

Meeting	SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education)
Date	14 October 2025
Present	<u>Group A</u> Penny Coppin-Siddall (Faith/ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) Imam Amar (Faith/Muslim) Ben Rich (Vice Chair) (Faith/Jewish) Colin Lewisohn (Faith/Humanist) Dee Boyle (Faith/Unitarian, Buddhist, Pagan) Tony Lawton (Faith/Catholic) <u>Group B</u> Joseph Everdell (CoE) <u>Group C</u> Taco Michiels (Joseph Rowntree School) <u>Group D</u> Cllr Robert Webb (Chair) (City of York Council) Cllr Emilie Knight (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) Stephen Pett (RE Today)
Apologies	Councillor Rowley, Karen Vincent, Fleur Kennedy, Sue Bland and Mark Jones

11. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest (6:02pm)

Apologies for absence were received and noted for Karen Vincent, Mark Jones, Fleur Kennedy, Sue Bland 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.

[Penny Coppin-Siddall arrived at 6.03pm]

12. Minutes and matters arising from the minutes (6:06pm)

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings held on 15 May 2025 and 15 July 2025 be approved as a correct record.

Matters arising: Maxine Squire reported that the next school visit would be on 26 November 2025 to Joseph Rowntree School. Cllr Knight and Ben Rich undertook to attend the visit. Following a question from a Member regarding the informal meeting, Maxine Squire noted that she would send out an update. It was noted that the Chair had visited York Mosque and he noted that the informal meeting had been arranged to address flag flying and how SACRE could support RE teachers.

13. School Survey 2025 (6:13pm)

Maxine Squire reported that the School Survey focussed on a review of the Agreed Syllabus and areas where RE teachers needed additional support. She noted that there had been increased and more detailed responses due to the survey being online. She added that responses had been received from 7 out of 9 secondary schools and 18 primary schools and there had been a lot of support for the Agreed Syllabus with some suggested changes. Teachers also responded that they felt confident in teaching RE. The results showed that the demography of RE teachers was white British and a third were Christian, a third were of no faith and there was a younger demographic. The results also showed Christianity and Islam being the faiths taught in schools and teachers noted that they would benefit from more curriculum resources. The two teacher SACRE members were asked and explained their experience of teaching the Agreed Syllabus and Diocesan curriculum in their respective schools.

Resolved: That the contact lists, core offer and links to trusted sources of information would be updated.

Reason: To ensure the information was up to date.

14. Renewal of SACRE development plan (6:35pm)

Stephen Pett, RE Advisor at RE Today, whose syllabus was used by York SACRE, was introduced to members. Maxine Squire confirmed that the current Agreed Syllabus could be extended. Stephen Pett explained that RE Today was a charity and that York had used the RE Today syllabus since 2016. He outlined the Agreed Syllabus options from RE Today as being Option 1 the systematic approach and Option 2 the religion and world views approach. He detailed what was contained in each of their curriculum and the feedback from Gloucestershire schools using the Option 2 syllabus.

Stephen Pett was asked and confirmed that there could be a modernised version of the thematic approach. He was also asked and explained that the world view approach allowed for some thematic approach. A Member noted concern in moving away from what teachers said that they like as shown in the feedback from the school survey. A member asked if SACRE could have a third options for a modernised syllabus as well as Options 1 and 2.

Members discussed the Agreed Syllabus Conference, with Stephen Pett advising that RE Today could extend the licence by a year and that they could look at amendments to the current Agreed Syllabus. Following discussion, it was;

Resolved:

1. That the Agreed Syllabus be delayed by a year.
2. At the January meeting look at options for the Agreed Syllabus with Stephen Pett in attendance.
3. The Chair to email members for their views on the Agreed Syllabus

Reason: To renew the Agreed Syllabus.

15. Update from Interfaith (7.13pm)

Penny Coppin-Siddall noted that SACRE working with York Interfaith would be an opportunity to look at unity. Maxine Squire agreed to circulate their newsletter to York schools.

16. Views of RE Teachers (7.15pm)

The Chair explained that he wanted unity to be part of the syllabus and the new syllabus would be an opportunity to address unity between communities. A member asked if schools could be asked about how they were dealing with the issues with flags and Maxine

Squire explained that schools had been finding the situation very difficult with maintained Headteachers needing be careful and supportive around discussions regarding flag. The Chair noted that he was working with York Mosque regarding engagement with school. Following discussion the Chair noted that clarity was needed on what schools were doing and how SACRE could support them.

Resolved: Maxine Squire to ask schools about their approach to the flag flying at the Schools Forum meeting and following day and feedback to members at the next SACRE meeting.

Reason: For SACRE to see how it could support schools.

17. NASACRE News Issue 1 (7.31pm)

The latest NASACRE briefing was noted.

18. Correspondence on complaints/determinations (7.32pm)

It was noted that no complaints had been received, and no determinations submitted. It was noted that headteachers would be reminded of their duties in relation to RE and the need to submit determinations to SACRE.

19. Any Other Business (7.32pm)

It was agreed that the Chair and Maxine Squire would meet to discuss the Development Plan.

Maxine Squire reported that a Headteacher had reported an increase in parents withdrawing their children RE and she undertook to remind schools about the process for withdrawing children from RE.

20. Future meeting dates (7.35pm)

January date tbc

10 March 2026 at 6.00pm at West Offices

21 April 2026 at 6.00pm at West Offices

Cllr Webb, Chair

[The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 7.35 pm].