

## ARTICLE 19 - STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### The Constitution of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

#### 1 Membership of SACRE:

1.1 The Education Act 1996, provides for two forms of membership on SACRE, namely those nominated by the appropriate sponsoring Groups and formally appointed by the local authority, and who fall within one of the 4 Groups below; and those co-opted by SACRE.

1.2 The 4 Groups are as follows:

#### Group A:

Such Christian denominations and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the Authority, will approximately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.

In respect of Group A, section 390(6) Education Act 1996 states:

*The number of representative members appointed to any representative group under subsection (4)(a) [referred to as Group A] to represent each denomination or religion required to be represented shall, so far as consistent with the efficient discharge of the group's functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area.*

It is the responsibility of City of York Council to determine who should be included in Group A but this would ordinarily follow consultation with local faith communities and existing SACRE members before a decision is made. SACRE does not have a legal right to veto the ultimate decision of the City of York Council however.

**Commented [BJ1]:** Needs to specify how many members are in this group and from which denominations

**Commented [OS2R1]:** I think it would be helpful to reflect what we have at the moment

- **Bahai'**: Daryoush Mazloum
- **Humanist**: Ian Hodgson
- **Jewish**: Ben Rich
- **Methodist**: Keith Albans
- **Muslim**: Imam Abid Salik
- **Religious Society of Friends/Quakers**: Deborah Evans
- **Catholic**: Kate Bailey
- **Salvation Army**: vacant

But also explore a Hindu representative as Hinduism is on the Syllabus and possibly a Buddhist representative due to local places of worship

**Commented [SM3R1]:** List added in below

Membership of Group A (as at March 2021) is as follows:

- Bahai'i
- Humanist
- Jewish
- Methodist
- Muslim
- Religious Society of Friends/Quakers
- Catholic
- Salvation Army

**Group B:**

A groups of persons representing The Church of England.

Section 390(5) Education Act 1996 states:

“Where a representative group is required by subsection (4)(b), [referred to as *Group B*] the representative group required by subsection (4)(a) [referred to as *Group A*] shall not include persons appointed to represent the Church of England.”

**Group C:**

A group of persons to represent such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area.

**Group D:**

A group of persons representing the City of York Council. In this case of Elected Members appointment to this group should ensure political balance and state which political group they represent. As an alternative, the Council may appoint representatives such as a governors association.

**Commented [SM4]:** I agree that it makes sense to move from 3 to 2

**Commented [BJ5]:** Need to specify how many members are in this group

**Commented [OS6R5]:** There are currently 3 places  
Olivia Seymour  
Katharine harper  
1 vacancy

If it is helpful we could explore having 2 places rather than 3 as it is a single vote anyway

**Commented [SM7]:** We could ask for a representative from YSAB and I think it would be helpful to have an ITT rep

**Commented [BJ8]:** Need to specify how many members are in this Group

**Commented [OS9R8]:** I think it would be helpful to have something such as 'up to 5' this would enable a good cross section of primary/secondary/maintained and academy representation.

NASACRE handbook says The members of this group are usually representatives of professional teacher associations. It is usual for there to be representation also from the head teacher associations. It is the local authority that decides which associations will be invited to be represented. They will usually approach the teacher unions, but local associations of RE teachers may also be asked to provide a representative. Sometimes someone from a local teacher training establishment is also invited to be a member of this group, or someone representing the interests of local Academies or Free schools. Group

**Commented [SM10]:** I wonder if we did add in a school governor as the focus is on religious education – we have a governor on schools forum

**Commented [SM11R10]:**

**Commented [BJ12]:** Should this remain at 4?

## 2 Term of Office

2.1 All Members of each Committee of SACRE shall sit for a 4 year term of office (unless they leave for the reasons as stated below) and will be subject to re-election by agreement of SACRE at its next meeting.

2.2 A member of the SACRE appointed by the City of York Council may be removed from membership by the Council if:

- In the opinion of the Council, that person ceases to be representative of the denomination or association which s/he was appointed to represent or (as the case may be) of the Authority.
- S/he is absent for a period of three consecutive meetings without reasonable grounds.

2.3 Any member of the SACRE may at any time resign his/her office by giving notice in writing to the Clerk of the SACRE.

2.4 Membership shall be continuous unless a member resigns by writing to the Clerk.

*Note: Before appointing a person to represent any denomination or association as a member of SACRE, the City of York Council shall take all reasonable steps to assure themselves that a person so appointed is representative of the denomination or association in question.*

## 3 Co-Opted Members of SACRE

3.1 SACRE shall have the right to co-opt to its non-voting membership such persons as it wishes; such co-options shall be for a period not exceeding three years.

## 4 Confirmation of Appointments by City of York Council

4.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, confirmation of appointments of SACRE Members shall be made by Full Council at its Annual Council meeting. Thereafter any changes or amendments to membership of SACRE will be considered

**Commented [BJ13]:** Should substitutes be allowed to attend

**Commented [OS14R13]:** It is rare for a SACRE constitution to include this. I have not come across it before in any SACRE I have sat on or worked with and there is a mixed message in some NASACRE documentation. I think it is challenging to allow substitutions particularly as it is hard to ensure any substitutes understand the legal framework they would be operating under and could cause challenges in voting situations.

**Commented [SM15]:** I agree let's not go with substitutes makes it difficult to achieve consistent attendance

**Commented [BJ16]:** I am going to presume that we do not support substitute members for any of the Committees

**Commented [BJ17]:** New addition to add clarity of length of appointment

**Commented [SM18]:** Do we want to have a process for inviting expressions of interest from prospective members of SACRE?

**Commented [BJ19]:** Do co-opted Members have voting rights? See below under Voting.

**Commented [OS20R19]:** It is not common for co-opted members to have voting rights and depending on the context of co-option could cause some issues given each committee only has one vote. This could mean 1 co-opted member has 1 vote and 8 full committee A members still only have 1 vote because of the legal framework for voting

The NASACRE handbook says  
Co-opted members may co-opt other members who have a particular expertise or represent a small local faith or belief community. Many bring in a Humanist representative, currently technically prevented by law from becoming full members of Group A. Co-opted members do not have voting rights

by the Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee which has the appropriate council delegations for such matters.

## 5 Chair and Vice Chair

5.1 SACRE shall by election each year determine the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee from amongst its representative membership.

**Commented [CIC21]:** Not sure that this is how we are working? And it probably directly conflicts with 5.2

**Commented [BJ22R21]:** Yes this will need amending if we agree the terms of reference section -

5.2 The posts shall be held for a maximum period of four years (unless their membership of SACRE ends earlier as per the reasons stated in the Terms of Office section above). The Vice-Chair shall be a member of a different Group from that of the Chair. The election shall take place at the autumn meeting.

**Commented [BJ23]:** Content with this?

**Commented [OS24R23]:** I think there needs to be a mechanism for re-election. This can be helpful if there are members not engaging or contributing but causes a number of challenges if for example a Committee A member has to step down after 3 years but there isn't another member of that faith that can support. We have some members that have contributed to SACRE for a long time that you wouldn't want to lose. In the case of Committee B the DBE always includes the RE adviser as member of its SACREs to ensure the link with RE advice and support for VC schools in SIAMS. Membership has always been an issue and I think this could exacerbate it

5.3 The Vice Chair shall have the following responsibilities:

- To preside over the meetings in the absence of the Chair;
- To participate in the agenda setting for each meeting.

**Commented [BJ25R23]:** Thanks Olivia – are your comments just limited to the 3 year term for the chair and vice chair? For example if a Ctee D CYC Councillor was to be the Chair then this could be for a maximum period of 4 years as he/she may lose the seat at the next election.

I am happy to write details under the Terms of Office Section that all Members of the Committee of SACRE shall sit for a 4 year term (unless they leave for the reasons as stated) and will be subject to re-election by agreement of the Committee at its next meeting etc? would that help?

**Commented [OS26R23]:** I think that works well, thanks Janie

**Commented [BJ27R23]:** Noted – see new additional wording in term of office section

## 6 Voting

6.1 Where a vote is required, each Group will be allocated one vote. In order to facilitate this the Chair will consider a short adjournment in the proceedings to allow the members of each Group to meet, debate their views and propose how they wish to vote as the Group.

6.2 Voting will be held on any item of business where it is proposed and seconded that a vote shall take place.

6.3 Determinations will always be decided by vote; a majority decision will be carried.

6.4 Where possible, decisions shall be by consensus. Voting may be by a show of hands, committee by committee, or where requested by any member, by secret ballot.

**Commented [OS28]:** I think some guidance on this would be helpful to avoid any comeback on it being viewed as going with their committee view and it being contentious

**Commented [BJ29R28]:** We do not have to have this which I have taken from the existing CYC constitution. From my research some SACRE's do not support any form of weighted voting and instead state the following:

Where voting is tied, a no-decision vote will be recorded. Where there is a no-decision vote, at the Chair's discretion, further discussion and a further vote, may be allowed.

**Commented [OS30R28]:** Thanks Janie that wording is what I am most familiar with and I think would be helpful

6.5 Where voting is tied, The Chair shall cast a deciding vote.

6.6 On any question to be decided by the SACRE only the representative groups shall be entitled to vote and each group shall have a single vote.

**Commented [BJ31]:** this means co-opted members do not vote..

**Commented [OS32R31]:** This is standard in SACREs across the country and linked to the reasons given previously

6.7 When any member asks that a decision be taken through the committee structure, SACRE shall break into its groups and each group shall determine how its representative shall vote in SACRE.

## 7. Functions and Duties

7.1 The main function of SACRE is to advise the local authority on religious worship in community schools or foundation schools which do not have a religious character and on religious education, to be taught in accordance with York's agreed syllabus.

**Commented [OS33]:** Should this read collective worship rather than religious worship?

**Commented [SM34]:** Yes I agree Olivia it should be collective worship. Do we also need to add that this is for maintained schools

7.2 It is the duty of SACRE to:

- Support the teaching of RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus through the provision of advice on, for example, methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.
- Such advice being made available to the head teachers of all schools in York.
- Request a review of any agreed syllabus adopted by the authority through the convening of an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- Consider applications made by a head teacher that the requirement for collective worship in community schools and foundation schools which do not have a religious character to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character shall not apply to the collective worship provided for some or all of the pupils in that particular school and to review such determinations at the request of the head teacher or, not later than, a period of 5 years.

- Monitor the provision of a daily act of collective worship in all community schools and foundation schools which do not have a religious character and advise on the action to be taken to improve such provision.
- Report annually on the work of SACRE, a copy of the report being sent to [NEED TO INSERT CTTEE/FULL COUNCIL]. As well as the work undertaken, the report will also include details of:
  - any matters in respect of which SACRE has given advice to the authority,
  - broadly describe the nature of the advice given, and
  - where any such matter was not referred to SACRE by the authority, give SACRE's reasons for offering advice on that matter.

Commented [CIC35]: Probably an annual report to full Council?

## 8. Procedure

### 8.1 Conduct of Meetings

8.2 The procedures for the conduct of SACRE meetings are defined in the Standing Orders at Appendix of this Constitution

[NEED TO STATE HERE WHICH MEETING WILL BE THE ANNUAL MEETING – IS IT THE FIRST ONE OF THE YEAR]

Commented [OS36]: If this is linked to the annual report cycle and electing chair it is usually the autumn term meeting in most SACREs

## 9. Extraordinary Meetings

9.1 Extraordinary meetings will be arranged when requested by at least four individual members of SACRE. This request should be in writing and should give the reasons for holding such a meeting. At least seven days' notice will be given of any such meeting.

9.2 The Chair may also call an extraordinary meeting when required.

Commented [SM37]: We've usually presented the annual report in November/December to link with school data

## 10. The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

10.1 In accordance with current legislation SACRE may request, and will ensure, that the process for the review of the agreed

syllabus for Religious Education, which is required to take place every 5 years, should commence.

10.2 Membership of the Agreed Syllabus Conference, which is in itself a separate legal entity, will consist of four committees representing:

- Christian denominations and other religions which reflect principal religious traditions in the area.
- Church of England.
- Teacher Associations as represented in York
- City of York Council representatives

10.3 Any sub-committees appointed by the conference shall have at least one member from each committee constituting the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

10.4 SACRE will recommend to the Local Authority, and will oversee, the establishment, process and outcomes of the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

10.5 SACRE will monitor the Agreed Syllabus, provision and standards in RE. The outcomes of this process will help constitute the basis of revision of the Agreed Syllabus, which will be presented to the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

10.6 Any proposed modification of the Agreed Syllabus will require the reconstitution of the Agreed Syllabus Conference in accordance with 8.1 – 8.3 above.

## 11. Review of the Constitution and Code of Conduct

11.1 There will be an annual review of the SACRE constitution and code of conduct to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

**Commented [OS38]:** Legally it is every 5 years the agreed syllabus has to be reviewed every five years. If, at some other time, a majority of the groups of the SACRE asks the LA in writing to reconsider its agreed syllabus, it must convene a conference for that purpose. Education Act 1996, Chapter 1

## APPENDIX 1

### Standing Orders for Meetings of SACRE

#### 1 Meetings

- 1.1 Meetings are held at least one per term
- 1.2 A meeting of SACRE shall be quorate only when one member of each constituent group is present in addition to either the Chair or Vice-Chair. Members' attendance may be recorded in the annual report.
- 1.3 Meetings are held, and are open to members of the public, in accordance with The Religious Education (Meetings of local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994.
- 1.4 Dates of meetings will be agreed at the final meeting of the previous academic year.
- 1.5 The Clerk to SACRE will contact members giving at least seven days' notice of any meeting.
- 1.6 Public notice will be given at least three days before a meeting.
- 1.7 The minutes of the previous meeting, agenda and any other relevant papers will be provided for members, and for inspection by members of the public on request.
- 1.8 Committees; A, B, C, & D may hold committee meetings as and when required.

**Commented [BJ39]:** or no more than 3 in a year

**Commented [OS40R39]:** At the moment there are 4. This is to allow the approval of the annual report in a single item agenda in Dec/Jan

**Commented [BJ41R39]:** I referenced three as I understand that the decision was taken in York in Autumn 2018 for the meetings to be limited to 3 but am happy for this to be 4

#### 2. Order Of Business

- 2.1 Business will include the following:
  - a) Disclosure of interest
  - b) Apologies for absence / declarations of interest
  - c) Minutes of the previous meeting
  - d) Matters arising from the minutes
  - e) Reports



- f) Correspondence items including complaints
- g) Any other business
- h) Dates & agenda items for future meetings

### 3. Agenda

- 3.1 The agenda will be prepared by the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE and supporting Officers.
- 3.2 Members of SACRE may put forward items for inclusion on the agenda, with such request being made in writing, to the Clerk at least 14 days prior to the meeting.
- 3.3 The agenda for a SACRE meeting, accompanied by minutes of its previous meeting (if not already circulated) shall be sent so as to reach members not later than seven days before that meeting. The Agenda for each meeting shall be published on the City of York Council website at least five working days prior to the meeting taking place.
- 3.4 Matters for the agenda shall normally be sent to one of the SACRE's officers not later than fourteen days before that meeting.
- 3.5 Items for 'any other business' shall be sent in writing to officers or Chair not less than forty-eight hours before the meeting.
- 3.6 The minutes of the SACRE meeting shall be reported to the LA.

### 4. Determinations

- 4.1 Determinations will be received from schools in sufficient time for them to be considered at the meeting prior to their commencement. For those seeking a quinquennial renewal, applications should be received for consideration at the meeting prior to their expiry. Such applications will only be accepted on the SACRE approved application form.
- 4.2 Determinations will be accepted or rejected on a majority decision of each constituent committee and by a majority vote by SACRE.

**Commented [OS42]:** In other SACRES in the region the agenda is usually clerk, chair, vice chair and officers to SACRE. That has been the practice in York recently too

**Commented [BJ43]:** Content with this?

**Commented [OS44R43]:** I think this is helpful in case any legal advice/professional RE advice is needed

**Commented [CIC45R43]:** Is there a provision for 'urgent' as opposed to 'any other' business. I'd be content with these coming up to the day before the meeting.

- 4.3 If SACRE requires modification to a determination the school will be informed in writing and the modified application will be considered at the next SACRE meeting. An interim 'Chairs action' can be taken.

DRAFT

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **An introduction to City of York SACRE**

#### **Why is there a SACRE?**

In 1944, Local Education Authorities were empowered by law to set up a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). In 1988, the Education Reform Act made it a legal responsibility for them to do so. The Education Act 1996 governs the constitution for SACRE which includes membership and roles and responsibilities.

#### **What are the duties of SACRE?**

The SACRE must:

- advise the LA on RE given in accordance with the agreed syllabus, collective worship, and on matters related to its functions, whether in response to a referral from the LA or as it sees fit
- have regard to any circumstances relating to the faith backgrounds of the pupils which are relevant for deciding what character of collective worship is appropriate when a school makes application for a determination
- publish an annual report on its work and on actions taken by its representative groups, specifying any matters on which it has advised the LA, broadly describe the nature of that advice, and set out reasons for offering advice on matters not referred to it by the LA
- send a copy of the report to NASACRE (National Association of SACRE's)
- meet in public unless confidential information is to be disclosed
- make minutes of its meetings available for inspection at the LA's offices (so far as the minutes relate to the parts of meetings that were open to the public). There are also provisions about public access to the agenda and reports for meetings.

The SACRE should:

- monitor the provision and quality of RE taught

according to its agreed syllabus, together with the overall effectiveness of the syllabus, and collective worship

- provide advice and support on the effective teaching of RE in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus; provide advice to the LA and its schools on methods of teaching, the choice of teaching material and the provision of teacher training
- in partnership with its LA, consider whether any changes need to be made in the agreed syllabus or in the support offered to schools in the implementation of the agreed syllabus, to improve the quality teaching and learning of RE
- offer advice to the LA, and through the LA to schools, concerning how an existing agreed syllabus can be interpreted, and collective worship provided, so as to fit in with a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum.

The SACRE may:

- require its LA to review the agreed syllabus and, if after discussion a vote is taken on this matter, the LA group on SACRE is not entitled to cast a vote. A majority decision by the three other committees is sufficient
- decide to advise the LA on matters related to its functions to the LA – equally, an LA may decide to refer matters to its SACRE
- co-opt members who are not members of any of the four groups – such co-opted members may provide educational expertise, young peoples' views or religious and non-religious views that reflect a diverse multi-cultural society.

### **Attendance at meetings**

SACRE members are expected to attend all meetings where possible and send apologies to the clerk when they are unable to attend. A SACRE member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings and does not send apologies will be asked to stand down and an alternative representative will be sought.

### Who sits on the SACRE?

The composition of the SACRE is defined by law. It is made up of four committees. Each local authority (LA) must establish a permanent body called a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). It must appoint representatives to each of four committees, representing respectively:

- Group A: Christian denominations and such other religious and religious denominations as, in the authority's opinion, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area
- Group B: The Church of England
- Group C: Teacher Associations
- Group D: The LA

Membership of each of the four groups which constitute the York SACRE are:

- Group A: Baha'i, Humanist, Jewish, Methodist, Muslim, Salvationist, Sikh, Society of Friends (single representative for each)
- Group B: Three representatives nominated by the Diocese of York.
- Group C: Teachers for religious education
- Group D: Four elected members of the LA.

### What is the distinctive contribution of each committee?

Everyone shares the responsibility to put children's learning before personal interest.<sup>5</sup>

Members of Groups A and B, each of whom represents a faith community within the locality:<sup>6</sup>

- should present and foster a positive image of their religion, so that negative stereotyping is avoided. They must also make

**Commented [BJ46]:** This needs updating in line with the revised constitution

**Commented [OS47]:** It would be helpful if this section mirrored the wording in the NASACRE handbook which is updated. It is not very different but there are some changes  
[https://nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/SACRE\\_members\\_handbook-1.pdf](https://nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/SACRE_members_handbook-1.pdf)

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<sup>5</sup> NASACRE Members Handbook

<sup>6</sup> NASACRE Members Handbook

clear any grounds on which they may differ from each other, whilst showing respect for each other's viewpoints, since such convictions and mutual understanding both lie at the heart of effective classroom RE;

- can create opportunities within SACRE meetings to raise awareness of issues of sensitivity in the teaching of RE to the children of their faith community, and also in the presentation of their particular faith and religious tradition within school RE, always taking an educational approach;
- should appreciate the difficulties schools are facing in the area, support their best endeavours, and act, where necessary, as a link between schools and the faith communities;
- should be aware of other local minority faith communities not represented amongst their number. Some SACREs address this by co-opting representatives from these communities.

Members of Group C, representing teacher associations and education, should:<sup>7</sup>

- have a real and positive interest in RE in primary, secondary or special schools;
- ensure that the needs of schools and teachers are considered by the SACRE in their discussions;
- provide the SACRE with information about the context in which RE is taught in the schools in the local authority;
- ensure that the bodies they represent are informed about the work of the SACRE and about RE in local schools;
- create opportunities for other teachers to learn more about the work of the SACRE and give them the opportunity to have their views expressed at SACRE meetings;
- consult their colleagues on matters of particular importance to the work of the SACRE;
- can bring 'public' dimensions to the debate about RE provision and support.

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<sup>7</sup> NASACRE Handbook

Members of Group D, representing the local authority: <sup>8</sup>

- can bring to the meeting the breadth of educational issues and concerns which elected members are wrestling with, and place RE's role within it;
- can be the supporters of RE within the various committees and structures of the local authority;
- can give political support to enable locally determined RE to flourish within each LA, including advisory support etc.;
- can appreciate the issues raised by a multi-faith, multi-cultural society for the education of children in RE, and reflect these issues in support of RE in the relevant council structures, including Scrutiny Committee, Executive, etc.;
- can particularly support the efforts of the SACRE to be effective through publicising its work with fellow elected members and officers of the local authority, ensuring it is taken seriously and is appropriately funded and supported.

### **Voting**

On any question to be decided by the SACRE, its constituent groups each have a single vote, but co-opted members do not have a vote.

Decisions within a group do not require unanimity.

Each group must regulate its own proceedings, including provision for resolving deadlock.

### **Election of chair and vice-chair**

Members of groups A, B, C and D shall vote individually for the election of a chair and vice- chair from within their collective membership at the first SACRE meeting of a new school year.

### **How often must a SACRE meet?**

There are no requirements to meet for a certain number of times but meetings are usually held once a term. More meetings may be scheduled if the business is considered to be urgent or

**Commented [BJ48]:** Ensure this is consistent with the revised constitution

**Commented [BJ49]:** The constitution indicates will meet 3 times each year

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<sup>8</sup> NASACRE Handbook

requiring more discussion time than is possible in the regular meeting/s.

It is important to attend because no decisions can be made unless there is at least one person present from each committee in order to cast that committee's single vote. Co-opted members do not have a vote.

### How is the SACRE managed?

It is the LA's responsibility to set up a SACRE and this implies it also has a duty to fund it. Funding for SACRE's varies across the country, but in this authority there is no specified budget. The SACRE applies for funding as and when it identifies a need.

The SACRE is serviced by a clerk, provided by the City of York Council Democratic Services Team who is a contact within the authority for SACRE matters, takes minutes of the meetings and provides administrative support.

The LA can make the decision on how the chair of SACRE may be appointed or it may allow the SACRE to choose the chair from amongst their members.

This SACRE is serviced by a Local Authority adviser from York's Effectiveness and Achievement Team, who:

- may advise the SACRE and LA
- ensures that the decisions of the SACRE are moved forward
- oversees the monitoring of RE and collective worship in schools
- oversees the development of the Agreed Syllabus and its implementation
- offers support and advice to teachers and schools through training and consultancy
- writes the SACRE annual report.

### What is an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)?

An ASC is convened in order to produce an Agreed Syllabus for RE. It is a separate legal entity from a SACRE.

**Commented [SM50]:** From September I'll be picking this up - I covered it before Mike J took it on

**Commented [BJ51]:** Check who this is from Education Service

**Commented [OS52R51]:** If there is not a professional RE adviser the LA adviser would need to fulfil or look at who fulfils those aspects <https://nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/SACRE%20officers-1.pdf>



Although a review of the locally Agreed Syllabus is required within five years of the last review, if the majority of the committees (other than Committee D) ask the LA in writing to reconsider its Agreed Syllabus it must convene a conference for that purpose.

An ASC:

- Is a separate legal entity in itself
- Contains the same committees as the SACRE
- Can be made up of SACRE members but need not do so
- There is no provision for co-opted members
- The chair of the ASC can be appointed by the LA or the LA may allow the ASC to choose its own Chair.

The LA's responsibility to convene the ASC implies a duty to provide funds for its work.

#### **What other activities might the SACRE be involved in?**

- convene working parties of SACRE members and teachers
- produce guidelines for schools, such as: schemes of work; programmes of study; assessment guidance; resource lists including visits and visitors; policy documents; teaching and learning strategies; RE and the early years; RE and post 16; RE and SEN; SMSC; recording and reporting
- keep up to date with Ofsted reports; what is happening with SACREs in other areas (NASACRE and Analysis of SACRE reports)
- monitor action plans
- receive reports on local activities such as exam results; displays; exhibitions; 'special days';
- acknowledge schools on their achievements and encourage those who need it through visits; certificates; letters; invitations to talk to SACRE; listening
- visit schools to: experience an RE lesson or an act of worship;
- presentations to SACRE by teachers
- find out more about the faiths or non-faith stances of: members of SACRE; the faiths identified in the agreed

**Commented [SM53]:** I think this would be for the SACRE handbook/guidance document rather than here

**Commented [BJ54]:** Is this correct?

**Commented [OS55R54]:** It's not in any of the official NASACRE documentation. Although some of these are good ideas I wonder if it needs to be in here?

syllabus

- recognise and seize opportunities to raise the profile and status of RE
- ensure schools are kept up to date with both local and national initiatives and information which will support them in their situation
- address the issue of schools' non-compliance with legal requirements
- organise SACRE training days and lectures
- ensure that the LA are fully aware of the duties and responsibilities of SACRE so that they may make informed decisions regarding policy and budget
- ensure that SACRE is represented on national bodies and at national courses/conferences
- write a development plan to ensure the SACRE 'moves forward' and is effective in carrying out its duties and tasks.

## APPENDIX 3

### City of York Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) code of conduct and roles and responsibilities

#### IS THIS STILL UP TO DATE / FIT FOR PURPOSE?

**Commented [OS56]:** This could be updated using the NASACRE guidance  
<https://nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/Code%20of%20conduct.pdf>

#### General principles<sup>9</sup>

York SACRE encourages all its members to:

- attend all SACRE meetings and take a full and active part in its work
- participate in and review the work of SACRE for the benefit of the whole community
- listen with respect to the views of other members and where a situation of disagreement occurs, disagree respectfully
- express views and opinions openly, honestly and sensitively, always recognising others may have views different to one's own
- assume at all times that other members of SACRE are honourable and concerned with the best interests of SACRE
- seek reasoned consensus where views diverge and never disrespect the views of other SACRE members or seek to convert them to a different belief stance
- actively consult with, and report back to, the membership body which they represent so that debate is fully informed
- actively challenge and resist stereotyping

Remember that the central aim for the SACRE is to improve the quality of provision in RE and collective worship for all pupils in York.

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<sup>9</sup> NASACRE Code of Conduct

### **Visiting schools**

From time to time, SACRE members may have the opportunity to visit schools. SACRE Members should remember that it is a privilege to visit a school. They are there as invited guests, not to make judgements about the school or to “inspect” RE and collective worship. Members should:

- only visit a school when invited
- inform the Clerk of SACRE and the SACRE’s RE Professional of any invitation received and visits made
- ensure that you do not say or do anything, which could be viewed as denigrating any religion or ethical belief system
- avoid being critical of others or imposing their own views
- any confidential information disclosed should not be passed on but along with any possible concerns or confusions about what may have been seen should be discussed with the LA Officer and RE Professional before being reported back to SACRE

#### Visiting schools as a representative of a faith community<sup>10</sup>

Some faith community representatives may be more regular visitors to schools and invited to support RE and/or collective worship. Visitors should be well-supported by the class teacher who should always be present, taking an active role in question and answer sessions, and ensuring visitors are well-briefed before a visit.

SACRE members visiting a school to share their beliefs, values and experiences should:

- have a clear, mutually agreed understanding of the purpose of the visit before it takes place
- appreciate that they are not there to convert or proselytise, avoiding being critical of others or imposing their own views
- be familiar with the school’s aims, ethos and policies in RE and collective worship;
- have an understanding of where the lesson will fit into the unit of work from the Agreed Syllabus and what the learning objectives are

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<sup>10</sup> NASACRE Code of Conduct

- use a variety of teaching and learning methods and approaches, but at no time touch pupils or behave favourably towards pupils of particular faiths, ethnic groups or genders
- ensure that pupils understand that the visitor is representing a particular faith view and their own personal interpretation of it and therefore that others from the same faith may not always interpret ideas in exactly the same ways
- ensure that they do not say or do anything, which could be viewed as denigrating
- communicate at an appropriate level for the age group concerned

Teacher and teacher association representatives should:

- provide information and expertise in relation to teaching and the school environment
- if appropriate provide information and expertise in relation to the teaching of religious education and the carrying out of collective worship in schools
- represent the interests and concerns of teachers, pupils and schools
- consult with teaching colleagues and students
- keep colleagues informed about the work of SACRE
- ensure that the welfare and education of all the children in the City of York is the primary focus of SACRE

Council representatives should:

- represent the wider public interest
- provide information and expertise to SACRE in their capacity as an elected member of City of York Council
- inform SACRE of concerns or issues known to City of York Council relating to education and in particular the provision for SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development), teaching of religious education and the carrying out of collective worship in schools
- support the work of SACRE by representing its interests in City of York Council
- endeavour to ensure that SACRE is adequately funded and supported

**Commented [SM57]:** I think that these sections should come out and we go with the general principles in this document

**Commented [BJ58]:** Is this still relevant and to be included or just happy with the general principles?

**Commented [OS59R58]:** I think this is a helpful reminder to members about their role and responsibilities. It is also helpful as part of inducting new members

**Commented [BJ60]:** Is this still relevant or content with general principles?

- ensure that legal requirements for the conduct of SACRE are observed in particular in relation to the suitability and qualifications required to be a member of SACRE

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The Chair of SACRE is required to fulfil the following key tasks:

Ensure that:

- a clear timetable of meetings for the year is agreed and published
- membership of the SACRE is efficiently maintained, i.e. that the four groups of SACRE have appropriate representation, with good attendance and participation
- SACRE produces guidance to support the local authority and its schools with regard to religious education and collective worship
- an annual report is produced each year and sent to the Secretary of State as required by statute
- SACRE members have a programme of training, and when necessary induction
- there is a Vice Chair if the Chair is unable to make a meeting
- where there is an agreed a code of conduct it is adhered to by all SACRE member

In addition, the Chair of SACRE is required to undertake a number of other responsibilities which include:

- Attend all SACRE meetings, helping to prepare Agendas and key papers;
- Welcome new SACRE members and ensure they are fully briefed;
- Chair SACRE meetings;
- Represent City of York SACRE on national bodies and report back to SACRE on the outcomes of any meetings;
- Send letters of thanks to schools who host meetings and to individuals who give presentations at SACRE meetings;

**Commented [O561]:** This could be updated using the NASACRE role descriptions documents  
<https://nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/SACRE%20chair.pdf>  
<https://nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/SACRE%20officers-L.pdf>

- Send congratulation letters to schools where good practice has been identified, such as through the RE Quality Mark, through Ofsted Inspections or through visits by SACRE members;
- Working with the LA Adviser, the clerk and other SACRE Officers, produce reports for the Council e.g. when changes to the SACRE constitution or membership are required.

RE Professional Advisor to SACRE (who is not a member of SACRE) has the following responsibilities:

- Attend all SACRE (and ASC when appropriate) meetings, helping to prepare Agendas and key papers;
- Advise SACRE (and ASC when appropriate) on issues relating to its work;
- Ensure SACRE (and ASC when appropriate) is up to date with local, regional and national initiatives and issues related to RE, collective worship and syllabus developments, e.g. the work of the RE Council, the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE, DfE or charitable funded initiatives;
- Relate SACRE's work to wider community issues, including partnerships with faith and belief communities ;
- Lead on areas related to the Agreed Syllabus, RE and collective worship;
- Manage and deliver the training of SACRE members and, where appropriate, teachers and other groups interested in RE;
- Produce reports to meet the deadlines agreed for distribution of papers for the meetings;
- Support SACRE members' development, including their ability to provide a bridge between their nominating body and SACRE;
- With relevant administrative support and the SACRE clerk, manage and advise meetings of sub groups e.g. working parties for particular initiatives;
- With the SACRE clerk ensure that all SACRE publications are circulated to the relevant bodies;
- Working with the Chair, the clerk and other SACRE Officers, produce reports to the Lord Mayor or Portfolio Holder and Executive e.g. when changes to the SACRE constitution or membership are required;
- Draft and edit the SACRE Annual Report and all SACRE materials and publications;

Commented [BJ62]: need to insert relevant Cttee here

- With administrative support, update any relevant RE / ASC / SACRE website and SACRE's presence on the LA website;
- Take the lead on the monitoring aspects of SACRE, especially agreed school visits and analysis of examination results in Religious Studies;

The Clerk to SACRE (who is not a member of SACRE) should:

- Arrange, attend and clerk meetings of the SACRE and/or ASC;
- Produce and circulate minutes and agendas of the SACRE and/or ASC in a timely manner in accordance with the LA's standard format;
- Ensure that all papers from working parties or consultants are circulated to SACRE and/or ASC members in advance of meetings electronically and where necessary printed;
- Advise on dates of meetings, particularly in relation to religious holidays or other Council meetings which may clash and effect quoracy;
- Arrange venues for meetings of both the SACRE and ASC;
- Liaise with the venue regarding any catering for a meeting with due sensitivity towards the religious requirements of a particular faith community or communities represented on SACRE;
- Liaise with a venue for use of any necessary equipment (e.g. IT, digital projector) required for the meeting;
- Remind and chase members/other attendees about reports for meetings and circulation deadlines;
- Circulate additional papers or conference invitations e.g. from government departments, Council departments, the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE), the RE Council and Ofsted as appropriate;
- Alert the Chair and RE Professional / Adviser to any communications from these and similar bodies;
- Ensure that regular communications such as the NASACRE updates are circulated to members;
- Working with the Chair, the local RE Professional and other SACRE Officers, produce reports to the Lord Mayor or Portfolio Holder and Executive when changes to the SACRE constitution or membership are required;

Commented [BJ63]: add correct cttee here



- Work as a team member closely with the Chair, the local RE Professional and other SACRE Officers; this includes regular phone contact, email, sending meeting dates and up to 3 agenda planning / setting meetings per year;
- Be the first point of contact for SACRE members, faith community members, members of the public and other bodies concerned with the work of SACREs, e.g. NASACRE;
- Respond to queries, alerting the Chair and Advisor when necessary, for example FOI requests, this function is particularly crucial in LAs where the RE Professional is a contracted external consultant;
- Maintain the SACRE membership list, keeping it up to date, chasing members whose attendance is poor and identifying any membership issues for the attention of the Chair, RE professional and LA Officers;
- Contact nominating bodies represented on the SACRE when membership lapses to arrange for replacements and / or liaise with these bodies for any other issues as appropriate;
- Contribute information, e.g. membership and attendance details for the Annual Report of SACRE;
- Assist in the production and circulation of the Annual Report; issue Welcome / Induction Packs for new members and ensure that they have sufficient information to prepare them for their first meeting.
- Maintain a filing system (electronic and sometimes paper) of relevant and up to date information;
- Where possible liaise with the LA Officer, other Council departments, keeping the Chair, the RE Professional and other Officers informed of any Council initiatives which may be relevant to the work of the SACRE;
- Ensure that all SACRE publications / advice are circulated to the relevant bodies;
- Liaise with the Council's legal advisor in respect of governance issues;
- Be responsible for the passing on for payment, invoices relating to SACRE work, e.g. payment for attendance at national conferences, payment for catering for meetings.

Commented [BJ64]: proposed to be 4