

CROYDON ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
CROYDON SACRE  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2014-2015



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  
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.

## **Overview**

Croydon SACRE met on three occasions during the 2014-2015 academic year at the Croydon Faith Education Resource Library;

6<sup>th</sup> November 2014

5<sup>th</sup> March 2015

14<sup>th</sup> July 2015

The clerk to SACRE for administration was provided by Croydon council and the minutes are taken at meetings by a clerk from Governor Services. The RE Advisor (SACRE Officer), employed by Croydon CYPL, for 50 days per year was Mrs Penny Smith-Orr.

## **Introduction from the Chair**

Welcome to the 2014-15 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. The SACRE has also responded to the Religious Education Council's review of Religious Education and has written to the Secretary of State (through the Local Authority) as a way of contributing to the direction and health of Religious Education in the future.

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. The syllabus produced periodically by SACRE refers to a selection of the array of materials available from Croydon Faith Education Resources (CFER).

A high proportion of school 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 may not be apportioned the same importance as other subjects in the school curriculum. The

SACRE is grateful to Mrs Penny Smith-Orr, Consultant Adviser, for driving our work forward and keeping us abreast of developments in Religious Education nationally.

As Chairman, I would like to thank all those who serve on Croydon SACRE, teachers, faith group representatives, Cllrs, and the vice chairman. We would also like to thank CFER led by Dr Jagdish Sharma and his team for allowing SACRE to meet in the CFER library and for the use of the materials from and on such a wide variety of religions. The professional support of our consultant /advisor and the democratic support are 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

## **Advice to Statutory Bodies**

### **Local Authority**

The Advisor is part of the planning group on Holocaust Memorial day and advises on schools taking part or marking the day in school.

The Director of Education asked SACRE to identify educational establishments within the borough which have any specific after school/additional groups where religious teachings take place within any denomination because the LA is very concerned to ensure that appropriate safeguarding measures are in place in all situations within Croydon schools and educational establishments. As part of the wider interfaith network in Croydon the advisor is able to recommend links with members of other faiths when necessary.

A course for Governors was run to update them on their responsibilities towards religious education and collective worship. The course also explored the OFSTED process and the introduction of British values teaching into school. Croydon SACRE members are provided with sections of the Ofsted reports of Croydon schools which mention RE, collective worship (CW), and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education at each meeting and are able to note these reports and act upon them when necessary advising the local authority of any problems.

### **Schools**

Three network meetings were held with Primary RE coordinators and discussions at these meetings allow the RE advisor to gain some information on the provision of RE in their schools. Discussions at the networks included ideas for teaching Easter, Ascension and Pentecost, what to do about assessment, how the new syllabus can be embedded in school and a speaker from the Hindu community talked about Hinduism and Diwali. Coordinators that have achieved the

RE Quality Mark are always asked to speak about their experience. The Croydon Faith Education Resources library hosted a series of talks, led by leaders of the different faiths, on aspects of their faith and these were also discussed.

The RE Advisor went to three schools to give advice to the RE Coordinator on teaching and learning in RE and was also able to attend a Head teachers breakfast meeting and explain the support that SACRE can offer. A course for new RE coordinators was also run.

Information is given to schools throughout the year through email or telephone calls to the Advisor. Some schools are able to access 'Fronter' and use the resources and information there and also the resource library has a website with information on and access to 18000 resources for subscribing schools.

### **Government**

The SACRE discussed the letter sent to all SACREs by Lord Nash and replied to this. A response was also made to the GCSE and A level exam consultation.

### **Standard and Quality of Provision of RE**

The LA were only able to provide exam data in a reduced form, however twenty-one schools entered pupils for GCSE RE with a total of 2370 Croydon pupils entered. Harris Crystal palace, Norbury manor and Oasis Coulson all achieved above 90% of pupils gaining A\*-C while all schools achieved over 90% of pupils gaining A\*-G grades. One school entered 32 pupils for the AS level exam with 12.5% gaining A-B results.

### **Attainment in RE**

Three schools in Croydon have achieved the RE Quality mark and coordinators from other schools have been invited to visit these. One school that puts on an annual RE day was visited during the event which had interactive displays from all the religions and very enjoyable. SACRE still relies on the goodwill of the schools to invite the committee or inform them about RE and collective worship.

Some children are withdrawn from RE in schools in Croydon, these are mainly from the Jehovah's Witness community and how to deal with this has been discussed at network meetings. There have been no complaints about religious education.

### **Agreed Syllabus**

A new Agreed syllabus was launched in July 2013 and schools are now using it. A review of use will take place in autumn 2015

## Collective Worship

It is understood from discussion with RE Coordinators that collective worship is carried out within schools. The SACRE committee decided to review the Collective Worship guidance during the year and a working party was formed to do this.

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

## Management of SACRE

The Chair is a Councillor from group D and the Vice chair appointed in the spring term is a teacher from a local Church school who is a representative from group B.

## Membership of Croydon SACRE 2014-2015

### A-Other Faiths B-Church of England C- Teachers D -Councillors

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | Mr Javid Hamid (Muslim)                           | C | Ms Sevim Hamit                              |
| A | Lt Col Morag Rowlanes<br>(Salvation Army)         | C | Ms Lorna John                               |
| A | Rabbi Nathan Anoushka<br>(Judaism)                | D | Cllr Richard Chatterjee<br>(Chair)          |
| A | Mrs Barbara Rosen (Judaism)                       | D | Cllr Joy Prince                             |
| A | Mrs Ruth Tayler (Methodist)                       | D | Cllr David Wood                             |
| A | Ms Isabel Russo (British<br>Humanist Association) |   | Mrs Penny Smith-Orr<br>SACRE Officer        |
| A | Miss Mayura Patel (Hindu)                         |   | Miss Sheila Fenner<br>Resource officer CFER |
| A | Mr Jeet Bains (Sikh)                              |   | Clerk from Governor Services                |
| B | Mrs Cheryl Hudson (Vice Chair)                    |   |   |
| B | Mrs Jane Saville                                  |   |   |
| B | Rev Alison Brunt                                  |   |   |
| B | Rev Canon Colin Boswell                           |   |   |

There is an annual budget for SACRE and the RE consultant is employed by the Council as SACRE Officer for 50 days per year. The LA also provides information on public examination grades for this report and an administrator as well as a clerk for the minutes at meetings.

During the year members who had not attended were written to and this has meant that the committee reduced slightly, we also lost a teacher to retirement and a priority for the next academic year is to get more teachers onto the SACRE committee. The Archdiocese has also been contacted for a new Roman Catholic representative.

At each meeting members look at extracts from Ofsted reports which have had an inspection within the last quarter. Members noted with concern in the autumn term that one inspection report made no mention at all of the school's contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The self-evaluation toolkit is used each year by Croydon SACRE and the committee looked at the top challenges to SACREs produced by the NASACRE AGM and discussed these in relation to Croydon.

Discussions at meetings included the letter from Lord Nash, the document on Religion and Belief in Schools produced by Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead, the exam consultations, the possible closure of the Croydon Faith education resource library due to the loss of funding from the local authority. The conference on the 'Trojan Horse' aftermath which the advisor had attended and issues raised at the NASACRE AGM. A new Hindu school is being opened in Croydon and this was also discussed.

A training session on the impact of RE on pupils was presented at one meeting and a short training discussion on the law regarding collective worship in advance of the working party updating the Croydon guidance.

In the summer the AGM of the association of religious education inspectors, advisors and consultants was held in Croydon, having been organised by the RE Advisor. A previous Chair of SACRE and the current vice chair were invited to present workshops at the conference and received very positive feedback from the conference and were warmly congratulated by the SACRE committee.

### **Contribution of SACRE to the wider Local Authority Agenda**

Members of SACRE are invited to attend the faith celebrations in Croydon. The advisor 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 is able to give advice on faith matters and religious education in schools and to report on these to SACRE. The activities of the Faiths Together group, which is supported by the local authority, are discussed at meetings.