

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE KINGSTON UPON THAMES
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION [SACRE]
FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2011- 2012
(SEPTEMBER 2011 TO AUGUST 2012)**

INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIR OF THE SACRE, MARIA JAMES

Once again, SACRE members have served the schools of this borough in a voluntary capacity throughout the year bringing their individual and collective wisdom to the table in doing so. It has been my privilege to lead this statutory committee. As usual, we have been able to meet in a school, a place of worship and the Guildhall in Kingston. I would like to thank Diana Brotherston, Fern Hill Primary, and Rabbi Rosenfeld, Kingston Synagogue, for hosting these meetings and making us feel so welcome.

We bid farewell to Diana Brotherston who has retired as Headteacher of Fern Hill Primary School, and Councillor Liz Green. We have welcomed Charmaine Lee, St Andrews and St Mark's C of E Junior School and Councillor John Ayles.

In January 2012 we presented our revised locally agreed syllabus. The launch was a particularly wonderful affair where RE was truly celebrated. Thanks, as usual, go to the Clerk to the SACRE, Karen Bridgman, for her support in arranging such an inspiring evening – not to mention the delicious refreshments. Also a special thanks to the wonderful children of St Paul's C of E Junior School who gave an awe inspiring performance and the Just Jhoom dancers for their exciting show. The syllabus was revised after consultation with the schools and it was brought up to date in the light of latest government initiatives. I would like to thank the working party for the many meetings they attended and for the sterling work carried out. We are indebted to Keith Field, our RE consultant, for the work that he has done this year with Kingston teachers and the syllabus.

A personal celebration for me, in March, was being awarded the Mayor's Award for service and commitment to the SACRE as the Chair. I was happy to receive the award for the whole of the SACRE as I represented a team. It was a lovely occasion and again, gratifying to see the status and importance of Religious Education in the Borough being recognised. Councillor Dennis Doe made a very kind speech and I am very grateful to him for the nomination.

For our inaugural lecture this year, Lat Blaylock who writes for RE Today spoke to us about "Enquiring RE: Curiosity for Better Learning". The teachers present voiced how much they enjoyed the lecture and how there were inspired by what Lat had to say. He has an inspiring way of linking both theory and practice together in a synergised whole and spoke about pedagogical principles that could be carried forth, realistically, into the classroom.

I would like to congratulate the teachers of this Borough once more for the work they do in RE and Collective Worship and I know I speak for all members of the Kingston SACRE that we count it a privilege and pleasure to serve you in this way.

MARIA JAMES
Chair to SACRE

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR OF LEARNING AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

During the academic year 2011-12 the SACRE has met its statutory requirements on behalf of the borough and has continued to support the development of quality RE across the borough. I am extremely grateful for the time and commitment its members and co-opted members give to this work. It is good to hear that members of SACRE have been contributing to the Primary RE Support meetings, and continue to seek ways of monitoring the effectiveness of RE in our schools through questionnaires, and the scrutiny of Ofsted reports.

My particular thanks go to Maria James for chairing SACRE again this year. Her wisdom and experience have been greatly valued, especially at a time when she has been so busy writing up her doctorate.

I am grateful to the Syllabus Review Working Group for the work they put into revising the Kingston Agreed Syllabus. I am sure that the additional support provided in response to requests from schools will be greatly appreciated by those teachers with the responsibility for devising an RE curriculum fit for the 21st century.

SACRE are to be congratulated on hosting two significant events this year:

1. The very successful and well-attended launch of the revised syllabus on 12 January 2012. I am thankful to Keith Field, our independent RE Adviser, for chairing that evening on behalf of Maria, and to Karen Bridgman for her sterling work as Clerk to SACRE throughout the year.
2. The successful and thought provoking Annual Public Lecture, in which Lat Blaylock, a renowned national speaker in the RE world, gave a very practical and inspiring presentation on 'Enquiring RE'.

My directorate continues to coordinate the work of statutory and voluntary agencies in the borough in order to promote the education and welfare of all our children and young people. I am conscious of the crucial role that SACRE, the Inter Faith Forum and our local faith communities play in both nurturing and providing development opportunities for our young people within a variety of cultural traditions. I am also aware of significant factors that are impinging upon our work in our schools and community at this time, such as the Government's reorganisation of the examination system, the change of status of many of our schools to Academies and the recent Government report on working with faith communities to help tackle so called 'Faith Based Abuse'.

I wish the members of SACRE every success in their ongoing work at this challenging time, as we seek to work together for the wellbeing of our children and young people

NICK WHITFIELD
Director
Learning and Children's Services

SACRE WEBSITE

The Kingston SACRE web page provides access to a variety of our documents including:

- RE Syllabus
- Databank of Places of Worship
- Transcripts of Annual Lectures
- Access to the agenda and Minutes of SACRE meetings
- SACRE information leaflet and Parents' Leaflet
- Annual Reports
- Collective Worship Guidance Document
- Collective Worship Determination Scheme
- RBK Self Evaluation guidance and AREIAC self evaluation toolkit
- Links to 10 key RE websites and 12 SMSC websites
- Inter Faith dialogue resources

View the website at: <http://www.kingston.gov.uk/education/sacre>

COMPLAINTS

The SACRE has not received any complaints on either the agreed syllabus or collective worship.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

There have been no requests for determinations (that is, to lift the statutory requirement that collective worship be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character).

PUBLIC EXAMINATION RESULTS FOR RE

Details of results for each school can be found at Appendix

NATIONAL BODIES

We are members of both the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and the National Associations of SACREs (NASACRE) and have benefitted from their conferences, newsletters, website and advice.

MEETINGS OF THE SACRE

The Kingston upon Thames SACRE met on three occasions between September 2011 and August 2012. We continued our tradition of meeting in different education and faith locations across the borough (as well as in the Guildhall, Kingston).

We enjoyed the kind hospitality of Fern Hill Primary School and the Jewish Synagogue. SACRE Members were given a very interesting tour of the synagogue by Rabbi Rosenfield.

The following topics were discussed at our meetings:

- The Annual Report for 2010-211i including school examination results.
- Minutes of Kingston Inter Faith Forum meetings.
- Summaries of SMSC grades in 'Section 5' Ofsted report.
- RE Toolkit
- SEF
- SACRE Action Plan
- Improving SACRE Links with schools
- Visitors to Schools

Meetings and agendas of SACRE meetings can be found on the Kingston Council website at:

www.kingston.gov.uk/committeeminutes

MAYOR AWARD

Maria James, Chair of SACRE, received the Mayor's Award for her service and commitment to the SACRE.

LAUNCH OF THE 2012-2017 LOCALLY AGREED RE SYLLABUS

It was with much pleasure and a sense of satisfaction at a 'task well completed', that SACRE and The Royal Borough of Kingston hosted the launch of the updated Agreed Syllabus on Thursday 12th January 2012. We are grateful to The King Charles Centre for allowing us to use their main hall for the occasion. The hall was packed with pupils, teachers and SACRE members.

Karen Bridgman, clerk for SACRE and Ruth Freedman from the Kingston Synagogue organised a delicious array of food. Members of 'Insight', (The Kingston schools' Christian workers) set up a stand illustrating their work and kindly acted as stewards for the evening. There were also fascinating displays of literature, resources and artefacts from a variety of faith and belief traditions.

St Paul's Church of England Junior School Choir entertained us to some top quality musical items and were followed by a colourful display of Indian dance by the Just Jhoom Dance Company.

The evening was compared by Keith Field who reminded us that any syllabus is really about the children and young people we seek to teach and thanked all those who had taken the time to attend and who had contributed to the update of the Agreed syllabus over the past two years.

We hope that the new material in the syllabus will assist teachers in their effective delivery of Religious Education for next five years.

2012 ANNUAL LECTURE

We were very privileged to have Lat Blaylock as the guest speaker for our Annual Lecture this year. Lat is Editor of REToday magazine and has written many resources for Religious Education for both Primary and Secondary pupils. He taught RE, Humanities and PSHE in the multi-cultural city of Leicester for 11 years but now travels around the country, hosting very popular conferences and speaking to and advising teachers, SACRE's Dioceses and Local Authorities.

Lat gave a spirited and inspiring presentation on the title "Enquiring RE: Curiosity for Better Learning". His illustrative material ranged from pupils' 'Letters from God' to the atheist comedian Marcus Brigstocke (written in response to Marcus' wistful take on spiritual development), to a Year 4 class' response to the Sikh story of 'The Milk and the Jasmine flower' through to some secondary pupils' responses to Islamic art and the concept of God.

The underlying challenge behind Lat's presentation was to reflect on how we can empower pupils with the freedom to develop and respond to their natural curiosity rather than the pre-determined pathways we so often lay out for them. Not an easy task but one worth continued exploration!

APPENDIX A

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SACRE (September 2011 – August 2012)

Christian and Other Religious Denominations

Mrs Maria James (Chair)	-	The local Evangelical Churches
Mr Gurmeet Singh Nurula	-	The local Sikh Community
Mrs Ruth Freedman	-	The local Jewish Community
Mrs Anna King	-	Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark
Mrs Beryl Mooney	-	Kingston and District Free Churches
Mr Raju Pandya	-	The local Hindu Community
Mr Mahendra Thaker	-	The local Hindu Community
Venerable Phrakru Samu Lom	-	The Buddahist Community
Mrs Hamida Syed	-	The local Muslim Community

The Church of England

Miss Sam Mitchell	-	Southwark Diocesan Board of Education
Ms Heather Henderson	-	Diocese of Guildford

Teachers' Associations

Ms Diana Brotherston	-	Fern Hill Primary School
Ms Jennifer Rickards	-	Malden Manor Primary & Nursery School
Ms Charmaine Lee	-	St Andrew's and St Marks's Junior School

Local Authority

Councillor Dennis Doe (Vice Chair)
 Councillor Tricia Bamford
 Councillor John Ayles

Co-opted Members

Mr Simon Birch	-	the local Baha'i Community
Mr Tim Neale	-	Insight in Kingston
Mrs Marilyn Mason	-	British Humanist Association

Officers supporting the SACRE

During this academic year, the SACRE received professional support from Keith Field, Consultant RE Adviser, Barbara Chevis, RBK and Karen Bridgman, Clerk.