

Meeting	SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education)
Date	10 March 2026
Present	<u>Group A</u> Karen Vincent (Faith/Catholic) Ben Rich (Vice Chair) (Faith/Jewish) Mark Jones (Faith/Buddhist) Dee Boyle (Faith/Unitarian, Buddhist, Pagan) <u>Group B</u> Sue Bland (CoE) Joseph Everdell (CoE) <u>Group D</u> Cllr Robert Webb (Chair) (City of York Council) Cllr Sarah Wilson (City of York Council)
In Attendance	<u>LA Officer</u> Maxine Squire (Assistant Director Education and Skills, City of York Council)
Apologies	Councillors Knight and Rowley, Penny Coppin-Siddall, Taco Michiels, Fleur Kennedy, Colin Lewisohn and Tony Lawton

The meeting was not quorate.

21. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest (6:03pm)

Apologies for absence were received and noted for Karen Vincent, Mark Jones, Fleur Kennedy and Cllr Rowley. Members were asked to declare at this point in the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registerable interest they might have in respect of business on the agenda, if they had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. There were none.

22. Minutes and matters arising from the minutes (6:04pm)

The approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2025 was carried forward to next meeting.

Matters arising: Maxine Squire reported that web services had been in contact regarding updating the SACRE webpage. The Chair asked Members to send the Clerk a sentence about themselves if they had not already done so. Maxine Squire informed Members that the extension of the Agreed Syllabus had been agreed by RE today. She had asked schools about flag flying and schools had found it a challenge and had dealt with it sensitively. They also said that they would find it useful to have some information from the council and SACRE. The Chair noted that on his visits to schools children had said that they were concerned about flag flying. Maxine Squire noted that the Department of Education (DfE) advice had been sent to schools and there was a national review on anti semitism in schools.

[The meeting adjourned from 6.13pm until 6.14pm to allow Sue Bland to join the meeting remotely].

Dee Boyle reported that Interfaith had changed their programme in relation to flag flying.

23. SACRE Annual Report (6:16pm)

Maxine outlined the 2024-25 SACRE Annual Report noting that it would be updated to include the Chair's comments. She detailed the information in the report, including a summary of performance in Key Stages 4 and 5. She noted that the annual survey to schools looked at the Agreed Syllabus. She added that the RE Hub had started to review what it does if RE was to become a National Curriculum syllabus under which SACREs would not be devolved. She noted links with Interfaith. She noted the need for SACRE to focus on the delivery of the Development Plan. The Chair noted the importance of quoracy for meetings as the meeting was not quorate. It was noted that there would be Sikh representation on SACRE and potential Hindu representation and there was no age limit on SACRE. Maxine Squire noted that it would help SACRE to have more youth voice on it.

It was confirmed that the Annual Report would be approved at the next meeting.

24. Review of the Agreed Syllabus (6:26pm)

Maxine Squire noted that SACRE had more time to look at the Agreed Syllabus as it had been extended. She noted that Stephen Pett from RE today would be invited to the next meeting. It was agreed that schools not using the Agreed Syllabus would be invited to the teacher focus group for the Agreed Syllabus and noted that SACRE budget could be used to support it.

Maxine Squire explained that teachers had been asked what they would benefit from SACRE and they feedback that it would be useful to see what other school did. It was noted that in relation to the potential RE National Curriculum it may be useful for RE departments to discuss as a team. The Chair noted that the SACRE budget could be used to pay for an amount of time (possibly an afternoon) for schools RE teachers to meet to discuss how their schools deliver RE. Karen Vincent agreed to help with that and Maxine Squire undertook to contact Taco Michiels about it.

25. Update from Interfaith (6:36pm)

Dee Boyle reported that York Interfaith had changed their January meeting to discuss flag flying. The new meeting was attended by young people in reviewing what York Interfaith could offer schools. She noted that York Interfaith would like to go on a school visit with SACRE.

The Vice Chair noted that he had been in contact with the FaithAction, who manage the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Faith and Society regarding the Faith Covenant. Maxine Squire noted that the authority had not heard from them and Dee Boyle noted that it had been discussed at the York Interfaith meeting the previous evening. The Vice Chair was asked and explained that FaithAction would like Local Authorities to sign up to a Faith Covenant.

26. Delivery of the SACRE Development Plan (6:42pm)

Maxine Squire reported that the Development Plan had been slimmed down and focussed on the Agreed Syllabus and engagement event with teachers. She suggested that there a small sub group to pull together a calendar of events and added that thought needed to be put into setting aside some SACRE budget for the RE teacher conference.

Members discussed visits to secondary schools and it was noted that the next visit was on 25 March 2026. Dee Boyle noted that York Interfaith would be working on faith information sheets. It was suggested that to contribute to community cohesion and social harmony there was the possibility of an annual event with young people on community cohesion and social harmony. It was further suggested that the Youth Council Festival could tie in with community cohesion. It was noted that Fishergate School was a school of sanctuary.

The Vice Chair noted that the government had published their community cohesion strategy the previous day. The Vice Chair and Maxine Squire noted that they would be looking at the strategy.

The Chair noted that Maxine Squire and Karen Vincent would be looking into paying for times to get RE teachers together. He added that SACRE would pause looking at how it could encourage young people to join SACRE as it needed to consider its future visits to schools. Regarding school visits, Maxine Squire suggested contacting Huntington School in the summer term and then following up with feeder primary schools.

27. SACRE Visit to Joseph Rowntree School, Wednesday, 25 March 2026 (6:54pm)

Dee Boyle agreed to attend the visit with Maxine Squire and there was a possibility that Karen Vincent and Cllr Knight would attend.

28. NASACRE News Issue 2 (6:57pm)

Maxine Squire noted that NASACRE put out information regarding events including their annual conference. The Chair asked Members to contact him if they would like to attend the conference. Maxine Squire added that the theme of the conference was cohesion and she undertook to add information on it in the email to schools.

29. Correspondence on complaints/determinations (6:59pm)

It was noted that no complaints had been received, and no determinations submitted. It was noted that all schools had been emailed to remind them of their duties in relation to RE and the need to submit determinations to SACRE.

30. Any Other Business (6:59pm)

There were no items for Any Other Business.

31. Future Meeting Dates (6:59pm)

The 21 April meeting was to be rearranged as the Chair and Maxine Squire were judging at a secondary school speaking competition.

Cllr Webb, Chair

[The meeting started at 6.02 pm and finished at 7.00 pm].