



STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**TUESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2009
7.30 PM**

COMMITTEE AGENDA

**COMMITTEE ROOMS 1 & 2,
HARROW CIVIC CENTRE**

MEMBERSHIP (Quorum: 1 member from each of 4 groups: Representatives of the Local Authority, Representatives of Christian and other religious denominations and faiths, Representatives of Church of England, Representatives of Teachers)

Chairman: Mrs A Stowe

Vice-Chairman: Mrs M Besser

Councillors:

Mrs Lurline Champagne
Mrs Anjana Patel

Ms Nana Asante

Reserve Members:

1. Eric Silver
2. G Chowdhury

1. Nizam Ismail

**Issued by the Democratic Services Section,
Legal and Governance Services Department**

**Contact: Mark Doherty, Acting Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 020 8416 8050 E-mail: mark.doherty@harrow.gov.uk**

***NOTE FOR THOSE ATTENDING THE MEETING:
IF YOU WISH TO DISPOSE OF THIS AGENDA, PLEASE LEAVE IT BEHIND AFTER THE MEETING.
IT WILL BE COLLECTED FOR RECYCLING.***

1. **Welcome and Introductions:**
Alison Stowe.
2. **Opening Reflection:**
By a SACRE Member.
3. **Apologies for Absence:**
To receive apologies for absences (if any).
4. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**
To note the attendance at this meeting of any duly appointed Reserve Members.

Reserve Members may attend meetings:-

- (i) to take the place of an ordinary Member for whom they are a reserve;
- (ii) where the ordinary Member will be absent for the whole of the meeting; and
- (iii) the meeting notes at the start of the meeting at the item 'Reserves' that the Reserve Member is or will be attending as a reserve;
- (iv) if a Reserve Member whose intention to attend has been noted arrives after the commencement of the meeting, then that Reserve Member can only act as a Member from the start of the next item of business on the agenda after his/her arrival.

5. **Declarations of Interest:**
To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from:

- (a) all Members of the Committee, Sub Committee, Panel or Forum;
- (b) all other Members present in any part of the room or chamber.

- Enc. 6. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 September 2009:** (Pages 1 - 6)
That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2009 be taken and read as a correct record.

7. **Matters Arising from the Minutes:**
To consider matters arising that are not included later in the agenda.

- Enc. 8. **SACRE Annual Report:** (Pages 7 - 20)
- (a) Analysis of public examination results for Harrow High Schools in Religious Studies 2009;
 - (b) Consideration of the draft Annual Report 2008 – 2009.

9. **SACRE Self-evaluation:** (Pages 21 - 32)
Criteria for an effective SACRE provided in the Ofsted publication 'SACRE's and Self-evaluation: A Guide' to identify priorities for the SACRE Development Plan 2010 – 2012.

10. **Protocols For SACRE Visitors to RE Lessons and Collective Worship:**
(Pages 33 - 40)
'Religious Believers Visiting Schools: Guidance & a Code of Conduct'.
NATRE 2007.

11. **Determinations:**
To receive Determinations (if any).
- Enc. 12. **Youth On Religion (YOR) Study:** (Pages 41 - 46)
An update on the Study.
13. **News from Harrow Inter-Faith Council:**
A report from Harrow Inter-Faith council on activities organised for the first ever Inter-Faith Week in England 15 - 21 November 2009.
14. **News from Faith Communities:**
To be received from SACRE Members.
15. **Reports from SACRE Partners:**
16. **Any Other Business:**
Items to be submitted to the SACRE clerk before the meeting.
17. **Date of Next Meeting:**
To note that the date of the next meeting of SACRE is due to be held on Tuesday 9 March 2010.

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**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

16 SEPTEMBER 2009

Representatives of the Local Authority

Councillors: † Ms Nana Asante * Mrs Anjana Patel
† Mrs Lurline Champagnie

Representatives of Christian and Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

* Mrs M Besser	† Councillor Asad Omar
Mr Z Baig	Miss F Rahemani
† Mr M Bishop	* Mr N Ransley
* Dr J Crow	* Mrs G Ross
* Mrs N Desai	† Mr S Saddik
* Mrs P Gan-Kotwal	* Mrs B Samuels
Ms S Gulamhussein	Mr P Singh-Kohli
† Mrs M Hale	Ms B Willson
Dr V Kapashi	
Mr D Liversedge	

Representatives of the Church of England

* Mrs M Abbott	† Reverend G Pinnock
Mrs G Mercer	* Reverend Matthew Stone

Representatives of Teachers

Ms G Capin	Mrs A Stowe (Chairman)
Ms B Pandya-Arepalli	† Ms N Parsons
	Rev'd Dr S Thompson

Co-opted Members

Mr J Dave	D Patel
Mr R Mistry	Ms P Stevens

Adviser to the Council, Nominated by the Corporate Director, Children's Services

Ms F Aldridge

* Denotes Member present
† Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

212. **Opening Reflection:**
This was led by Dr Julie Crow, who offered quotations from works by Charles Darwin and Professor A.J.Aire.
213. **Apologies for Absence:**
RESOLVED: To note apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Nana Asante, Councillor Lurline Champagnie, Councillor Asad Omar, Mr Mike Bishop, Mrs Mary Hale, Mr Shaban Siddik, Rev. Giles Pinnock and Ms Nancy Parsons.
214. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**
RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.
215. **Declarations of Interest:**
RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interest made by Members present in relation to the business to be transacted at this meeting.

216. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2009 be taken and read as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- (i) The inclusion of apologies from Councillor Nana Asante and Mrs Mary Abbott;
- (ii) The deletion of Mrs G Mercer's name from the Church of England Group after her resignation;
- (iii) Councillor Anjana Patel being marked as present and the deletion of her name from minute 195 – Apologies for absence;
- (iv) Mrs Phiroza Gan-Kotwal's name being spelt correctly under minute 195 – Apologies for absence.

217. **Matters Arising:**

- (1) distribution of 'Faith Matters in Harrow: Guidance on Sensitivities that Impact on Schools'. (Alison Stowe confirmed that these had been circulated to schools and SACRE Members);
- (2) response to Qualifications and Curriculum Authority questionnaire: Pat Stevens reported that a working party had met to draft a response from Harrow SACRE. Following useful discussion on the primary curriculum review and updated non-statutory guidance on religious education, the draft response was shared with all SACRE Members and forwarded to Q.C.A. Mrs Gan-Kotwal requested an additional copy of the response. SACRE Members felt that the impact of the new curriculum arrangements relating to religious education (RE) would need to be monitored once the revised legislation was implemented.
- (3) The Handbook for SACRE Members: Copies of the Handbook were distributed to Members who had not received one previously. It was suggested that a special induction pack for Harrow SACRE Members might be developed, complementary to the Handbook, which explored ways in which RE could be monitored locally.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

218. **SACRE Maintenance Plan 2009 - 2012 with Objectives for 2009 - 2010:**

Rachel Bowerman explained the rationale behind the SACRE Maintenance Plan 2009-2010, which had been distributed to members previously. She stressed that schools' priorities for the coming year as follows: The implementation of the new OFSTED framework; development of the 'pupil voice'; and rigorous school self-evaluation. She added that SACRE would need to monitor the quality of religious education and its outcomes for pupils, and the Q.C.A primary curriculum review and non-statutory guidelines on religious education. Consideration would need to be given to how SACRE would collate information about the quality of RE in schools, and the possible piloting of a self-evaluating form (SEF) for RE.

In response to Members questions relating to the work of the RE Consultant following her retirement, Rachel Bowerman confirmed that in-service training (INSET) for RE, led by Advanced Skills Teachers (who were SACRE members), was in place for the academic year 2009-2010. She added that additional support by national specialists could be brought in by both schools and the Achievement and Inclusion Service.

Members pointed out that SACRE and Harrow Inter-Faith Council personnel frequently worked with teachers in schools with a view to sharing knowledge and understanding the experiences of pupils. It was suggested that a register of people with known expertise in this area could be created and distributed to schools. It was agreed training sessions for visitors to classrooms to demonstrate good practice in RE learning and teaching and how RE contributes to the curriculum would be arranged.

It was noted that the Professional Council for Religious Education (PCfRE) had a model contract that could be used to draw up one between schools and visitors and collective worship. Members pointed out that national faith associations, such as the Board of Deputies of British Jews, provided excellent support and INSET. Members suggested a quality mark for places of worship that provided an excellent experience for visiting pupils.

Heena Modi was concerned that in some cases RE was taught by unqualified teachers during times given to teachers for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA).

That the SACRE Maintenance Plan 2009-2010, be accepted and worked on, with a special focus on building a framework of evaluation with the help of subject leaders.

RESOLVED: That (1) the SACRE Maintenance Plan 2009-2010 be noted.

(2) the SACRE Maintenance Plan 2009-2010 be developed, with a special focus on building a framework of evaluation for the use of SACRE Members in monitoring the enjoyment and achievement in RE in Harrow schools.

219. **The A - Z of Collective Worship, Collective Worship Experiences at Priestmead Middle School and National Inter Faith Week:**

Alison Stowe affirmed that the document was being revised, with a view to placing information on relevant websites. It was agreed that Alison would continue working on this document and that a draft would be provided for discussion with SACRE prior to publication.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

220. **Guidance on Authorised Absence for Pupils to Fulfil Religious Obligations:**

Following agreement of the introduction to the 2009-2010 document at the last meeting, Pat Stevens presented an overall list of religious festivals where schools may receive a request for absence. A list containing the dates during the 2009-2010 academic year, when such festivals fell on weekdays during term time, was also presented.

It was accepted that the Zoroastrian festivals in the general list should read Zartuscht-No-Diso, Jamshedi and Khordad Sal.

Heena Modi pointed out that not all pupils took time out on the recommended day for religious observance, as faith communities made different arrangements concerning observance times.

SACRE Members agreed that consideration would be given to provisions based on local faith needs, and the possibility for a general school closure at the time of major religious festivals.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

221. **Young People's Projects:**

Youth SACRE Members:

The retiring youth SACRE Members, Dheemal Patel and Ravi Mistry, stated that on 19 October 2009 the Student Advisory Group would elect two new youths delegates to SACRE. They would accompany them to their early meetings to help them settle into their roles. Unanimous and sincere thanks were passed to Dheemal and Ravi for their contribution to SACRE deliberations, and their outstanding achievement in their recent GCSE.

Brunel University:

Rachel Bowerman and Councillor Anjana Patel gave a detailed account of a recent meeting with Professor Nicola Madge of Brunel University, her colleagues in the Youth and Religion project, and Hillingdon colleagues who were participating in the project. She advised that a progress report had been provided and plans implemented for contacts to set up a questionnaire for pupils. It was felt that the project had great potential for the 'pupil voice' concerning religion and RE in Harrow, and of our young 'champions' working in partnership with students from Brunel University. The importance of clarity in the questionnaire was emphasised. It was felt that the need for its purpose should be explained to pupils to secure their commitment, enthusiasm and participation.

Members agreed that in going ahead with the project, Harrow SACRE would insist on clarity in the questionnaire and full involvement of our young people. Members also noted that Harrow SACRE would withdraw if representatives become dissatisfied with the projects aims and modus operandi.

RESOLVED: That SACRE Members would receive minutes of the meetings concerning the Brunel University.

Youth Inter Faith Forum:

Pat Stevens reported that a working party of pupils would be commissioned at the Student Advisory Group meeting on the 19 October 2009. She added that the working party would plan the inaugural activity of the newly formed Harrow Youth Inter-Faith Forum, which consisted of making a film, 'This is Harrow – the UK's most religiously diverse borough'. To date, £7,000 had been secured to make the film, together with an offer from St.Dominic's Sixth Form College to assist with technical support. Interested Members of SACRE and Harrow Inter-Faith Council were invited to support the newly formed working party. Niru Desai indicated her wish to be involved.

SACRE Members expressed their support of the Harrow Youth Inter Faith Forum. It was agreed that Members interested in being further involved would e-mail Alison Stowe to indicate their interest.

RESOLVED: That the updates be noted.

222. **Determinations:**

There were no determinations for consideration at this meeting. Pat Stevens informed Members that Headteachers and Chairs of governors of the schools whose determinations were due for renewal, had been invited to reapply for a determination if they wished to do so.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

223. **Resource Packs:**

Paramjit Singh Kohli was not present to give an update on the Sikh pack. Phiroza Gan-Kotwol reported that Malcolm Deboo, Secretary of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, was in contact with Pat Stevens concerning the Zoroastrian pack.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

224. **Harrow Hate Crime Forum:**

It was reported that Pat Stevens had resigned from this group on her retirement. In future, Alison Stowe would represent SACRE. Martha Besser, in her role as secretary of Harrow Inter-Faith Council, indicated that the group would also nominate a representative.

SACRE Members were aware that the Harrow Hate Crime Forum, together with the Trustees of Harrow Central Mosque, the police and Members of Harrow Inter-Faith Council, had supported Harrow Central Mosque in light of a protest against their organisation on 11 September 2009. Following a request by Reverend Matthew Stone, it was agreed that a letter should be written to the Trustees of Harrow Central Mosque, pledging SACRE's support for the community.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

225. **News from Harrow Inter Faith Council:**

Martha Besser reported that Harrow Inter-Faith Council had worked alongside the Harrow Council Community Development Group to organise an 'Open Door' event in Harrow on the 21 and 22 November 2009 as a contribution to Inter-Faith Week. All faith communities would be encouraged to take part and programmes would be distributed widely. It was intended to produce leaflets entitled, 'Our Faiths – Fact and Fiction'. Martha Besser undertook to report SACRE's comments to the Harrow Inter Faith Council.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

226. **News from Faith Communities:****The following events were highlighted:**

(1) Ven Sumana Sravaner invited members to the International Buddhist Centre in Kingsbury to celebrate the UK Buddhist Day at 4:00pm on the 20 September 2009, and to participate in a Kathina Day Robe Offering ceremony at 4:00pm on 4 October 2009;

(2) Councillor Patel reminded Members of the following Hindu festivals:

- Navaratri, 19 – 27 September 2009;
- Durga Puja, 26 September 2009;
- Diwali, 17 October 2009;
- Hindu New Year, 18 October 2009.

SACRE Members were advised that they were welcome to attend these events, held at various Hindu temples. They were also invited to the celebration of Durga Puja at the Arts Centre from 24–28 September 2009. Members were advised to contact Councillor Patel for further details and invitations if they wished to attend;

(3) The Jain New Year would be celebrated on Monday 19 October 2009;

(4) Phiroza Gan-Kotwol explained that the National Trust Open Weekend, 19–20 September 2009, would include visits to the Zoroastrian Centre between 10.00am and 1.00pm on both days. SACRE Members were welcome to attend.

227. **Dates of next meetings:**

RESOLVED: To note that the date of the next meetings would be held on:

- Tuesday 1 December 2009
- Tuesday 9 March 2010

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.50 pm)

(Signed) MRS A STOWE
Chairman

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HARROW STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2008-2009

Executive Summary

This is the twenty first annual report of Harrow SACRE.

It is written during a time of considerable change in Harrow Council's educational organisation. For many years provision was arranged as:

- First Schools for Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception), Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) and Key Stage 2 (Year 3);
- Middle Schools for Key Stage 2 (Years 4, 5, 6) and Key Stage 3 (Year 7);
- High Schools for Key Stage 3 (Years 8 and 9) and Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

Tertiary colleges provided sixth form and further education. From 2006 Sixth Forms are being added to schools as part of the Harrow Collegiate. From 2010 Year 7 pupils will transfer from middle to high schools.

The 2008-2009 academic year saw steady progress and consolidation of RE and collective worship, building on past experiences and looking ahead to the way in which RE can play a central part in curriculum development, giving opportunity for pupils and students to continue to develop an important and exciting role in their RE learning and exploration.

1. Standards and quality of religious education (RE) provision

Overview

Harrow is the most religiously diverse borough in the UK and enjoys strong, trusting relationships between its council, faith communities, SACRE and schools. Religion and faith are seen as strong, positive elements in the local community. This strength is reflected in religious education in schools, where adults (staff, parents and members of the local community) and young people (from the nursery to Year 13) willingly share their scholarship, understanding, perceptions and reflections with confidence, in the knowledge that they will be received with respect and interest. The organisation in March / April 2009 of a Jewish Way of Life Exhibition was testimony to the work of the Jewish SACRE members, who in conjunction with the Middlesex New Synagogue and the Board of Deputies of British Jews arranged an excellent, inter-active learning experience for the hundreds of pupils who visited the exhibition and an example of the many occasions when pupils visit places of worship and listen to members of faith communities describing their experiences. The youth members of SACRE speak warmly of the value of religious education in the curriculum and members of the Harrow Student Advisory Group show noticeable enthusiasm for religious education projects across the borough. In November 2008 a SACRE Showcase united school staffs and pupils, SACRE members, councillors and members of faith communities to participate in an impressive exhibition of young people's work in RE, enlivened by pupils of all ages, who explained and

demonstrated their learning.

There is appreciation for the potential and lively nature of RE across the curriculum but also awareness of the way it can become a low priority amongst strong competing curricular demands, in danger of being squeezed to the limits. Where there are specialist, committed members of staff learning is deep and relevant, but it can become superficial or mundane in the hands of unqualified or unwilling teachers. SACRE takes seriously the strengths and weaknesses of learning and teaching in RE and plans to investigate and analyse learning opportunities and the sharing and dissemination of good practice, wherever it occurs.

1a: Compliance and time allocation for RE

All schools comply with the requirements of the agreed syllabus to provide regular opportunities for religious education and most schools are rigorous in ensuring that RE lessons are of an appropriate length and meaningful. However teacher members of SACRE and RE subject leaders have voiced their disquiet that when other curricular priorities become overwhelming, RE can be sacrificed, both in terms of time and expertise.

For the first time high schools are considering general sixth form provision for RE and are building on opportunities provided by successful inter-school conferences in religion and philosophy, such as that organised by the Harrow Inter Faith Council in 2007 and Park High School in 2008. Further conferences are being planned by Harrow Inter Faith Council and the Youth Parliament and serious thought will be given to sixth form provision, led by the high school religious education panel.

There were no official complaints about RE during the academic year, but a Church of England Member of SACRE, a teacher in a Harrow community school, voiced concern that some pupils in her school were being withdrawn from certain aspects of RE such as visits to particular places of worship or learning about certain religions. Although there is legal provision for this, SACRE members were concerned that this attitude could threaten community cohesion and will investigate the extent to which this is happening in other schools.

1b: Public examination entries in RE

In 2009 pupils in Harrow schools were entered for public examinations at GCE A2 and AS levels and GCSE long and short courses in religious studies. Creditable results were achieved in all areas, with overall improvement at GCSE Full and Short Courses, as set out below:

Religious Studies: GCE A level

This is the first year that the A Level results have been available to the Local Authority.

Number entered	A Grade %	B Grade %	C Grade %	A & B grades %	A To E grades %
10	20%	70%	10%	90%	100%

There were no scores lower than Grade C. Congratulations to the students of

Nower Hill and Park High Schools who achieved these good A level results.

Religious studies: GCE AS level

Year	Total entries	A Grade %	B Grade %	C Grade %	D Grade %	E Grade %
2007	19	52.6%	36.8%	10.5%		
2008	17	53%	41%	6%		
2009	21	38.1%	19.2%	33.3%	4.7%	4.7%
2009		A-B grades			A-E grades	
		57.1%			100%	

The students of Hatch End, Nower Hill and Park High Schools and Sacred Heart Language College, who contributed to these results, are to be commended. Special congratulations to Sacred Heart College, which currently has no Sixth Form and whose Year 11 pupils gained 43% A grades and 100% A-D grades at AS level.

Religious studies: GCSE Full Course

Figures are in percentages

Y	NOE	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
2007	499	13.6	24.2	27.3	15.2	7.2	5.8	4.8	1.0	
2008	450	14.2	21.1	23.1	19.1	7.1	5.3	5.8	22.2	
2009	440	19.8	29.1	22.5	11.4	7.2	4.1	3.9	1.6	0.5
		A* - C grades					A* - G grades			
2007		80.4%					99.2%			
2008		77.6%					98%			
2009		82.7%					99.5%			

We commend the pupils from Bentley Wood High School for Girls, Canons High School, Harrow High School, Hatch End High School, Nower Hill High School, Park High School, Rooks Heath College of Business and Enterprise, Sacred Heart Language College, Salvatorian College, and Whitmore High School, who contributed to these good and improved results.

There are special congratulations to:

- Bentley Wood High School, where of 37 entries 43% obtained an A* grade, 62% obtained A* and A grades and 94.6 % obtained A* - C grades;
- Hatch End High School, where of 37 entries 41% obtained an A* grade, 62% obtained A* and A grades and 91.9% obtained A* - C grades;
- Nower Hill High School where of 26 entries 71% of pupils obtained A* and A grades and 92.3 obtained A* - C grades;
- **Park High School, where of 26 entries 59% of pupils obtained an A* grade and 96% of pupils A* and A grades. 100% achieved A* - B grades.**
- Rooks Heath College where of 4 entries 75% of pupils received A grades and 100% of pupils obtained grades A* - C;

- Sacred Heart College where of 114 entries 56% obtained A* and A grades and 94.7 obtained grades A* - C;
- Whitmore High School where of 24 entries 79% of pupils obtained A*, A and B grades and 83.3 obtained grades A* - C.

Religious studies: GCSE Short Course

Figures are in percentages

Y	NOE	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	
2007	876	5.2	15.2	22.7	23.5	12.5	11.0	6.0	2.9		
2008	1299	7.6	14.7	21.4	22.2	11.9	9.3	6.3	4.0		
2009	1405	12.2	18.7	20.8	17.9	12.7	7.8	5.2	3.6	1.1	
				A* - C grades				A* - G grades			
2007				66.7%				99.0%			
2008				66%				97.7%			
2009				69.9%				98.9%			

We also commend the pupils from Bentley Wood High School for Girls, Canons High School, Harrow High School, Hatch End High School, Nower Hill High School, Park High School, Rooks Heath College, Sacred Heart Language College, Salvatorian College, and Whitmore High School, who contributed to these good and improved results.

There are special congratulations to Park High School, where 52% of pupils achieved A* and A grades and to Whitmore High School where 41% of pupils achieved A* and A grades

Religious studies: Entry Level Qualification Band C

Of the 21 entries from Hatch End and Park High Schools, 48% obtained level 3, 43% level 2 and 9% level 1.

1c: Standards and achievement

Stories and cultural aspects of festivals are very much part of life in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are aware of worship and special events in the locality and are interested in the religious story and artefact packs that were developed for nursery and reception classes and are available for loan at Harrow Teachers Centre.

Pupils at Key Stage 1 build on their experiences of religion and its various forms of expression in the locality, identifying places of worship and retelling stories associated with particular religions. Many describe experiences of religious traditions at home and on special occasions, often demonstrating in-depth perceptions.. Pupils frequently make links between different religions, based on their own experiences.

At Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and experiences of religion through answering open questions, discussion, drama, writing, activities that encourage thinking skills and investigations that are frequently presented through ICT. The non-statutory units of work, that have been developed in

conjunction with the Harrow Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, encourage the keeping of a diary for recording thoughts that arise in RE lessons as well as various other forms of religious expression. In subject leader meetings, teachers express admiration for the depth of thought that is manifested in these diaries. A Group A member of SACRE representing Zoroastrianism, who visited a class to speak about her faith was astonished at the level of research undertaken by the pupils prior to her visit, in that they were able to add to her input and make sophisticated links between primary and secondary sources.

In the current set up of middle and high schools, close connections have been established between the aspects of the Key Stage 3 RE syllabus, as it is taught in Year 7 in the primary schools and Years 8 and 9 in the high schools. The RE Advanced Skills Teacher, a high school RE specialist, has undertaken significant work in transition while high school departments report favourably on the developing knowledge and understanding demonstrated by Year 8 pupils on entering their schools, particularly since the introduction of the revised non-statutory units of work. High school departments are honing their skills in building on this knowledge and understanding to develop appropriate expectations and encourage pupils to ask and explore in-depth questions. Standards in RE at Key Stage 3 are raised noticeably in those schools which introduce GCSE long and short courses in Year 9 with resultant expectations of higher order thinking, analysis and evaluation.

Pupils build on their knowledge and understanding of RE in Key Stages 1-3 to acquit themselves well at Key Stage 4 as testified by the achievements in RE examinations outlined and analysed above. A number build on their achievements in RE to progress to studies in philosophy.

SACRE pays tribute to Harrow's pupils, students, teachers and community members for their diligence and hard work in achieving current standards in RE.

1d: Quality of teaching

The ongoing work that in Harrow schools on the Primary and Secondary Strategies, "Building Learning Power" and "Assessment for Learning" has had a positive effect on the teaching of RE. The non-statutory schemes of work encourage an interactive, rigorous approach with high level pupil participation, cross-curricular approaches and the development of pupil skills in making meaningful links between the various areas of learning. In the regular termly meetings for RE subject leaders, teachers share examples of good quality work, analyse assessment strategies, discuss the resolution of problems and demonstrate impressive ability in open questioning that develops in-depth thinking. The sharing of subject knowledge and experience between colleagues, pupils and members of local faith communities is encouraged and support offered whenever there is lack of self confidence, leading to limited learning experiences for pupils. Visits to schools by members of the Harrow Achievement and Inclusion Group and OFSTED inspectors together with members of SACRE and Harrow Inter Faith Council in their capacity of sharing community resources, leave the impression that teachers encourage pupils to talk about religious issues and articulate their ideas, which they do with confidence and energy.

Most schools undertake pupil evaluations of their learning in RE as in other subjects.

Harrow SACRE has nothing but praise for the inspiring contribution of its youth members, who have described their response to religious education and that of their fellow pupils and have commented on the high level of learning in which they are engaged. They made useful suggestions on a future pupil survey, which will be part of a research project on youth and religion, being planned in co-operation with Brunel University and three other local authorities to take place in 2010. Interest in religious matters led to a request by the Harrow Student Advisory Group for the formation of a Harrow Youth Inter Faith Forum. Plans and funds are in place for the first activity of this group to organise and make a film "This is Harrow - Britain's most religiously diverse borough", with support from SACRE, the Harrow Inter Faith Council, the Harrow Student Advisory Group and Harrow Youth Parliament. The pupil voice is poised to make a significant contribution to the evaluation of RE in schools and religious experience in the community.

1e: Quality of leadership and management

The leadership and management of RE is good throughout the primary, secondary, and sixth form sector and special schools. Whole-staff training in RE was requested and managed well by subject leaders throughout the year in primary and special schools, in conjunction with the RE Consultant and the RE AST. Additionally there is excellent support to schools by the Chair of SACRE, a teacher member and AST in drama, who has undertaken extensive study and research in RE through Farmington Fellowships and intends to pursue further higher level qualifications in this area. Difficulties in management arose when RE subject leaders experienced isolation in the promotion of their subject, felt under-valued and were not encouraged to participate in CPD, due to general pressures within the school. The attitude of a school's senior management team was crucial to the success of RE in a school, which can flourish with encouragement or wither in the face of neglect and lack of interest.

The study of religion and philosophy, previously covered by Harrow's tertiary colleges, has passed to school sixth forms and virtually disappeared in the post-16 sector. This is to be regretted particularly in the case of the RE element in an Access to Education course, which led many students into degrees and teacher training with an RE specialism. A number of subject leaders in schools are graduates of this provision, which is no longer available.

1f: Teacher recruitment and retention, level of specialist provision

Harrow schools enjoy overall the blend of a stable staff with an influx of highly qualified, inspiring NQTs (Newly Qualified Teachers). Of the ten high schools with sixth forms, nine have well qualified RE departments as is the case with the two special high schools. One high school lacked specialist RE teachers during the year, although the department was well-managed by a deputy head teacher (now acting headteacher) with the help of input from local faith communities. Specialist qualifications in RE are well represented among primary school teachers, who play a valuable role in subject leadership. In addition most school staffs include people who are knowledgeable and well versed in their own religion and willing to share their understanding and traditions to enhance RE. SACRE has been alerted, however, to a tendency in some schools to put RE lessons in the hands of

unqualified staff members in order to give teachers appropriate time for preparation , planning and evaluation (PPE). Some of these staff members are willing, but need considerable support to develop appropriate subject knowledge and a good range of activities.

1g: Resources

Subject leaders report that budgets for RE are generally small, less than budgets provided for other subject areas and not sufficient for the full development of the subjects.

This is counterbalanced by the wide range of available ICT resources that are used for investigation, research, reading, discussion, lesson stimulation and presentations. The Harrow Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education with the non-statutory units of work for the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and Year 7 is available electronically in the RE section of the London Grid for Learning for flexible down-loading and use by schools. The RE AST is using this portal to develop banks of resources to support learning in RE at all levels and within all phases.

SACRE continues to work with faith communities to produce RE packs to enhance learning about the different religions, which, due to the generosity of faith communities, are distributed free or at a highly subsidised cost to schools. Schools continue to use previously distributed packs on the Baha'i, Christian, Hindu, Jain and Muslim religions. During the year work has progressed on Sikh and Zoroastrian packs for distribution in 2009-2010. Schools much appreciate these packs especially those produced by religions, i.e. the Baha'i and Jain religions, where information is not readily available in current published resources. The local Jains, in association with the Institute of Jainology, commissioned a primary text-book by Colin Hynson, that gives child-friendly explanations of the complex philosophy and teachings of Jainism, which was distributed free in generous quantities to all Harrow primary schools during the year. The Jains and Zoroastrians, although numerically small faiths world-wide, have relatively large populations living in Harrow.

2. Managing the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders

2a: SACRE meetings

During the the 2008-2009 academic year SACRE met on 17th September 2008, 2nd December 2008, 12th March 2009 and 2nd June 2009 at Harrow Civic Centre. There was an additional meeting of a working party on 24th June 2009 at Priestmead Middle School to consider and draft SACRE's response to the D.C.S.F. Curriculum Reform Consultation, in particular responding to questionnaires on the primary curriculum review and updated non-statutory guidance on religious education.

A quorum of representatives of Committees 1, 2, 3 and 4 was maintained at all meetings. Attendance was encouraging throughout the year, inasmuch as booking of a large committee room or the Council Chamber at the Civic Centre was requested to accommodate attendees.

2b: Membership and training

Baha'is, Buddhists, Christians (including the Church of England), Hindus, Humanists, Jains, members of the Jewish religion, Muslims, Rastafarians, Sikhs and Zoroastrians are represented on SACRE.

New members are offered induction packs, most recently that produced by the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). There are detailed introductions, whenever a new member joins SACRE, together with background explanations of the items under discussion. The induction procedure will be reviewed in future development plans. Harrow SACRE sends members on a regular basis to the NASACRE AGMs, meetings for representatives of London SACREs and Q.C.A. (now Q.D.C.A.) conferences, who report back to SACRE on their learning and experiences and answer questions. During the year a Senior School Improvement Professional (SSIP) attended SACRE to give training on data analysis, specifically RAISE ONLINE.

A constant item on each agenda is "News from Harrow Inter Faith Council" and "News from the faith communities". These contribute well to members' knowledge and awareness of what is happening in the local community.

2c: SACRE development

In addition to curricular advice and resources mentioned in Section 1, SACRE continued its annual publication of Advice on Authorised Absence for Religious Festivals, which includes the school session days when SACRE considers that parents / carers may properly request that their children spend religious observances with them. It states that the official borough allowance for religious observance is up to three days in the school year. The advice for the academic years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 has been the subject of serious deliberation by SACRE, conscious that although unauthorised absence by pupils in the borough is low, the incidence of authorised absence is very high compared with statistical neighbours. Members are aware that this is a result of Harrow's religious demography with a high proportion of observant families in its many and diverse faith communities. SACRE advises that the final decision for permitting authorised absence for religious observance must rest with the Governing Body and school, balancing religious requirements with the importance of each pupil's education.

In July 2009 SACRE published, in response to a request by schools, a document entitled "Faith Matters in Harrow: Guidance on Sensitivities that Impact on Schools". It was the result of detailed discussion and checking with local faith communities to raise teachers' awareness of the practices of the various faiths and how these impact on children as they engage with the National Curriculum and educational provision in the school. The introduction stresses that it is an attempt to acknowledge SACRE's dialogue with local faith communities in the hope that children in school feel confident that their faith will be respected and valued in every aspect of school life. It consists of a diagrammatic poster for the staff room, with an accompanying booklet that sets out the perspective of faith communities on such topics as dress, diet, jewellery, music, art, dance, P.E., sex education, science, drama and Holy Books. Schools have welcomed the guidance and feel that it

encourages a common approach throughout the borough.

In November 2008 SACRE organised the previously mentioned SACRE Showcase, which included a wide-ranging exhibition of work from all phases, impressive writing, cheerful accounts of learning during visits to places of worship, technically accomplished Power Point presentations, eye-catching models of examples of religious architecture and a filmed survey from Harrow town centre when Year 10 and 11 pupils investigated the perception of passers-by on what happens to a person after death. Pupils spoke confidently about their learning and activities in RE and received awards for outstanding work. Delegates to the showcase were impressed by its manifestation of Harrow's spiritual life and community cohesion.

From 2008-2009 SACRE worked to a SACRE action plan linked to the Achievement and Inclusion Service Plan. A maintenance plan is in place for 2009-2010 when the next three year development plan will be produced.

SACRE kept in touch with local providers of teacher education and the placement of RE students in its schools and Continuing Professional Development in RE including work with NQTs through reports by the Senior School Improvement Professional (SSIP) who is the SACRE Lead, the Associate Senior Adviser and Religious Education Consultant and the Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs), all of whom play a central role in SACRE's work..

2d: Financial support

The SACRE budget is allocated at the beginning of the financial year on 1st April. The allowance for the academic years 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 for SACRE's work was £5.120 per year. In addition Harrow Council provides free accommodation for SACRE meetings and events in its committee rooms, Council Chamber and Members' Lounge.

The budget 2008-2009 was spent on:

- The RE Consultant's work for SACRE, (including acting as SACRE clerk), the Harrow Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and the drawing up of the non-statutory units of work
- Supply cover and expenses for Advanced Skills Teachers to lead RE INSET
- In-house printing of the guidance document "Faith Matters in Harrow"
- Yearly subscriptions
- Attendance of SACRE members at courses and meetings of NASACRE and QCA.
- Purchase of SHAP calenders for SACRE members, schools and libraries
- Coach travel for school parties to visit the exhibition of Jewish life at Middlesex New synagogue
- Administration, copying and refreshment costs.

The budget is sufficient for SACRE's days to day needs. A SACRE subsidy for travel by pupils to visit places of worship, special religious events and exhibitions is greatly appreciated by schools and makes a significant difference to the numbers that attend. Such subsidies need to be strictly controlled due to travel costs and SACRE was unable to contribute towards the costs of travel to the many events during the year that would have enhanced RE.

SACRE secured grant funding of £7.000 during the year for its part in setting up the Harrow Youth Inter Faith Forum. There will also be a contribution from Harrow Inter Faith Council.

2e: Information and advice

SACRE received information that is applicable to RE through reports passed on by the Religious Education Consultant from information gathered by the Achievement and Inclusion Service. This included school reviews by Senior School Improvement Professionals, OFSTED reports and data investigations, whereby progress in RE was measured against general progress across the curriculum. If particular problems with RE were identified in any school, specific information was passed to the RE Consultant who worked with the ASTs to provide appropriate support in the situation.

The Religious Education Consultant and ASTs reported regularly on their work at SACRE meetings and subject leaders attended from time to time to give a picture of RE in their school, show samples of work and answer questions.

The SACRE Showcase provided an excellent opportunity for SACRE members and others to taste pupils' RE experiences and scrutinise samples of their work.

Professional advice and support to SACRE for the year was received from:

- The Senior School Improvement Professional and SACRE lead, in conjunction with other duties
- An Associate Senior Adviser and Religious Education Consultant (for approximately 60 days in the year)
- The RE AST for one day a week, split into two half days
- Some AST time from the Chair of SACRE for approximately twelve days in the year.

These people participated regularly in SACRE meetings and discussions.

Advice given by SACRE to the local authority centred around authorised absence for pupils to fulfil religious obligations, guidance on religious sensitivities that impact on schools and the curriculum, support for organised faith events and responses to the DCSF concerning the curriculum reform consultation.

2f: Partnerships with other key stakeholders

Training sponsored by SACRE involved the SACRE Showcase, the Jewish Way of Life Exhibition, a programme of outreach work in connection with Harrow Inter Faith Council's 25th Anniversary and partnership with Brunel University in the planning of an important two year project on young people and religion.

3. The effectiveness of the local agreed syllabus

3a: Review of the Agreed Syllabus

The Harrow Agreed Syllabus was reviewed between 2005 and 2007 and published in revised form in 2008. Along with the accompanying primary non-statutory units of

work it is in a continuous process of review and evaluation.

3b: Using the non-statutory national framework

The Agreed Syllabus Conference was very grateful for the non-statutory national framework for RE on which the 2008 agreed syllabus was built, finding it a useful foundation for high quality learning and teaching in RE and a springboard to express the richness of faith traditions for which Harrow is renowned.

3c: Developing the revised agreed syllabus

Having developed the agreed syllabus, SACRE members aim to understand it fully, contribute to resources for effective RE, see learning and teaching in practice, monitor that all aspects of agreed syllabus requirements are in place and work with schools and teacher groups to resolve any difficulties that may arise.

3d: Implementation of the agreed syllabus

The Harrow Agreed Syllabus is explained and expanded through the model units of work that have been written to cover each year group from the Foundation Stage to Year 7. These consist of six units per year, (half a term's work) and are divided into six weekly activities. They were built up in conjunction with the needs and advice of local faith communities and the new secondary and emerging primary curriculum. Every attempt has been made to suggest meaningful, participative activities, rigour of expectation, links across the curriculum, research and exploration and above all the opportunity for pupils to share their ideas, beliefs, experiences and thoughts. There is electronic access to the agreed syllabus and units of work, which can be used and adapted by schools.

3e: Additional guidance/monitoring and evaluation of the agreed syllabus

Subject leaders under the guidance of the RE AST and a technical officer are working to add banks of electronic resources to the website that contains the agreed syllabus and non-statutory units of work. The high schools will offer their individual schemes of work, lesson plans, assignments, resource suggestions and GCSE/GCE tasks, thus sharing expertise and good practice that has been built up across the departments. The agreed syllabus, units of work, resources and gaps in resources are monitored regularly to see where they might be developed or improved.

4. Collective worship

4a: Practice and provision for collective worship

SACRE produced a document entitled "The A - Z of Collective Worship" soon after the 1988 Education Act, setting out legal requirements and providing ideas, resource suggestions, ideas and models of good practice. The document has been revised and developed over the years and is due for further revision and refreshment in 2009-2010.

4b: Monitoring the provision of collective worship

During the year primary schools offered daily assemblies with collective worship, the majority of which were found by the Achievement and Inclusion Service to be sensitive, meaningful, and appropriate for a multi-faith community. At festival time schools went to great lengths to provide a joyous multi-faceted celebration to enrich children of the faith concerned and educate pupils generally about the significance and traditions of the occasion. A teacher member of SACRE, following criticism by OFSTED of an assembly at her school, which failed in the opinions of the inspectors to sufficiently emphasise the transcendent, completed a detailed study of the requirements of collective worship during the opportunity of a Farmington Fellowship. During her year, as Chair of SACRE, she led very well received INSET for Senior Management Teams on the implications of her findings.

In the High Schools well constructed, thoughtful collective worship was blended with assemblies, at which pupils frequently performed, demonstrating their presentational, musical, dramatic and artistic skills. Visitors and drama groups set out spiritual and moral issues and there were opportunities for reflective thought and prayer. It was often difficult for high schools, however, to organise meaningful daily collective worship for logistical reasons of space and time. All conscientiously tried to fulfil obligations through a blend of school, year and class assemblies, but SACRE and schools are aware that these can vary in standard according to the priorities and experience of the people organising and leading them.

Nine schools, two high schools and seven primary schools have determinations, all of which are longstanding. There is a programme of five year renewals and the determinations of Marlborough First and Middle School and Stanburn First School were renewed during the year. Both schools, as required in the renewal process, set out the faith commitments of their pupils, consulted with pupils, staff, parents and Governors, and offered stimulating programmes and examples of collective worship, which, in both cases, were appropriate to the wide range of religions and philosophies practised by the school community. The overall number affected by school determinations is in the region of 6,800 pupils. SACRE's decisions, in renewing the determinations, were based on a thorough scrutiny of details on the application together with a judgement on the quality and value of the collective worship offered. In both cases the proposed worship was imaginative and stimulating with good opportunities for thought and reflection.

There were no complaints about collective worship during the year.

5. Contribution of the SACRE to the community cohesion agenda

5a: Representative nature of the SACRE

Harrow SACRE clearly reflects the wide religious and ethnic diversity of Harrow across all its groups. Group A representatives of Christian and other religious denominations and faiths reflect the size and variety of local religions.

An annual evaluation of SACRE membership identifies areas where there is a vacancy and agreed procedures are put in place to fill the vacancy through

nominations from appropriate bodies.

5b: Knowledge and understanding of the local religious, cultural and ethnic Minority

Harrow SACRE recognises its privilege and responsibility in serving the UK's most religiously diverse borough, which is rich in the scholarship, traditions and understanding of its constituent faith communities. It works very closely with the voluntary Harrow Inter Faith Council and with all known faith communities in its boundaries, who demonstrate great generosity of spirit in supporting RE in schools, on which they place great value for the spiritual nurture of their children. Relationship with Harrow Council is close and due recognition is given to schools for their successful nurture of positive values and citizenship and their pursuit of cohesion in school as in the community. Links with the Student Advisory Group, the emerging Harrow Youth Inter Faith Forum and the Muslim Forum ensure continuity of vision and implementation of values and attitudes that contribute to Harrow's reputation as "a tremendous example of multi faith, multi cultural friendship and peaceful coexistence", *Bishop of Willesden*. SACRE is delighted to learn that Harrow's pupils make a significant contribution to this reputation.

5c: Understanding the intrinsic contribution which RE can make to social, racial and religious harmony and to community cohesion

Through the Achievement and Inclusion Service and through arranged opportunities to meet the pupils themselves, SACRE is aware of pupils' attitudes to RE and the very meaningful discussions whereby the pupils offer their own and their community's teaching and philosophies in the cause of religious harmony and community cohesion. They express personal beliefs with confidence and frequently use knowledge and understanding of their own and other religions and philosophies to bring to bear on day to day issues and concerns.

5d: Links to local authority initiatives promoting diversity

SACRE works to the borough's diversity and equal opportunities policy and during 2009-2010 will develop opportunities being set up for young people in schools to work with the Harrow Youth Parliament. A SACRE member attends meetings of the Hate Crime Forum, which, with the police and local authority officers monitors areas of concern in the borough and possible flash points of disruption and disturbance.

The value of difference and diversity in Harrow is paramount to SACRE's work for a meaningful education for each individual within vibrant, cohesive schools and communities. Members reflect the friendship and good intentions of the faiths and organisations that they represent, determined to work together for peace, harmony and the future of the young people.

Summary

A distinctive feature of Harrow SACRE is the knowledge and understanding of its members of the rich tapestry of local faiths and philosophies, including those that are lesser known on a national and international basis. We could share our range of expressions and traditions, together with our determined development to provide

opportunities for young people to feel comfortable in their faith / philosophy and to present their thoughts and ideas to others in confidence that they will be received with respect.

One of the SACRE members expressed the notion that SACRE works together with a great sense of unity and purpose. Members meet at a variety of celebrations and functions and all give generously of their enthusiasm, knowledge, understanding, expertise and vision.

SACRE offered advice to the DCSF and QCA in responses to the curriculum reform consultation. With regard to the primary curriculum review, SACRE made the strong recommendation that RE should be blended with the National Curriculum at the centre of curriculum requirements rather than as a separate entity or off-shoot that could be forgotten or felt by schools to be unimportant. In the same way that ICT is rightfully regarded as “the furniture of learning”, so RE should be given similar cross-curricular credibility as an important source of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. SACRE sees RE as a dome overarching all personalised learning with its sense of appreciation of self as a prerequisite for appreciation and respect of others and an essential aspect of community cohesion.

We should like to see in the updated non-statutory guidance on religious education a clear, specific statement on the place of RE within and contributing to the whole curriculum.

In the case of collective worship, SACRE feels that it would be helpful if the requirement of a daily act of collective worship could be replaced by requirement for a regular act of collective worship, which would free high schools especially to organise appropriate worship that commands real respect and value on every occasion.

Attached appendices are:

- Public examination statistics
- Index of the primary non-statutory units of work
- Advice to school on authorised absence for religious observance
- “Faith matters in Harrow”. Guidance on Sensitivities that Impact on Schools”
- SACRE maintenance plan 2009-2010
- List of SACRE members 2008-2009

1. Standards and quality of provision of religious education

How effectively does the SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, monitor and evaluate standards and the quality of provision for RE in schools?

How effective are the strategies to improve standards and the quality of provision?

Key area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Group evaluation
<p>1a Compliance and time allocation for RE</p> <p style="text-align: right;">21</p>	<p>Little knowledge of levels of compliance with the legal requirements for RE in schools. Little information about the time schools are allocating to RE.</p>	<p>Informed about levels of compliance and time allocations but limited opportunities to establish strategies for action where evidence of non-compliance or inadequate time allocation is reported.</p>	<p>Well informed about levels of compliance and time allocations and factors impacting on these. Clear understanding of effective ways schools can provide adequate time for RE. Established strategies to take action to support schools which are non-compliant and receive feedback on the impact of interventions.</p>	
<p>1b Public examination entries in RE</p>	<p>Limited knowledge of the number of pupils in the LEA entered for GCSE, AS and A2 examinations.</p>	<p>Informed about the number of pupils in the LEA entered for GCSE, AS and A2 examinations and how this compares with national figures but few strategies to increase the number of entries.</p>	<p>Well informed about the number of pupils in the LEA entered for GCSE, AS and A2 examinations and how this compares with national figures. Clear strategies in place to increase the number of entries.</p>	

<p>1c Standards and achievement: including standards at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, GCSE, AS and A2 level</p>	<p>Limited knowledge about standards within schools and no clear SACRE or LEA strategies to address areas of concern or share good practice.</p>	<p>Informed about standards of RE in schools locally and by comparison with national figures, but limited analysis of the data and little opportunity to develop strategies to address weaknesses.</p>	<p>Detailed information about standards with careful analysis of data against national figures and trends. Information about standards extends to primary schools and Key Stage 3. Clear strategies in place to tackle areas of weakness. Developing independent mechanisms to gather data about performance.</p>	
<p>1d Quality of teaching</p> <p>22</p>	<p>Limited knowledge about the quality of RE teaching in schools.</p>	<p>Information provided about findings in relation to quality of teaching derived from LEA intelligence and RE subject self-evaluations, but limited analysis of strengths and weaknesses and little opportunity to develop strategies to tackle weaknesses.</p>	<p>Clear and detailed information about the quality of teaching, with some analysis of trends and strengths and weaknesses. Good strategies to share good practice and target improvement strategies on areas of weakness.</p>	

<p>1e Quality of leadership and management.</p>	<p>Limited knowledge about the quality of leadership and management of RE in schools.</p>	<p>Information provided about findings in relation to quality of leadership and management derived from LEA intelligence and RE subject self-evaluations, but limited analysis of strengths and weaknesses and little opportunity to develop strategies to tackle weaknesses.</p>	<p>Clear and detailed information about the quality of leadership and management, with some analysis of trends and strengths and weaknesses. Good strategies to share good practice and target improvement strategies on areas of weakness.</p>	
<p>1f Recruitment and retention issues. Level of specialist vision</p>	<p>Little knowledge of data and issues related to the recruitment or retention of specialist RE teachers in schools.</p>	<p>Some investigation and analysis of subject recruitment and retention issues. The SACRE is aware of the level of non-specialist teaching of RE but has limited opportunity to take action to deal with its concerns.</p>	<p>Detailed knowledge of patterns of recruitment, retention and specialist provision. The SACRE is active in promoting strategies to improve recruitment and provide training to address the needs of non-specialist teachers of RE.</p>	
<p>1g Resources</p>	<p>Little knowledge about issues related to the quality of resources for RE in schools</p>	<p>Some information about issues related to resources for RE in schools but limited opportunity to address areas of concern.</p>	<p>Detailed knowledge of issues related to resources for RE in schools. The SACRE is active in promoting the development of resources and setting benchmarks about appropriate levels of funding for the subject in schools.</p>	

2. Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LEA and other key stakeholders

How far does the SACRE's partnership with the LEA enable it to carry out its responsibilities effectively?

Key area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Group evaluation
<p>2a SACRE meetings</p> <p>24</p>	<p>Meetings are held regularly. Routine administrative arrangements are in place. Agendas and papers are distributed appropriately. Attendance is satisfactory. Business is dealt with in a prompt and orderly way. There are limited opportunities for teachers and representatives of faith communities to be invited to share their work. Business tends to be focused solely on routine statutory requirements.</p>	<p>Attendance is good and all four committees are well represented. Agendas and papers are distributed well in advance ensuring all members have time to consider them carefully. Meetings are well managed with strong contributions from a wide range of members. Meetings move beyond routine matters to consider wider issues about the quality of RE and collective worship.</p>	<p>SACRE members contribute to development of the agenda. Meetings are lively and purposeful with wide variety of contributions. Teachers and representatives of faith communities regularly attend and participate fully in meetings, sharing their experience and insights. Meetings are held in a variety of venues, including local places of worship and schools.</p>	
<p>2b Membership and training</p>	<p>The membership fulfils the basic statutory obligations. The arrangements to fill vacancies are not always effective. There are limited induction and training opportunities for SACRE members.</p>	<p>The membership strongly reflects the diversity of the wider religious and professional community. There are some opportunities for SACRE members to participate in training activities.</p>	<p>Very good use is made of co-option to ensure membership of the SACRE is well informed and is highly representative of the diversity of the local community. There is a strong and co-ordinated programme of induction, and training opportunities for SACRE members.</p>	
<p>2c Improvement/</p>	<p>The SACRE does not have an action plan to focus its future</p>	<p>The SACRE has a basic action plan which is reviewed</p>	<p>The SACRE has a well-defined action plan with clear objectives</p>	

development planning	work and there is little overt linkage between the priorities of the LEA's development / improvement plan and the work of the SACRE.	regularly and updated on an annual basis. This provides an effective focus for the SACRE's work. There is some attempt to link the plan to the wider LEA priorities.	and success criteria. Resource implications are clearly defined. There is a clear link between the plan and the wider objectives of the LEA. The SACRE is regularly represented at national events relevant to its work; for example, NASACRE.	
2d Professional and financial support	Representatives of the LEA attend meetings but there is limited subject specialist advice available. There are resources for basic SACRE functions but there is no specific budget for the SACRE and little opportunity for the SACRE to take initiatives requiring funding.	The SACRE has some access to subject specialist advice. The LEA is represented at meetings and can provide a means of communication with the wider LEA. The SACRE has a modest budget which enables it to fund some initiatives.	The SACRE is well supported by a subject specialist who provides effective advice and is well informed about the provision and quality of RE in the LEA and about national developments. The SACRE is also attended by a lead officer from the LEA who can provide a strong link between the work of the SACRE and the wider LEA. The SACRE has access to funds to enable it to make decisions about its priorities and ensure these can be properly resourced.	

<p>2e Information and advice</p>	<p>The SACRE receives limited information about public examination data from the LEA. Limited information is provided about wider national and local developments. The SACRE tends to receive information from the LEA rather than ask questions of the LEA and challenge its work.</p>	<p>The SACRE is regularly provided with clear information relevant to the quality and provision for RE and collective worship in local schools. The SACRE receives the information in a way that enables it to challenge and question the LEA's work.</p>	<p>The SACRE receives detailed and well-analysed information about the quality and provision for RE and collective worship. As a result SACRE uses this information effectively to give advice to the LEA which leads to strategic action to improve standards and quality in schools. The SACRE has a strong partnership with the LEA and plays an active role in promoting ideas and initiatives.</p>	
<p>2f Partnerships with other key stakeholders (for example pupils, parent, ASTs, specialist schools, ITT providers, local religious organisations and groups, Commission for Racial Equality)</p>	<p>The SACRE has little contact with or awareness of other local agencies, and rarely has contact with pupils or parents.</p>	<p>The SACRE is well informed about other key stakeholders supporting RE and has some contact with the groups involved.</p>	<p>The SACRE has opportunities to hear the views and experience of pupils and parents about RE. Representatives of key support networks such as ASTs and higher education providers are regularly involved with the SACRE. The SACRE's activities build effectively on local networks.</p>	

3. The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus

How effectively does the SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, monitor the impact of the agreed syllabus in raising standards, use national guidance (e.g. the non-statutory national framework) and evaluate the effectiveness of the previous agreed syllabus?

Key area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Group evaluation
3a Review of the agreed syllabus	Little opportunity to review the effectiveness of the previous agreed syllabus. Teachers' views are not known and there has been no external evaluation of strengths/weaknesses of the existing version. There is little budget for agreed syllabus development and no clear action plan to structure the review process.	The SACRE has a good idea of the strengths/weaknesses of the previous agreed syllabus. Teachers' views and some external evaluation are carefully taken into consideration and there is a clear action plan and sufficient budget for the agreed syllabus review.	The SACRE has a clear and systematic process for reviewing the agreed syllabus including full consultation with schools and other key stakeholders, particularly faith communities. The budget is clearly allocated including consultation meetings, external evaluation and printing/distribution costs. There is strong sense of ownership of the agreed syllabus review, with clear targets for what needs to be achieved.	
3b Using the National Framework for Religious Education	The SACRE has a limited view of the role and significance of the National Framework in relation to the agreed syllabus review process and does not use the Framework in a coherent way.	The SACRE is aware of the National Framework and uses it in their agreed syllabus review but does not extend the Framework to reflect local circumstances.	The SACRE fully uses the National Framework in the construction of the revised agreed syllabus, understanding fully the importance of retaining the coherence and integrity of the Framework. It uses and extends the Framework in a coherent way to reflect local circumstances.	

<p>3c Developing the revised agreed syllabus. See Annex 1 for the characteristics of an effective agreed syllabus.</p>	<p>The SACRE has no clear structure for developing a revised agreed syllabus. It does not undertake a thorough revision, tending to add material rather haphazardly to the existing syllabus, leading to lack of coherence in the final outcome. There is little or no consultation during the development of a new agreed syllabus.</p>	<p>The SACRE has clear objectives for the revision and involves a wide range of local expertise in its construction. The SACRE ensures that strong direction is provided to design an agreed syllabus which is coherent, clear and accessible. The SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, holds consultation meetings which are reasonably supported.</p>	<p>The SACRE ensures that high quality advice is sought to review and advise on the revisions as they develop. The SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, holds very well attended consultation meetings and briefings to ensure teachers are fully involved in, and have a sense of ownership of, the revision process.</p>	
<p>3d Consultation / launch implementation of agreed syllabus</p>	<p>No special launch is planned and schools are not aware of the significance of the revisions for their teaching and learning in RE. There is little training provision for implementing the revised syllabus.</p>	<p>A launch event is organised and other forms of communication (for example the LEA website) are used to promote the launch. There are clear arrangements for training teachers on implementing the syllabus; this training is well supported and managed.</p>	<p>A successful launch, involving the wider community and strong media coverage, gives the agreed syllabus a high profile as an important development in the work of the LEA and SACRE. Effective training on implementing the agreed syllabus, which is supported by all schools, leads to teachers being clear about standards and expectations in the agreed syllabus and the implications for teaching and learning.</p>	

<p>3e Additional guidance / monitoring and evaluating the agreed syllabus</p>	<p>A shortage of financial and human resources prevent the SACRE from providing any significant additional guidance on using the agreed syllabus. It has limited arrangements in place to monitor the impact of the agreed syllabus, particularly in raising standards.</p>	<p>The SACRE, through its costed development plan, has arrangements in place to develop additional guidance. The SACRE is able to monitor the impact of the agreed syllabus, particularly in raising standards.</p>	<p>The SACRE has fully costed precise plans for further guidance and support and has consulted extensively with schools on what these should be. Teachers are actively involved in the development of support materials ensuring the process provides a strong professional development opportunity. There are clear arrangements in place to monitor the impact of the new agreed syllabus and to measure its effectiveness in raising standards.</p>	
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4. Collective worship

How effectively does the SACRE fulfil its responsibilities for the provision and practice of collective worship?

Key area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Group evaluation
<p>4a Practice and provision for collective worship</p>	<p>The SACRE has not provided guidance to schools on collective worship and arrangements for determinations are not in place. Issues regarding collective worship have not featured as part of the SACRE's agenda and national developments are not known. There is no training provision for collective worship.</p>	<p>The SACRE has not provided guidance to schools on collective worship which focuses on good practice. Meetings of the SACRE regularly focus on provision and practice in collective worship, and schools consider they are well supported by their SACRE on matters related to collective worship. The SACRE is aware of national developments in collective worship. Training is provided for schools and is reasonably supported.</p>	<p>The SACRE provides high quality advice and support on collective worship, sharing best practice, which leads to improvements in the quality of children's learning experiences. The SACRE regularly focuses on collective worship in its meetings and updates schools on new resources. The SACRE is actively involved in national developments in collective worship. High quality, well-supported training enhances provision.</p>	
<p>4b Monitoring the provision of collective worship and tackling issues of non-compliance</p>	<p>The SACRE does not monitor provision of collective worship. Members are unaware of the issues facing schools and do not provide advice on how issues of non-compliance can be addressed.</p>	<p>The SACRE monitors provision of collective worship and is aware of non-compliance issues and the demands collective worship places on schools. As a result of monitoring, further advice is provided to schools but members of the SACRE have limited 'hands-on' experience of collective worship in schools.</p>	<p>The SACRE closely monitors provision for collective worship, and provides guidance and support for schools, particularly on non-compliance. Members of the SACRE have direct experience of collective worship in schools through first-hand observation. They discuss key issues with staff and pupils and provide further advice in the light of their findings.</p>	

5. Contribution of the SACRE to the social and racial harmony agenda

How effectively does the SACRE, in partnership with the LEA, contribute to the wider social and racial harmony agenda?

Key area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Group evaluation
5a Representative nature of the SACRE	Membership of the SACRE meets statutory requirements but is not necessarily strongly representative of the religious diversity of the local community.	The SACRE and the LEA ensure representation broadly reflects the religious diversity of the local community.	The SACRE has strong representation from all major local religious communities, including different groups within the same religious tradition (for example, different Muslim communities).	
5b Knowledge and understanding of the local religious, cultural and ethnic community	The SACRE has limited knowledge about the religious, cultural and ethnic diversity in the local area.	The SACRE is well aware of different groups representing the diversity within the local area.	The SACRE is very aware of the nature of the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity in the local area and takes active steps to inform itself about the distinctive needs and opportunities created by this diversity.	
5c Understanding the intrinsic contribution which RE can make to social and racial harmony	The SACRE has a basic grasp of the contribution which RE can make to the social and racial harmony agenda but has limited opportunity to promote this further.	The SACRE has a clear commitment to the part RE can play in promoting the social and racial harmony agenda and seeks to promote this throughout its work.	The SACRE plays a key role in promoting activities to extend the contribution of RE to the development of social and racial harmony. It ensures that this is embedded explicitly in the agreed syllabus and related guidance.	

<p>5d Links to local authority initiatives promoting social and racial harmony</p>	<p>The SACRE has limited information about, or contact with, wider local authority initiatives linked to the promotion of social and racial harmony.</p>	<p>The SACRE is aware of the wider local authority initiatives promoting social and racial harmony and has the opportunity to discuss and contribute to this work.</p>	<p>The SACRE plays a key role in the work of the local authority in this area and takes the initiative in promoting activities and links which relate to this work.</p>	
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Religious Believers Visiting Schools

Guidance and a Code of Conduct

Introduction

Schools do well to welcome believers from different faith communities to make a contribution to learning. Religious believers can make a powerful impact in RE and collective worship in schools when they visit. Spiritual and moral development and religious learning can be stimulated most effectively through encounters between people of faith and school children of all ages. Teachers have good reason to be grateful to people of faith, often volunteers, and usually unpaid, who are willing to play a part in school life. This guidance and code of conduct is offered to give help to schools and religious visitors to make the most of the opportunities available, and to avoid some of the pitfalls which are sometimes encountered.

The guidance is offered by the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE), and concentrates on the interface between education and faith communities. NATRE is the subject teacher association for teachers of RE. It is envisaged that this guidance will be useful to head teachers, governors, RE teachers and religious visitors to schools. Some schools may wish to invite potential visitors to read the code and indicate their acceptance of it, or to write a school policy based upon it. SACREs might consider issuing it to schools as part of their official guidance on RE and collective worship.

Principles and good practice

Schools should welcome religious visitors and respect their faith and contribution to pupils' learning. It is good practice to plan visits jointly, to pay travel and other expenses, to welcome visitors with refreshments and to evaluate the visit together.

Schools are educational communities. Religious visitors are guests in the community, and whether they are frequent guests ('almost members of the family') or one-off visitors, it is helpful to bear in mind the ethos, purpose and aims of the school. For example, for a Christian, visiting a church school may be a different kind of opportunity from visiting a local authority school.

Schools are committed to the needs and interests of all their pupils, and they are plural communities. The school may include members of different faith groups, pupils from non-religious or secular families, and (within Christianity or other faiths) different denominational allegiances. Religious visitors need to think through what they have to offer to all pupils. The sharing of insight, experience, belief and practice is appropriate. It is never appropriate to impose on members of the audience.

Parents have the right to know what is happening in school. Parents of different faiths, different denominations and of no faith are, quite reasonably, concerned about the religious input their children receive in school, and clarity of information from school to home needs to be maintained all the time.

Children have their own integrity too. It is a fundamental principle that religious education work and collective worship experiences should respect the attitude and perspective of each child.

It is also important that the school ensures current legislation relating to child protection procedures is covered and implemented with regard to visitors to the classroom, collective worship or assembly hall.

The code of conduct offered here is elaborated in the notes that follow. It is important to read the notes, because a code such as this is necessarily written as concisely as possible.

The Code of Conduct

Religious visitors taking part in the life of a school should:

- be willing to share their own experiences, beliefs and insights, but avoid (1) criticising the experience and insights of others and (2) imposing their views upon pupils in any way;
- be familiar with the school's aims, ethos and policies, and plan their involvement in the light of the aims and curriculum at the school;¹
- seek to use engaging teaching and learning methods that involve the pupils actively, and to communicate at appropriate levels for the age-group(s) concerned;²
- make clear to pupils who they are, who they represent, and what their aims are;
- be willing to respect and value the faith of the pupils and adults in the school when it is different from their own;
- develop ways of speaking to pupils that communicate their open approach, avoiding any hidden agenda to 'convert' or proselytise.

A key question to help visitors reflect on their approach:

If a member of another religion visited my child's school and contributed in the same way that I have done, would I, as a parent, be happy with the education given?

¹ It is more effective to take part in the regular programme of teaching and learning, rather than make an isolated or one-off contribution to the curriculum.

² The two most common problems for pupils when visitors make a classroom visit or in collective worship are that they listen to a lengthy monologue, with more or less attention, and that they can't understand: the material presented is often too hard and sometimes too easy, and the language used is over the pupils' heads or sometimes patronising. Visitors who avoid these pitfalls will be more effective.

Schools' responsibilities

As already stated, schools have responsibilities to brief visitors in advance, to plan and evaluate jointly, to meet agreed expenses, and to make visitors welcome.

Schools should take responsibility for the curriculum and the school's collective worship at all times: it is inappropriate for this responsibility to be handed over to religious visitors. Thus activities such as interviews, question-and-answer sessions, sharing experience, or talks introduced by the teacher, are obviously appropriate, while activities in which the teacher takes a merely observational role are not appropriate. Generally, religious visitors should work alongside teachers at all times: the responsibility for the pupils, including their protection and health and safety, rests with the school.

Schools should be clear in guiding and assisting religious visitors to make an appropriate contribution to the curriculum or the programme of collective worship.

Schools should support pupils from a particular faith community who wish to practice their faith in voluntary time at school. Outside visitors to such groups have a special importance, and a special responsibility. A Bible study and prayer group for Christians, a Satsung group for young Hindus, a room set aside for Islamic prayer or a Shabad Kirton for Sikhs are all appropriate ways for schools to show the value they place on pupils' commitments, and appropriate contexts in which to welcome visiting believers.

Audiences and appropriateness

There are three contexts in which religious visitors might participate in school life:

- collective worship;
- the curriculum (including RE);
- voluntary groups, such as a lunchtime Christian Union, or Islamic salah.

Each context is distinct, and requires a suitable approach.

In collective worship pupils are offered opportunities for spiritual and moral development, including opportunities to join in with worship. Visitors might present ideas and experience from their faith, making clear the value of these ideas and experiences within the community, and asking pupils to think about them from their own point of view. In leading prayer, no assumptions should be made about the commitments of the pupils: no religion advocates compulsory worship! Some teachers introduce prayer by offering pupils a choice between the role of participant, and the role of observer.

In lessons, including RE, pupils are engaged in the task of learning. Religious visitors are valuable because they bring an authentic voice of faith into the classroom. This may be informative, help develop understanding, and may also challenge pupils to reflect on their own commitments. Visitors will want to think carefully about the educational aims of the session(s) or contributions that they offer.

In voluntary, extra-curricular groups, some pupils may wish to share their faith through a regular meeting or club outside curriculum time. Pupils, teachers, parents or visitors may take a lead in organising this. If such groups are clear in their purpose and open in their agenda and their invitation to all to participate, then they have the function of enabling believing pupils to share their faith in school. Visitors to such groups are participating in the life of the faith community, on school premises. This special opportunity should be taken seriously, and should be arranged with appropriate liaison between visitors, voluntary pupils' groups and senior staff in the school.

Appropriate communication

When believers who visit schools are ineffective it is usually because their presentations are too difficult or too easy for the children they address. To be an effective visitor, believers need to set the level of their presentation to match carefully the aptitudes and age of the group they work with. Going 'over the pupils' heads' or 'talking down' to them is all too easy. Effective communicators will:

- plan carefully
- discuss the input with teachers in advance, and be open to teachers' suggestions
- take account of the differing abilities of the pupils
- use a variety of teaching methods and styles, including those which elicit a response from all the pupils
- select content carefully, avoiding the temptation to try and get the whole of their faith across (for example, teaching six-year-olds all there is to know about Jesus Christ in a 35-minute session!)

Issues for discussion

Visitors to school are often welcomed and shown around the physical environment. It is just as important to 'show them round' the educational environment; the potential problems that they may face are then more easily avoided.

These are issues which need special discussion and attention:

- If a religious group is evangelistic or has missionary objectives, how will these objectives be kept separate from collective worship and curricular RE?
- How will parents get to know about the religious life of the school? What contribution will they make to shaping the experiences offered to their children?
- What steps can be taken to enable pupils to know what is being offered in voluntary activities supported by faith communities? How can hidden agendas be avoided?
- What can schools do to offer balanced opportunities for pupils to meet and share the lives of religious believers?

Conclusion

The guidance and suggestions given in this short leaflet need to be applied with care in each school. The guidance often strikes a note of caution, but it should not be forgotten that religious believers are a rich and exciting resource for schools. Much wonderful RE, and many inspiring acts of collective worship or assemblies, result from the visit of a person willing to share his or her faith. From the point of view of NATRE, schools are encouraged to welcome religious visitors whenever possible, and communities of faith are encouraged to contribute to the curriculum and collective worship some of the treasures of their living beliefs.

Correspondence is welcomed at: NATRE, 1020 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6LB, Tel: 0121 472 4242, Fax: 0121 472 7575, E-mail: enquiries@retoday.org.uk

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Brunel University - 2/11/09

YOR – Youth on Religion – Central Research Questions

The following research questions will act as a general focus of the inquiry, as a foundation for the detailed questionnaire items currently being developed through the drafting and piloting process and also for more in-depth follow-up questions in the qualitative study.

Aspects of Religious Identity

- 1) How do young people describe their identities in terms of religious categories, ethnic and national categories, and the relationships between these categories?
- 2) Do young people see themselves as belonging to a religious community?
- 3) What role do public and private religious practices play in young people's lives?
- 4) What is the nature and the extent of young people's religious beliefs and values?
- 5) How do these four aspects of religious identity (categories, belonging, practices, beliefs) relate to each other?

Religious and Spiritual Experiences

- 6) What is the significance of religious or spiritual experiences in young people's lives, such as births, deaths, 'moving worship', experiences of nature?

Influences on Religious Identity

- 7) How is religious identity related to individual, social and spatial characteristics including age, gender, socio-economic class, location and school?
- 8) What are the perceptions of young people on the effect of gender and age on religious identity?
- 9) How are young people's religious identities affected by friendships, family, teachers, religious leaders, religious communities, media, religious books and magazines, the internet?

Influences of Religious Identity

- 10) How does religious identity influence different aspects of young people's everyday lives, such as food, dress, leisure, relationships with others, use of space?

Perceptions of Religious Identity

- 11) What do young people feel are the positive and less positive aspects of religion (both their own religion and religion in a wider sense), and the way it is interpreted or enacted by others?
- 12) What are young people's perceptions of other religious identities and how are these affected by friendships, family, teachers, religious leaders, religious communities, media, religious books and magazines, the internet?
- 13) What are young people's attitudes towards the role of religion in school, including faith schools, collective worship and RE?
- 14) What are young people's attitudes towards the following social cohesion issues:
 - a) What are young people's current perceptions of inter-religious community relations?
 - b) What could they themselves and society do to improve matters further?

Brunel University

Youth on Religion project

**Meeting between the University and representatives from
Harrow and Hillingdon**

Hillingdon Learning and Development Centre, Queen's Walk
03 November 2009
10am – 11.30am

MINUTES

Present: Eric Blaire (EB), Rachel Bowerman (RB), Fiona Gibbs (FG), Peter Hemming (PH), Nicola Madge (NM), Duncan Struthers (DS)

Apologies: Gori Olusina Daniel (GD), Anjana Patel (AP)

Minutes from last meeting

The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the last meeting.

Research aims and questionnaire development

A brief document outlining the key research themes was presented to the meeting (and later circulated electronically). It was explained that this related to the overarching research questions to be addressed in both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study and did not represent the precise questions to be asked.

Representatives said they would discuss these themes further with colleagues in their boroughs as appropriate. SACRE in Harrow was particularly concerned to see what we would be asking young people before pledging their support for the study.

Some suggestions for thinking about precise questions were whether we might ask (although not necessarily in the quantitative survey) about:

- What difference do your beliefs (eg. in life after death) make to your quality of life?
- Does believing in God make a difference to your life?
- Episodes of awe and wonder in young people's lives.

The important issue of ensuring that the questionnaire is suitable for young people with no religious faith was discussed. Providing questions for those with a non-faith stance is a separate issue from providing questions for young people from different faith backgrounds. DS made the suggestion that we might want to run our pilot questionnaire past somebody (he had somebody in mind) from the British Humanist Society. RB questioned whether this implied we should also run it past somebody representing each faith. It was concluded that this would, generally speaking, be done through SACRE committees and other stakeholders in the research areas.

FG mentioned that we might be able to get some useful additional information on local areas (eg. where participants lived and where their schools were located) based on postcode data. Hillingdon is working with CACI in identifying social cohesion factors within specific localities across the borough.

Letters to schools

FG will send suggestions for modifications to the letter to schools by the end of the week. The research team will then make further amendments informed by minor changes to the research methodology.

It was clarified that Heather Clements remains in post in Harrow (there had been some confusion on the part of the research team due to the current advertisement for a Corporate Director for Children's Services in the borough). RB said that members of SACRE were awaiting further information on the content of the questionnaire before responding in relation to the letters. It was suggested that it might be possible for NM and PH to join a meeting with Harrow representatives next week to clarify matters: she will follow-up to check feasibility. DS asked if he could attend any such meeting as an observer to be aware of any concerns and avoid any difficulties in Hillingdon.

Piloting questionnaires

It was reported that the research team plans to be in a position to pilot the questionnaire during (mainly) December. It was suggested that it could be a good idea to do this with Year 9 pupils as these would not be included in the main survey. DS asked the research team to send more details on what was required as soon as possible so that he could help to set this up. It was suggested that we should arrange for an activity lasting a total of around an hour. It was agreed that it would probably be most feasible to use paper versions of the questionnaire for this exercise.

Questionnaire administration

The research team updated the meeting on the revised plan to survey only Years 8, 10 and 12 to reduce the burden on schools whilst maintaining the full age spread. This revised plan changes the age distribution of sampled pupils by one year in each direction, but avoids planning the survey for the school years in which it might be most difficult to find pupil time to complete the questionnaire.

The point was raised that, even in computer rooms, pupils may often have only one computer between two. Schools differ in their resources and this potential difficulty underlined the importance of early discussion and negotiation with schools to implement the most feasible plan for administering the questionnaire.

Qualitative study

There was a brief discussion on the qualitative part of the research that would follow on from the school survey. Pupil participants would volunteer themselves for this aspect of the study whilst completing the questionnaire. It was agreed that it would be best if pupils wishing to take part identified

themselves by name and that the research team then contacted them through their schools. There was some consideration of the year group of pupils to participate, and whether it would be better to include those in Year 8 or Year 10 at the time of the survey. A final decision on this matter has not yet been taken.

It was agreed that further discussion of the qualitative study could take place at a later date.

End-of-project event

NM reported a meeting between members of Brunel University and the following representatives from LB Hillingdon:

Cllr Ray Puddifoot, Leader of the Council

Hugh Dunnachie, Chief Executive

Fran Beasley, Deputy Chief Executive

Jean Palmer, Director of Planning and Community Services

Kevin Byrne, Head of Policy

NM spoke at this meeting about the University's links with the borough through the Youth on Religion project, and mentioned plans to hold a youth event at the end of the research period. The minutes from this meeting noted that 'LBH happy to support proposed Youth Event'.

Next meeting

Monday 25 January was proposed as the date for a next meeting. It would be held at a venue in Harrow (to be confirmed) from 10am until 11.30am.

NM/4 November 2009

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