

CROYDON ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
CROYDON SACRE
ANNUAL REPORT
2017-2018



Croydon SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACREs

A SACRE must publish an annual report of its work and send this to the DFE and NASACRE.

SACREs have responsibility for advising a Local Authority (LA) on religious education and collective worship in its schools. Consider requests for determinations on collective worship when required and advise the LEA upon such matters as collective worship and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus.

The main purpose of the annual report is to hold the LA to account, by informing the Secretary of State and key partners what advice SACRE gave the LA during the year and how that was responded to; this includes advice on RE and Collective Worship in those schools for which the LA has responsibility.

From NASACRE website information

Introduction from the Chair

Welcome to the 2017-18 Annual Report of the Croydon SACRE.

The SACRE has met three times during the academic year and has worked towards the priorities outlined in the current Development Plan and has contributed to the national discussions on direction and health of Religious Education in the future. Croydon SACRE has also continued to input to wider surveys and sought to promote the inclusion of RE in the English Baccalaureate.

Croydon is a richly diverse community and the need for strengthening every means of increasing tolerance and understanding of each other especially in the realm of religion has never been greater, in every decade of life.

Further information on activities are mentioned below but it should be noted that Croydon SACRE reached the 5-year point of the cycle of the local SACRE syllabus, which involves a certain amount of review of the syllabus. When the SACRE syllabus was drafted in 2013, there were many references to the tremendous and very welcome resources that were available via the resources centre CFER; however, council funding was later discontinued resulting in the closure of CFER despite representations from the Chair of CFER to the full council, Dr Jagdish Sharma, and a petition presented to the council by SACRE then-member Cllr Joy Prince. The 5-year review that was undertaken of the SACRE syllabus includes adapting it to take into account the closure of CFER.

SACRE is relieved and grateful to St James the Great Primary School and Coloma Covent Girls' School for their willingness to accept and enable access to RE materials for primary and secondary schools, respectively. The SACRE has also sought to strengthen its representation of faith groups.

A high proportion of schools in Croydon have converted to Academies and the SACRE has made ongoing efforts to engage with schools to ensure their continued compliance with requirements to provide high quality Religious Education and opportunities for Collective Worship. Some opportunities have been taken to engage with governors during training to enhance awareness of RE in schools.

Keeping its place of RE in the school curriculum has been a challenge which the SACRE has sought to rise to. This, combined with the impact of the absence of RE

from the English Baccalaureate in secondary schools, causes the SACRE great concern that Religious Education might not be apportioned the same importance as other subjects in the school curriculum. However, a renewed appetite in many schools for an improved RE profile has been detected, which is very welcome to SACRE.

As Chairman, I would like to thank all those who serve on Croydon SACRE, teachers, faith group representatives, Cllrs, visitors and visiting presenters, and the vice chairman, Mrs Cheryl Hudson, and to Rev Alison Brunt for, once again, attending the NASACRE AGM on our behalf and reporting back, and especially grateful to Mrs Penny Smith-Orr, SACRE Officer for Croydon, as professional support as our consultant /adviser and for driving our work forward and keeping us abreast of developments in Religious Education nationally, and Mrs Judy Bennett, committee Clerk. The help of the Education Department is also gratefully acknowledged.

Croydon SACRE is able to face the challenges ahead as we continue to ensure that Religious Education and Collective Worship retain their rightful place at the heart of our schools.

Cllr Richard Chatterjee
Chairman, Croydon SACRE

Overview

Meetings:

In the academic year 2017– 2018 Croydon SACRE met on the following occasions;

15th November 2017 at Shirley High School Croydon

13th March 2018 at The Minster Nursery and infants School Warrington Road Croydon

19th June 2018 at The Minster Nursery and infants School Warrington Road Croydon

The clerk to SACRE, for administration and minute taking is provided by Croydon Council. The SACRE Officer was Mrs Penny Smith-Orr.

A development plan is made each year and looked at during meetings. The priorities for 2017-18 were to Review and update the Croydon Syllabus, update the Guidance on pupils of Faith and target the local multi academy trusts.

These were achieved although there is more work to do with the academies.

Advice to Statutory Bodies

Local Authority

The Croydon Agreed Syllabus 2013 was due for a five-year review. Discussions started in the summer term 2017 and continued throughout the year. The local authority was informed that an update would need to be produced and put onto the SACRE syllabus pages of the Council website. An updated version of the Guidance on pupils of faith being included in the life of the school was updated and put onto the Council website, where there is also a special needs document and a document on Collective worship.

Croydon SACRE members are provided with sections of the Ofsted reports of Croydon schools at each meeting which mention RE, collective worship (CW), and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education at each meeting and can note these reports and act upon them when necessary advising the local authority of any problems.

A planned Governors training evening was postponed until the Autumn Term 2018 so that the updated syllabus could be advertised and discussed with Governors.

The SACRE Officer and the Chair of SACRE are part of the planning group on the Holocaust Memorial Day event put on by the Council.

Government

The Autumn term's meeting saw a very lively discussion on the interim report of the RE Council Commission and a full response was subsequently sent in from SACRE.

Schools

Information and advice are given to schools throughout the year through the school's bulletin, a news sheet sent out at the beginning of each term and through email or telephone calls to the SACRE Officer. As well as the Croydon Council website there is also a website (www.reconsultant.co.uk) where teachers can find information on the Croydon Syllabus, related documents and general RE advice. During the year there were a number of new RE Coordinators who were sent information on their role, monitoring, planning and general advice

The new home for the RE resources in the borough, St James the Great RC Primary school has proved successful and teachers are borrowing the resources regularly.

Three meetings were held for RE Coordinators during the year. The October meeting included discussions on the interim report of the RE Commission, an invitation to schools to take part in the Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) event, festivals coming up this term and what teachers would like to see changed in the review of the Croydon Syllabus. Teachers were also given a new sheet of useful websites which had been updated by the SACRE officer. At the February meeting teachers discussed the sort

of assessment they would like to see included in the updated syllabus, looked briefly at learning outside the classroom and at festivals coming up. The summer meeting discussed visits to places of worship and visitors to schools and RE Coordinators were told about the SACRE essay competition on the theme of Torn from Home, the winning entries will be read at the HMD event in January 2019.

The SACRE Officer went to ten schools to lead staff meetings or give advice to the RE coordinator. There was also a course with the PSHE adviser on the subject of Bullying and Islamophobia.

Every school was sent an HMD pack in the Autumn term 2017 and encouraged to mark the event in their schools and four Secondary schools, St Mary's, Riddlesdown, Oasis Coulsdon and Whitgift made presentations at the Borough HMD event at the Town hall on 26th January 2018.

Croydon SACRE members agreed to do a website check of school's websites to monitor whether the RE curriculum is on the websites. They also look for mention of Collective worship and SMSC, schools which do not mention these are contacted.

Standard and Quality of Provision of RE and Attainment in RE

It is difficult for a SACRE to gain verifiable information on the Standard and Quality of Provision of RE, particularly in the secondary schools. Network meetings held with Primary RE coordinators and discussions at these meetings allow the Officer to gain some information on the provision of RE in their schools. A check of schools websites has indicated whether RE and CW are mentioned and the importance given to the subject.

During this year the SACRE officer has attended schools which have been reported on by OFSTD as not teaching RE and has advised on ways to address this.

There have been no complaints about religious education during the year.

Standards of achievement and public examination entries GCSE Results: Summer 2018

This year only 15 of the Croydon schools entered pupils for the religious education GCSE exams. These schools mainly entered the whole cohort which is good to see. SACRE is concerned that some schools did not enter any pupils into the GCSE exams. This is probably as a result of the fact that religious education is not part of the school's progress measures and also not part of the ebacc set of subjects by which schools are measured. It should be remembered by schools that religious education is a statutory subject and that the Croydon syllabus requires pupils to be entered into an examination.

Only 3 schools entered a total of 25 pupils into the short course this year, this is no longer used as a performance measure of schools and is being phased out.

Previously most Croydon schools entered pupils.

At A level, ten schools entered 70 pupils altogether which is well below the numbers entered last year.

Collective Worship

It is understood from discussion with RE Coordinators that collective worship is carried out within schools and a document on Guidance for Collective Worship, can be found on the Council website.

The monitoring of school websites by SACRE members includes looking for mention of Collective Worship.

There were no determinations or complaints referred to SACRE during the year.

Management of SACRE

Once again, the Chair is a Councillor from group D and the Vice chair is a teacher from a local church school who is a representative from group B.

There is an annual budget for SACRE and the SACRE Officer is employed by the Council as SACRE Officer for 50 days per year. The LA also provides a clerk for the minutes at meetings.

The SACRE has a development plan and regularly uses the NASACRE Tool Kit to check the progress and effectiveness of SACRE.

Other Work of Croydon SACRE

Much of the work of SACRE during this year revolved around the updated Syllabus and Guidance documents.

Discussions took place as to whether the Guidelines for Respect of Pupils of Other Faiths, which was written in 2004, should be updated, and this was done with input from the members of SACRE, particularly the representatives of different faiths. It has been put onto the Council website.

Revd. Brunt volunteered to attend the NASACRE AGM in London and reported to members in the summer meeting.

Members were invited to the Croydon Community Prayer Space Project in the Minster Infant school and the Minster and Cheryl Hudson was congratulated on this very successful venture.

Contribution of SACRE to the wider Local Authority Agenda

The SACRE Officer is also involved in the local interfaith group and as a member of this and in the role of SACRE officer attends the CYPL partnership meetings and the Croydon Congress and can give advice on faith matters and religious education in schools to these bodies and to report on these meetings to SACRE.

Information from the local Interfaith group is given at each meeting. Members of SACRE were invited to the Easter Activities afternoon at Winterbourne school and to the Faiths Together in Croydon events during the year and also to the Peace festival.

Self-Evaluation of Croydon SACRE – June 2018

Key Area Number	Key Area	Developing	Established	Advanced
Section 1 Standards and quality of provision of Religious Education				
1a	RE Provision across the LA		X	
1b	Standards of achievement and public examination entries		X	
1c	Quality of learning and teaching			X
1d	Quality of leadership and management, including the provision and management of resources		X	
1e	Recruitment and retention of skilled specialist RE staff	X		
1ff	Relations with academies and other non-LA maintained schools			X
Section 2 The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus				
2a	The review process			X
2b	The quality of the local Agreed Syllabus			X
2c	Launching and implementing the Agreed Syllabus		X	
2d	Membership and training of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)		X (E/A)	
2e	Developing the revised agreed syllabus	N/A		
2f	Making best use of National Guidance	N/A		
Section 3 Collective Worship				
3a	Supporting pupil entitlement		X ((E/A)	
3b	Enhancing the quality of provision of collective worship		X	
3c	Responding to requests for determinations		X	
Section 4 Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders				
4a	SACRE meetings		X (E/A)	
4b	Membership and training	X (D/E)		
4c	Improvement/development planning		X E/A)	
4d	Professional and financial support			X
4e	Information and advice	X		
4f	Partnerships with key stakeholders		X	
Key Area Number	Key Area	Developing	Established	Advanced
4g	Relations with the Academies sector		X	
Section 5 Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community				
5a	SACRE's membership		X	
5b	SACRE's understanding of the local area		X (E/A)	
5c	SACRE's engagement with the community cohesion agenda			X
5d	SACRE's role within wider LA initiatives on community cohesion			X

Membership of Croydon SACRE 2017-2018

A-Other Faiths B-Church of England C- Teachers D -Councillors. Numbers indicate meetings attended

A			C	Ms Sevim Hamit	1
A	Lt Col Morag Rowlanes (Salvation Army)	3	C	Ms Lorna John	1
A	Rabbi Nathan Anoushka (Judaism)	0	C	Mrs Sara Bonnick	3
A	Kamil Sheikh	2	C	Mrs Sonia Clarke	3
A	Harvinder Singh	1	C	Mrs Jo O'Reilly	1
A	Fr. Michael Scanlon	1	D	Cllr Richard Chatterjee (Chair)	3
A	Miss Mayura Patel (Hindu)	0	D	Cllr Joy Prince	2
A			D	Cllr David Wood	1
B	Ms Cheryl Hudson Vice Chair	3	D	Cllr Lynne Hale	2
B	Mike McKeveny	1	D	Cllr Shafi Khan	2
B	Rev Alison Brunt	2		Penny Smith-Orr SACRE Officer	3
B	Rev Alan Bayes	3		Judith Bennett (Clerk)	3

A Buddhist member is still being sought and there is interest from the Friends of The Western Order. The Rabbi for the Croydon Synagogue receives the minutes.