3 (2)	Email reminder to members to send content for the visit directory to JMcG. **21.03.24: CARRIED FORWARD. 06.06.24: CARRIED FORWARD.**	**JC**

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 16 NOVEMBER 2023

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
1A.5	Seek a Hindu representative for SACRE from local temples. **21.03.24:** FJ had not yet been able to find anyone. **CARRIED FORWARD. 06.06.24:** SK, the Chair of the Shakthivel Hindu Association on Green Lanes, would attend today to observe and consider membership. **CARRIED FORWARD.**	**JC/FJ**
2.2 (3)	Publicise the Spirited Arts competition among primary heads and ask Patrick Cozier, the Highgate Wood Head, to inform secondary heads. All schools should be asked to send out a 'soft message' about the competition before the end of the autumn term and follow up with a big launch in January 2024. **21.03.24:** JL not at today's meeting to report back. **CARRIED FORWARD. 06.06.24:** JL was not at today's meeting and the time for launching the competition had now passed. **CLOSED.**	**JL**
6.2	Ask LBH to put a HEP/SACRE link on its website. **21.03.24: CARRIED FORWARD. 06.06.24:** CB said she would pick this matter up with LBH. FJ to email her the details. **CARRIED FORWARD.**	**CB/FJ**

2. DATES OF 2024-25 HARINGEY SACRE MEETINGS

2.1 JMcG noted the 2024-25 dates had been emailed to members. They were as follows:
Thursday 12 September 2024, 5-7pm, in person at Hornsey School for Girls
Thursday 14 November 2024, 5-6.30pm, on Zoom
Thursday 27 March 2025, 5-6.30pm, on Zoom
Thursday 5 June 2025, 5-7pm, in person at Hornsey School for Girls: celebration event

3. NASACRE CONFERENCE

3.1 JMcG told the meeting about her attendance at the 20 May 2024 NASACRE Conference in York. These conferences are held once a year and provide a chance for people from all the SACREs across the country to meet and talk.

The Keynote Speaker at the 2024 event had been Lat Blaylock, the National RE Adviser. His subject had been how to make SACREs more exciting, and the takeaway points were:

- Include more pupil voice
- Engage with councillors and MPs; SACREs should try to write to them three times per year to remind them, among other things, of the statutory nature of SACREs
- Be involved in a project; JMcG has applied to Westhill for £10,000 to run a 'Living Voices' project, which will involve asking people to share their experiences of faith. The Alevi community will be a focus. JMcG has found a videographer and graphic designer to carry out the work but is waiting to hear if funding has been granted.

CB left at 5.30pm, as she had to attend another meeting.

4. ISSUES, COMPLAINTS AND DETERMINATIONS

4.1 For the benefit of new members and observers, JMcG explained that SACREs support RE teaching and collective worship in schools. They also have to consider any related issues, complaints and determinations.

JMcG explained that a 'determination' is a decision by a local SACRE, in response to a request, for the statutory Christian collective worship to be changed to reflect the context of the school. There have been no determination requests in Haringey this year.

An important issue that Haringey SACRE was currently considering was how the Alevi community could be better represented in the RE curriculum. JMcG added that some information on Alevism had been added to the curriculum in 2021, but there was more to do. HB and two other members of the local Alevi Community Centre were at today's meeting. FJ would discuss the issue with them further at the end of the meeting.

ACTION: FJ, HB and others to discuss the representation of Alevism in the curriculum.

HSV asked for more information on determinations. JMcG said the 1944 Education Act states that schools must hold a regular act of Christian collective worship. However, a school can ask to change this Christian focus to reflect the demographic of their school.

If a school wants to make a change, it must write to its local SACRE and complete a request form. School staff will then have a meeting with SACRE members, and SACRE will also visit the school before coming to a decision on whether to grant the request. This would be formally discussed and voted on in a SACRE meeting.

5. SOCIAL AND CELEBRATION EVENT

5.1 *Introductions*

GJ brought in and introduced a group of students from Hornsey School for Girls (where the HEP offices are situated), who were going to talk about their experience of RS teaching and learning at secondary level. KJ, the RE Lead from Mulberry Primary School, was also introduced again, prior to her talk on primary RE teaching.

JC thanked the students for coming, noting the importance of pupil voice. He told the students that SACRE members wanted to make sure they enjoyed RE and found it useful.

5.2 *THEOS video*

The intention had been to show a video called THEOS before the presentations, but technical difficulties made this impossible. JMcG explained that the video talks about a new kind of RE that does not cover only the world's major religions. It introduces a more nuanced approach, for example looking at families where different members follow different faiths. The key issue was to promote respect and ensure everyone has a voice.

The video also discusses why RE is important. The Children's Commissioner for England, Rachel de Souza, studied Theology at university and considers it the best subject because it takes an in-depth look at issues people still think about when they are adults.

5.3 *Presentation by Kanza Jbara (KJ)*

KJ gave a presentation on her work as RE Lead at Mulberry Primary School. She explained how she had combined the SACRE-approved Awareness, Mystery, Value (AMV) curriculum and the Haringey Education Partnership (HEP) curriculum to create a programme of learning that pupils really enjoyed. All pupils at the school, from Reception to Year 6, receive between 45 minutes and 1 hour of RE teaching every week.

KJ explained also that some teachers had previously been scared to teach RE because they lacked the necessary subject knowledge. She had resolved this by providing training, so that now teachers feel confident to answer any questions that pupils ask.

KJ noted that the storytelling approach to RE encouraged by the HEP curriculum booklets was very successful and helps pupils to memorise content. The curriculum is adapted as necessary for pupils in the school's Provision for Autism.

KJ and other teachers emphasise to Mulberry pupils that RE is not just a subject for the classroom, and the school takes part in a broad range of activities to help demonstrate this. For example, it is entering NASACRE's 'Spirited Arts' competition and recently hosted an Iftar meal during Ramadan. 110 parents attended, both Muslim and non-Muslim, and the event was so successful that the school intends to run it again next year.

KJ finished her presentation by saying that pupils enjoyed sharing their understanding of different religions and talking about their own experiences at home and in their communities. They felt safe and happy to discuss such matters. They also enjoyed looking at artefacts from different religions and learning how to treat them with respect.

FJ asked how the school had taught RE before KJ had produced the combined curriculum. KJ said they had a followed a skeleton AMV curriculum online, but she had felt it was too basic. In addition, teachers did not really understand the subject matter.

JP said that she felt the approach KJ had outlined was very good. It showed pupils there was not just one way of belonging to a particular faith but many. This would help to reduce stereotyping. KJ said that she also invited parents into the school to discuss RE or PSHE issues if they wished. The aim was to create a safe space for everyone.

5.4 *Presentation by Hornsey School for Girls students*

GJ introduced the secondary school presentation by Hornsey School for Girls students: Our RE Journey.

Students told the meeting that they loved studying RE (also known as RS). It was interactive and allowed them to learn about and discuss a broad range of subjects.

The Year 10 students present, who were taking RE for GCSE, said they felt it was an important subject for their futures. We now live in a multicultural society and RE knowledge helps people to understand the lives and views of friends and colleagues, as well as to recognise subjects that are sensitive and need to be approached carefully.

Students also noted that there was a lot of writing to do for RE, but they could take part in interesting debates and share their own opinions verbally as well.

GJ asked the students if there was anything they did not enjoy about RE, or anything they would change. Some said they liked lessons that focused on philosophy and morality, where there was no 'right' answer. Everyone agreed that they sometimes felt rushed, and

it was hard to process everything they were taught. GJ said that since 2016 there had been an awful lot of RE content to cover at GSCE level.

GJ agreed with the students that RE would help them to interact with people of different faiths and none in a respectful way. It was a guide to life and highlighted the importance of not being closed, and of understanding each other.

HSV said she had been very impressed by the students' willingness to listen to one another and to others. You had to be brave to speak, listen and share. How could people be trained to do this more? The students said that studying RE gave them the opportunity to discuss these issues. Within their wider friendship groups, they did not do this as much.

JP talked about people known to her who had studied Theology and found it helpful in careers that were not directly related to religion. The subject had given them a good understanding of people and broad life skills that served as a great foundation. JC agreed, and said that he had studied RE at school, too. It was not just an academic subject.

GJ asked the students what the biggest challenge was in studying RE. Students said that there were a lot of facts to memorise, and it was also difficult to write down everything you wanted to say in exams. Working through practice questions helped.

GJ asked students what skills they felt they had gained. They said they had learned to understand other people better and to be tolerant and open-minded. They felt RE also helped them describe their beliefs, while being respectful of the beliefs of others. Their confidence to share their opinions had grown as they moved from Year 7 to Year 10.

5.5 *Networking and Displays*

Once the formal presentations had finished, JC invited everyone to network and look at the books and 'Spirited Arts' competition entries of students from Mulberry Primary School and Hornsey School for Girls. These were displayed on tables around the room.

5.6 *Presentation of Certificates*

JMcG presented certificates to the students and KJ to thank them for their participation in today's celebration event.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.1 **12 September 2024** at 5pm, in person at Hornsey School for Girls.

The meeting ended at 7pm.

SIGNED: **DATE:**

Actions Lists are on the next page.

NEW ACTIONS FROM TODAY'S MEETING

Agenda item	Action	Person responsible
4.1	Discuss the representation of Alevism in the curriculum.	**FJ/HB**

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM 21 MARCH 2024 - NONE

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