



**HAVING
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 14



Chair's Foreword

My first foreword to Havering SACRE's Annual Report could only begin with a vote of thanks to Mrs Pamela Coles who, since the retirement of the Revd. Terry Brown in 2009, has faithfully and diligently discharged the role of Chairman. Since those days of long occupation of the chair by the same person, SACRE has adopted a new constitution which means that chairs and vice-chairs change bi-annually. Pamela has been a member of SACRE for many years and has been active in many projects both within it and outside in the wider community. She is an exemplar to us all and her energy and commitment have been – and continue to be – truly inspiring. She has set the bar high indeed and I look forward to the opportunity of aspiring to her achievements.

Six years ago we were, I feel, justly proud of the Pathways Approved Syllabus that we produced after much discussion and consideration. It was launched at a suitable official function attended by the Mayor at Romford Central Library and the inclusive nature of its Essential Information section at the end was indicated by the presence there of all the nine main religions in the UK recognised by the Government together with one or two others. It has, I think, served schools well over these years and feedback received during this time has been positive. Meetings are now under way in partnership with Redbridge to produce its successor, which we hope will serve the schools of both boroughs just as successfully.

One secular organisation appearing in the Essential Information section is the Humanists, who hosted SACRE's 2013 summer meeting at Nelmes United Reformed Church in Hornchurch. It was good to find out more about Humanism and they were excellent hosts and keen supporters of SACRE.

This year's winner of the Michael Edwards award was the Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School in Upminster and both myself and Mrs Coles (as the current and previous chairs) were present to present the award to the Head Girl in the presence of the Deputy-Head, the Head of RE and the School Chaplain. A tour of the Old Chapel - for so long derelict and in disrepair but now acquired by the school and renovated - followed, much to our delight.

In her foreword to the 2013 Annual Report Mrs Coles spoke of concerns regarding the decline in RE teaching across the country and commented that: *'SACRE continues to believe that sound RE teaching is invaluable in setting both moral and spiritual parameters for today's children to equip them to be our citizens of tomorrow.'* How important that statement was can be illustrated by the atrocity at Woolwich which indicated clearly the vital importance not only of acquiring an accurate and respectful understanding of other religions, but also an accurate understanding of one's own.

At an interfaith meeting in London, the Bishop of Woolwich spoke of how well the community had pulled together after that event but that when he made a friendly visit to the Imam at the mosque he found the media camped outside, seemingly disappointed that he had come as a dove of peace and not as a hawk of conflict.

Some of our citizens of tomorrow will be our reporters, hopefully equipped in the way my predecessor looked for.

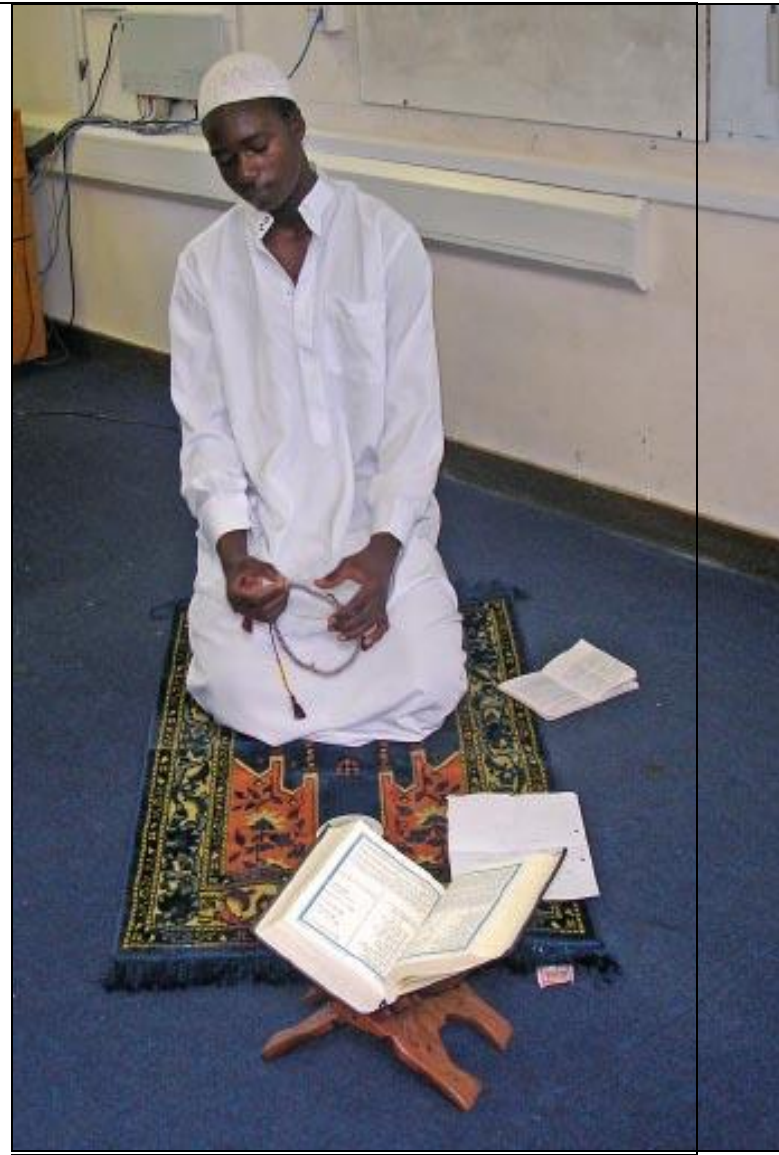
A more recent document issued by the Department of Education contains a foreword by the Minister revealing that Religious Education was an unintended victim of previous pronouncements and giving assurances that its future was secure. That sounds more heartening than at this stage last year and we can but hope that the good work going on in the borough (summarised within) can now continue unabated and unthreatened.

My thanks to all those who labour so diligently in this crucial field.

I am pleased to commend this report.

John Lester

(Chair of SACRE)



Preparation for a Hindu Arti festival

Muslim boy in traditional robes at prayer

Learning about different faiths at Redden Court School

Observations from the Secondary RE Advisor

The work of SACRE this year has been conducted against the backdrop of continuing national educational reforms. These reforms continue to affect Religious Education locally in a variety of ways. In the face of these challenges the national Religious Education community has been galvanized to try to ensure that every child, in every school, experiences excellent Religious Education. We have seen the Religious Education Council work on, and publish, a review of Religious Education. This outlines the issues we face, previous weaknesses within the subject, and provides recommendations on how the subject should move forward. Most importantly it includes a non-statutory framework for the subject that will go on to inform curriculum design nationally. We have also seen the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for RE report on teacher supply, the training of teachers, and on-going Continuous Professional Development.

At a local level, Havering SACRE has been working hard to consider how best to face up to the challenges that RE faces in our schools. The joint working with Redbridge SACRE on our new Agreed Syllabus will ensure that we make the best use of the financial and professional resources available to us. I am very pleased to report that this work is being led and directed by a core group of teachers of Religious Education from both boroughs, from across the various phases of schooling and from a range of different types of schools.

This Agreed Syllabus Review offers us an opportunity to produce a syllabus for local schools that is lively, honest and rigorous. We also want to ensure that it reflects contemporary research in Religious Studies. The Review group is also doing a great deal of thinking about how we can renew our approach to assessment so that it fits our subject more appropriately and serves children better. The conversations and work done so far have all been tremendously exciting and all the teachers involved are committed to working together to ensure the best possible outcome for all Havering and Redbridge students.

The collaborative working between our local teachers of Religious Education extends beyond the work of the Agreed Syllabus Review though. We are looking forward to hosting a *Respect for All Conference* in July that will involve Year 5 and Year 8 students from across a great number of Havering schools. This will include meeting teenage representatives from various religious and belief communities who serve as 'Ambassadors of Faith and Belief'. These teenage representatives come from a range of secondary schools from across Havering, Redbridge, and Thurrock.

Alongside the pupil conference, a group of primary and secondary teachers from Havering and Redbridge are also planning a conference for teachers of Religious Education. This will take place in the autumn term of 2014 and will involve teacher led "Teach / Meet" sessions, visits to places of worship, some keynote presentations and provide an opportunity for networking.

It has been a busy year for Religious Education in Havering and next year looks even busier! It is certainly an exciting time to be involved in Religious Education here in Havering.

Daniel Hugill
Secondary Adviser to SACRE
Teacher of Religious Education at the Coopers' Company and Coborn School

REPORT ON RE IN EDUCATION FOR THE YEAR 2013:**1. Religious Education (RE)****1.1. Standards in Religious Education**

Examination results at GCSE are monitored as part of the Borough's overall monitoring of standards.

The results for 2013 GCSE courses:

		Full Course		Short Course	
		A*-C %	A*-G %	A*-C %	A*-G %
LA	2013	70.6%	98.6%	51.2%	96.9%
	2012	74.1%	99.0%	49.1%	95.9%
	Diff	-3.5%	-0.4%	2.1%	1.0%
National	2013	72.2%	98.4%	51.1%	94.7%
	2012	72.6%	98.5%	50.4%	94.7%
	Diff	-0.4%	-0.1%	0.7%	0.0%
LA vs. NA	2013	-1.6%	0.2%	0.1%	2.2%
	2012	1.5%	0.5%	-1.3%	1.2%

1.2. Agreed Syllabus

Schools implemented the Havering Agreed Syllabus 'Pathways', (published in November 2007) in September 2008. The vast majority of Primary schools are using the new schemes of work as the basis for delivering the Agreed Syllabus. These were updated and shared with schools in September 2010. Most Secondary schools have developed their own schemes of work.

A review of syllabus is being undertaken in 2013-2014 supported by national RE advisers from RE Today Services which includes workshops with representative RE leaders from all phases of education and a conference for representative students.

1.3. Teacher Training

Advice is provided to Primary schools through the Havering School Improvement Service (HSIS) and there are regular meetings for Primary RE co-ordinators. In 2013 this consisted of:

- An experienced national trainer from RE Today Services Team, explored the teaching of Islam and Judaism with reference to the Havering Schemes of Work. Recommended activities were creative, visual, active and involved enquiry based learning;
- An update on the HMI national review of the teaching of RE and recommendations for improvement;
- A workshop to hear representative RE leaders to contribute to the review of the Havering syllabus led by RE Today advisers.

Attendance at the RE Co-ordinators conferences remains high, varying between 25 and 30 schools represented. Attendance at the termly network meetings is not as strong and varies between eight and twelve representatives. Where RE co-ordinators are unable to attend, all materials are electronically forwarded to those schools along with explanatory letters. This includes Independent and Special schools.

1.4. Complaints concerning RE

No formal complaints were made about religious education under the local statutory complaints procedure during 2013.

2. Collective Worship

2.1. Monitoring

Monitoring from Hsis during the academic year has taken the form of spiritual, moral, social and cultural health checks which include formal written reports to Primary school head-teachers and Chairs of Governors. This is a traded service and therefore is only offered to those schools who buy into the service.

2.2. Training

There has been no training on collective worship during the year.

2.3. Determinations

There were no applications for determinations (to alter the character of collective worship for all or some pupils in a particular school) during 2012. There were a number of Freedom of Information requests throughout the year which were a nil return on applications to change the character of schools in Havering.

2.4. Complaints concerning collective worship

No formal complaints were made about collective worship under the local statutory complaints procedure during 2012.

3. Links with other agencies

3.1. National

Havering SACRE belongs to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). Members attend conferences and other events and report to full SACRE meetings.

3.2. Local

SACRE has links with a range of faith and secular groups in the borough. The practice of holding some SACRE meetings in schools and different places of worship continues. SACRE were delighted to have the HMI who completed the national review of the teaching of RE address members at the Summer term meeting.

4. SACRE arrangements

4.1. Meetings

SACRE holds regular meetings during the year. The meetings are usually well attended with good representation from the faith groups and the local Humanist Association. There tends to be one meeting each term. SACRE sets its own agenda and commissions reports and updates from the Local Authority Advisers. Since the last Annual Report, SACRE has met three times during 2013.

The first of these took place in May – rather later than the planned March date, but this was to accommodate the hectic schedule of Mr Alan Brine, a senior Inspector for OfSTED who was the key-note speaker. His assessment of the position of RE within the curriculum was sobering and while his overall message suggested there were grounds for optimism (in that there were pockets of excellence and enthusiasm driven by RE teachers and responded to by groups of pupils), there was a good deal of caution as well due in part by the changes in direction in government policies in the Secondary phase.

SACRE met again in June, this time at Nelmes Church Hall which provided the external venue for a fascinating presentation by Mrs Christine Seymour on behalf of the Humanist Society and in particular, how Humanism had a valid perspective alongside faith groups and religions. It was at this meeting that Mr Hugill suggested that the forthcoming Agreed Syllabus Conference could be jointly conducted with Redbridge's SACRE as Redbridge had the support of some eminent educationalists and whilst Havering's current syllabus – "Pathways" – had been acknowledged as an excellent work, the cultural and educational landscape had changed significantly since its launch and Havering's demography was changing.

Redbridge already had experience in multiculturalism and that expertise could translate into a joint venture which would support and enhance the teaching of RE throughout the schools of both boroughs for the foreseeable future.

In September, SACRE met to elect its first Chair and Vice-Chair under the terms of reference adopted in 2012. Mrs Pamela Coles was succeeded by Dr John Lester and SACRE elected Mrs Christine Seymour to the position of Vice-Chair, the first time Havering's SACRE had appointed a Humanist to office. During the meeting, Mr Hugill informed SACRE that Redbridge had welcomed the idea of holding a combined ASC and Mrs Payne announced that Havering would be contributing £5,000 towards the Conference (Redbridge's contribution was £10,000). Members were invited to agree to the ASC being a combined one and this was unanimously agreed. At the conclusion of the meeting, several members along with Mr Hugill and Mrs Payne, remained behind for the inaugural meeting of the Havering arm of the Joint Agreed Syllabus Conference. This meeting was to plan the next combined meetings and set the process in motion.

SACRE continues to receive regular reports on local and national developments in RE. Topics discussed include: the National Curriculum Review currently underway, the relationship between autonomous academies and the Local Agreed Syllabus, and the effect of the English Baccalaureate on the teaching of Religious Education in secondary schools.

4.2. Budget

SACRE has a small annual budget to cover the cost of its work which is administered by the Education Service.

4.3. Professional and administrative support

SACRE has the services of a Committee Officer from Committee Administration at each of its meetings, both to minute the meeting and to give procedural advice. The Secondary and Primary Advisers attend SACRE meetings to report on work with schools, to offer advice and to assist SACRE in carrying out its role.

4.4. Monitoring

SACRE continues to monitor standards and quality in RE, the quality of provision for collective worship and for pupils' spiritual development from any information included in the most recent OfSTED reports for primary, secondary and special schools. In addition, examination results at GCSE and A/S and A level are monitored as part of the Borough's overall monitoring and evaluation of standards.

5. The Michael Edwards Award

This annual award is presented in commemoration of the life and work of Michael Edwards, Adviser/Inspector for Religious Education in Havering, who died in 2004.

The award is made to schools which demonstrate good practice in multi-faith RE. The award alternates between primary and secondary schools and this year was open to Primary, Special and PRU schools. The successful school was Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School. The ME Award has been opened to other schools such as the borough's pupil referral units and other Faith Schools to broaden its scope and be more inclusive – the way Michael Edwards would have wanted it. .



Mrs Pamela Coles accompanied by Dr John Lester presenting the Michael Edwards Award 2013 to Mrs Bernadette Williams, Head Teacher Sacred Heart of Mary, Roman Catholic Secondary School who received it on behalf of the school. Elizabeth Oliver, the school's Head Girl was present as representative of the pupils.

MEMBERS OF SACRE

The following is a list of SACRE members and officers in attendance for the period covered by this report.

Name	Group	Representing	Joined	Left
Mr Kevin Walsh	A	Roman Catholic	22/02/2007	
Revd. Lee Sunderland	A	Jewish Community	05/03/2009	
Mrs Pamela Coles	A	Methodist	30/06/2004	
Mr Sansar Narwal	A	Sikh Community	Pre 2004	
Pastor Aloysius Peter	A	Pentecostal Churches	24/09/2013	
Mr Mark Adams	A	Religious Society of Friends	24/09/2013	14/01/2014
Mr Kamal Siddiqui	A	Muslim Community	05/03/2008	
Mr Tariq Mahmood	A	Havering Islamic Cultural Centre	11/03/2014	
Mr Nasir Mubashar	A	Ahmadiyya Muslim Community	14/01/2014	
Mr Om Dhir	A	Hindu Community	06/06/2007	
Mrs Jenny Fox	A	Salvation Army	24/09/2013	
Dr John Lester	A	Baha'i Faith	10/11/2004	
Saddhabhaya (Dr David Weston)	A	Buddhist	09/05/2013	
Mr John Smailes	A	Evangelical Free Church (shared)	01/12/2013	
Mrs Dawn Ladbrook	A	Evangelical Free Church (shared)	01/12/2013	
Cllr Wendy Brice-Thompson	A	Local Authority	11/10/2011	
Mrs Christine Seymour		Havering and District Humanist Society	26/11/2009	
Mrs Stephanie Ellner	B	Church of England	01/12/2013	
Mrs Susan Freeman	B	Church of England	05/03/2009	
Mrs Alison Seaman	B	Church of England	07/11/2007	20/12/2013
Revd Adrian McConnaughie	B	Church of England	01/12/2013	
Mrs Anne Masters	C	ATL	28/01/2009	
Mr Nick Hills	C	NUT - Secondary	26/11/2009	
Ms Linda Munday	C	NUT - Primary	11/03/2010	
Cllr Paul Rochford	D	Local Authority	09/06/2010	
Cllr Gillian Ford	D	Local Authority	11/07/2004	
Cllr Paul McGeary	D	Local Authority	09/06/2010	
Cllr Pam Light	D	Local Authority	25/05/2011	
Cllr Damian White	D	Local Authority	09/06/2010	

Advisors:

Judith Payne, Primary and Daniel Hugill, Secondary