



**Notice of a public meeting of  
SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education)**

**To:** SACRE members

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.*

Karen Vincent  
Penny Coppin-Siddall  
Ian Hodgson  
Daryoush Mazloum  
Imam Amar  
Ben Rich (Vice Chair)

Group B

*A groups of persons representing The Church of England.*

Sue Bland  
Joseph Everdell

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.*

Taco Michiels  
Andy Tod  
Diane Norton

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.*

Cllr Robert Webb (Chair)  
Cllr Emilie Knight  
Cllr Martin Rowley BEM  
Cllr Sarah Wilson

LA Officer

Maxine Squire (Assistant Director Education and Skills)

**Date:** Monday 22 January 2024

**Time:** 6.00pm

**Venue:** The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, West Bank, Acomb, York YO24 4ES

## **AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest** (Pages 1 - 2)

At this point in the meeting, Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registerable interest they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

[Please see attached sheet for further guidance for Members]

**2. Minutes and matters arising from the minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)  
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2023.

**3. Annual Report 2022-23** (Pages 9 - 16)  
To approve the 2022-23 final draft Annual Report

**4. Monitoring of Standards** (Pages 17 - 18)  
To receive an update on the monitoring of Standards in RE including the Ofsted Annual Report and the Schools Survey, Autumn 2023 (Schools Survey to follow).

**5. Review of SACRE development plan**

To review the SACRE development plan. The plan is shaped around the five key functions of SACREs contained in the NASACRE Self-Evaluation Toolkit.

**6. NASACRE Update**

(Pages 19 - 30)

To receive NASACRE Briefing 36.

**7. Correspondence on complaints/determinations**

A verbal update will be given on complaints received and the determinations in respect of those complaints.

**8. Any other business**

**9. Future meeting dates**

19 March 2024 at 6pm at West Offices

8 July at 6pm at West Offices

Democracy Officer

Angela Bielby

[a.bielby@york.gov.uk](mailto:a.bielby@york.gov.uk)

01904 552599

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

**This information can be provided in your own language.**

**我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)**

**এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)**

**Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim  
własnym języku. (Polish)**

**Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)**

**یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)**

** (01904) 551550**

### Declarations of Interest – guidance for Members

- (1) Members must consider their interests, and act according to the following:

Type of Interest	You must
Disclosable Pecuniary Interests	Disclose the interest, not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.
Other Registrable Interests (Directly Related) <b>OR</b> Non-Registrable Interests (Directly Related)	Disclose the interest; speak on the item <u>only if</u> the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.
Other Registrable Interests (Affects) <b>OR</b> Non-Registrable Interests (Affects)	Disclose the interest; remain in the meeting, participate and vote <u>unless</u> the matter affects the financial interest or well-being: (a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interest or well-being of a majority of inhabitants of the affected ward; and (b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest. In which case, speak on the item <u>only if</u> the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise do not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.

- (2) Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.
- (3) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations,

and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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Meeting	SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education)
Date	19 October 2023
Present	<p><u>SACRE members</u></p> <p><u>Group A</u>  <i>Such Christian denominations and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the Authority, will approximately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.</i>  Karen Vincent  Penny Coppin-Siddall  Daryoush Mazloum</p> <p><u>Group B</u>  <i>A group of persons representing The Church of England.</i>  Sue Bland</p> <p><u>Group D</u>  <i>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.</i>  Cllr Emilie Knight  Cllr Martin Rowley BEM  Cllr Sarah Wilson  Cllr Bob Webb (Chair)</p> <p><u>LA Officer</u>  Maxine Squire (Assistant Director Education and Skills)</p>
In attendance	Diane Norton
Apologies	Ben Rich (Vice-Chair) Joseph Everdell Ian Hodgson Andy Tod

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**41. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest [6:12pm]**

Apologies for absence were received from Ben Rich, Ian Hodgson, Andy Tod, and Joseph Hepplestone. There were no declarations of interest declared.

**42. Minutes and matters arising from the minutes [6:18pm]**

Discussion took place regarding the minutes of the last meeting. Maxine Squire stated she would circulate a programme of school visits for the remainder of the academic year and would invite members to express an interest in joining them.

Members discussed the school visits item, and it was noted that Ben Rich would collate a list of potential RE venues for schools to visit. It was suggested that a religious education factsheet could be used detailing information on different faiths to support these visits.

It was suggested by Penny Coppin-Siddall that Acomb Chapel could be used for the next meeting.

Councillor Rowley BEM noted that it was agreed at the previous meeting that SACRE agendas would include the faiths each member was representing as well as their committee.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings held on 22 June 2023 be approved and signed as an accurate record.

Election of Vice Chair:

As the election of Vice Chair was deferred from the last meeting, It was proposed that Ben Rich be nominated as Vice Chair. No further nominations were received, and it was:

Resolved: That Ben Rich be appointed as Vice-Chair of SACRE for up to a period of 3 more years.

Reason: In accordance with paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of SACRE's Constitution.



**43. Expression of interest to join Committee C [6:00pm]**

Members considered a proposal from Diane Norton to join Committee C on York SACRE.

Resolved: That Diane Norton joined York SACRE on Committee C.  
Reason: To fill a vacancy on York SACRE on committee C.

**44. Review of SACRE development plan [6:40pm]**

Maxine Squire presented the development plan.

It was reported that the next development plan would incorporate work on a new syllabus which would be published between 2024-2026.

Maxine had contacted schools to collect contact details for subject leaders in order to ensure there was an up-to-date list. It was also commented that there was a need to promote within schools how Religious Education was a statutory responsibility for school governors.

Members discussed the membership of SACRE, noting that there were some faiths that were not represented on committee A, Penny Coppin-Siddall stated that information regarding SACRE's membership could be included in future York Interfaith newsletters.

Members discussed how young people's voices and experiences could shape the RE syllabus, and that there should be an increased ownership for the syllabus of young people. The Chair noted that school visits could be used for this purpose, and Imam Ammar suggested that various faith societies at York Universities could be contacted for their experiences and feedback.

It was noted by members that the SACRE section of the City of York Council website was out of date and should be updated to reflect SACRE vacancies.

It was stated that other subjects often had a guide of misconceptions for non-specialist subject teachers, and that this could be used for non-specialist RE teachers, as Maxine Squire noted the number of non-specialist-RE-teachers in York was increasing.

It was confirmed by members that the Chair, Councillor Rowley, and Ben Rich would have the responsibility of RAG rating the Development Plan.

Resolved: That members reviewed the SACRE development plan.

Reason: To keep the SACRE development plan updated and to keep members aware of the plan.

#### **45. School Survey 2023 [7:09pm]**

Maxine Squire presented the Religious Education School Survey 2023 to members.

Maxine reported that the original survey was too long and contained around 30 questions, and that this new one had been shortened. The survey was to be used to:

- Retrieve feedback and experiences from Religious Education teachers,
- Find out how much time was spent on teaching RE in schools,
- Find out about continuous professional development (CPD) for RE teachers,
- Find out what RE teachers felt they needed more support with.

Maxine recommended that a task a finish group could be created to investigate the responses from the survey.

In response to questions from members, it was confirmed that the following changes would be made to the survey before publication:

- Question 5 would be re-worded to show an open-ended question.
- Question 7 and 8 would be re-worded to be more Religious Education specific.
- Question 13 would be re-worded to read: "If you answered 'No' to question 12 above, please tell SACRE which syllabus you have chosen to adopt".
- The word 'The' before Maxine Squire's email address would be removed.

Resolved: That members approved the Religious Education School Survey 2023 for publication.

Reason: So that SACRE could receive feedback from the survey.

**46. Correspondence on complaints/determinations [7:20pm]**

It was reported that there had been no complaints to SACRE.

Resolved: That Members be updated on complaints.

Reason: In order to be kept updated on complaints to SACRE and determinations of complaints.

**47. Future meeting dates [7:20pm]**

22 January 2024 at 6pm at Acomb Chapel (Approval of SACRE Annual Report)

19 March 2024 at 6pm at West Offices.

It was confirmed by members that Acomb Chapel would be used for the next meeting subject to approval by the webcasting team.

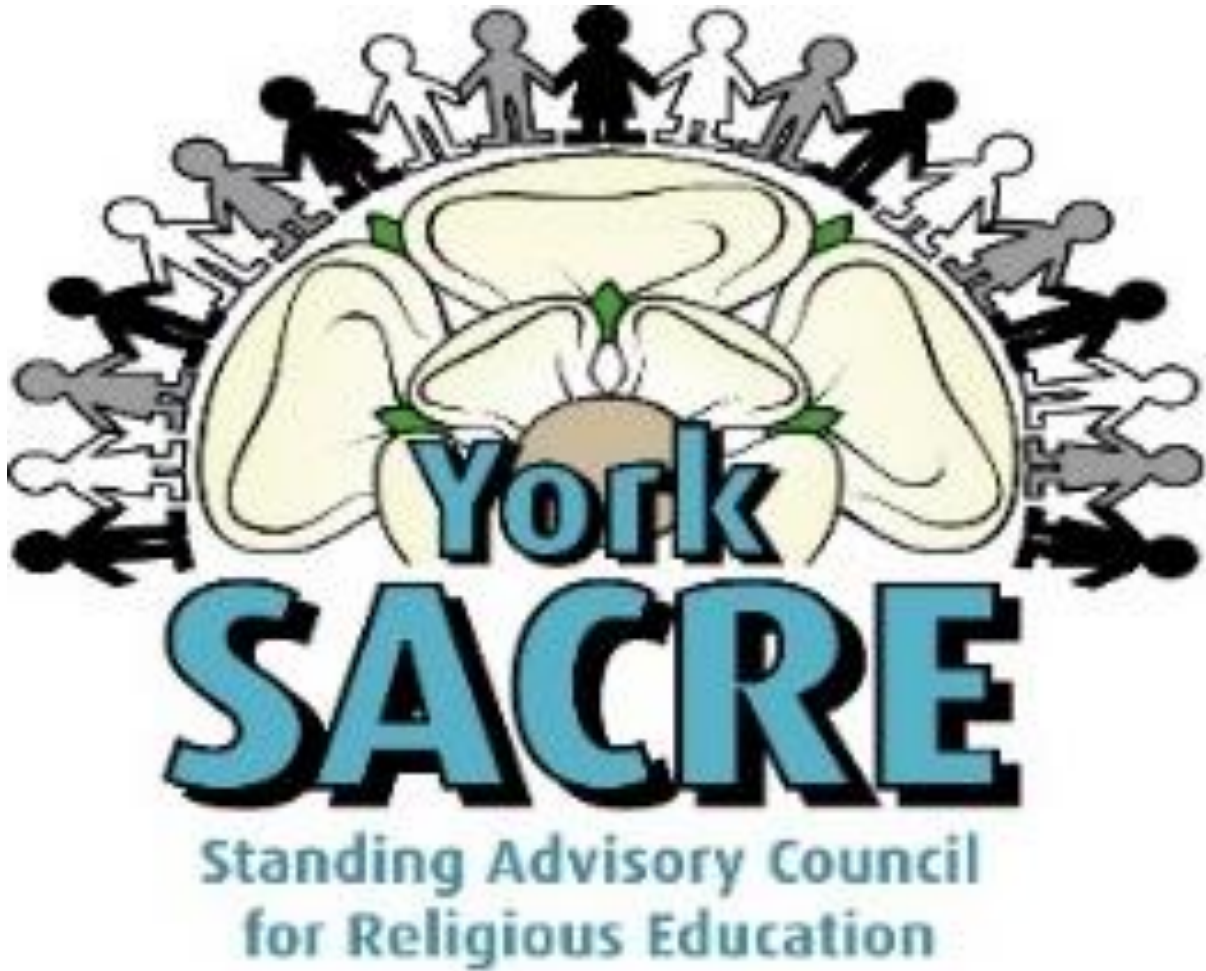
Cllr Webb, Chair

[The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 7.21 pm].

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**City of York SACRE Annual Report 2022-23**



## **1. Introduction**

### Foreword by the Chair of SACRE

Following the City of York Council election in May 2023 I became chair of this committee and would like to start by thanking the outgoing members of the committee and those still involved for all of their hard work throughout 2022-23. I'd especially like to thank officers for their time and efforts.

Unfortunately, 2023 saw the rise of further conflicts around the world including the current events taking place in Gaza. It is events like this that demonstrate the need for good quality education about people's beliefs, faiths and ethos in order that young people recognise that we have more in common than that which divides us. I'd like to thank the York Interfaith group and the different community leaders for their continued work towards that better understanding in York.

In the 2023-24 academic year I would like to build on the previous work done by this group and focus on how we can be a resource for teachers. This will include thinking about how we can connect teachers together with the relevant people and relevant information to make the classroom experience of religious education even better for the young people in our City.

Once again thank you to all those involved.

**Cllr R Webb**

**Meeting and Attendance 2022-23**

City of York SACRE met five times in the academic year 2022-23. An additional meeting was added due to the problems experienced with achieving quorate meetings during 2022-23.

29<sup>th</sup> November 2022

12<sup>th</sup> January 2023

6<sup>th</sup> February 2023

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023

During the academic year 2022-23 City of York SACRE met in face to face meetings. This caused some difficulties with achieving quorate meetings during 2022-23, with three of the 5 meetings held being inquorate. This led to an additional meeting being arranged on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 to allow the 2021-22 annual report to be formally approved. Ensuring and maintaining quoracy for SACRE meetings is a priority for the academic year 2023-24 and to facilitate this SACRE took a decision to allow hybrid meetings to be an option for members.

The attendance, by Committee, is set out below:-

<b>Committee</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup> November 2022</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2023</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2023</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023</b>
Committee A Representing Other Denominations / Faith Communities	3	4	4	1	5
Committee B Representing the Church of England	0	0	1	1	2
Committee C Representing teachers	1	1	0	1	1
Committee D Representing City of York Council	2	3	4	2	4
LA Officer	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b> (Inquorate)	<b>9</b> (Inquorate)	<b>10</b> (Inquorate)	<b>6</b> (Quorate)	<b>13</b> (Quorate)

A focus on the SACRE development plan, a report from the Local Authority officer (including a focus on standards) and a report on national NASACRE and RE professional organisations updates are standing items at each meeting

## **2. RE ( statutory responsibilities)**

### **Locally agreed syllabus**

There are 17 primary, 2 secondary and 1 special maintained schools who follow the City of York Locally Agreed Syllabus

There are 27 primary, 4 secondary and 1 special academies who have adopted the City of York Locally Agreed Syllabus

Separate regulations covering maintained special schools require them to ensure that as far as practicable every pupil receives opportunities to explore RE. The City of York Agreed Syllabus 2021-2026 includes specific guidance and support for Special Schools. Special Schools use the City of York Locally Agreed Syllabus, at least partially, and adapt it to meet the needs of the pupils.

### **Standards and monitoring of RE**

In 2022-23 York SACRE piloted monitoring visits to schools and on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 the first school monitoring visit took place at a maintained primary school. The visit involved three members of SACRE drawn from committee A and D supported by the LA Adviser to SACRE. The visit provided SACRE members with the opportunity to speak to staff and pupils about the quality of R.E. in the school. It also provided an opportunity to test the value of monitoring visits and it has been agreed to continue to develop the programme of monitoring visits during 2023-24.

There were 14 inspections of York Schools between September 2022 and July 2023. Ten primary schools were inspected, one primary special school and three secondary schools. The Ofsted reports for make no direct reference to Religious Education. York SACRE is continuing to consider how it can develop its monitoring of standards in R.E. in the future as the monitoring of R.E. through Ofsted reports is not providing detailed information about the quality of R.E.



### Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 results

KS4 and KS5 outcomes remain strong in comparison to schools nationally. The results for GCSE and A level religious studies are summarised in the table below:

Key Stage	No. of entries	% Grade 4+ (York)	% Grade 4+ (National)	Progress Score
Key Stage 4	940	74%	71%	+ 0.16 points (significantly above national)
Key Stage	No. of entries	% A*-C (York)	% A*-C (York)	Average points Score
Key Stage 5	79	82%	76%	38 (significantly above national)

The Key Stage 5 results show that more girls than boys took A level R.E. in 2023 – 55 girls and 24 boys, however the boys out - performed the girls both in attainment and progress. The majority of pupils (51 students) were White British and were identified as Higher Attainers (56 students).

At GCSE girls out-performed boys both in attainment and progress. The highest achieving groups were of Indian/Asian heritage (28 pupils) and those young people with English as an additional language (57 pupils).

### Teaching, training and materials and advice for schools

In July 2023, SACRE at the request of schools organised an online continuing professional development webinar for teachers which was delivered by the Humanist Society. The focus of the webinar was to provide teachers with support on teaching non-faith aspects of the curriculum.

The results from the annual survey to schools are being used to inform the SACRE Development Plan and to identify priorities for further training and advice for schools during the academic year 2023-24.

City of York SACRE received no formal complaints regarding RE provision in the academic - year 2022-23.

### **3. Collective Worship**

Besides Religious Education each local authority must work with its SACRE to monitor the provision of daily collective worship. As a result of changes to the Ofsted framework and in the absence of further guidance, the City of York SACRE published guidance in 2017 to support Collective Worship in schools in the City, which it continues to promote within schools. The guidance is available on the City of York SACRE website ([www.york.gov.uk/sacre](http://www.york.gov.uk/sacre)).

Schools may apply to SACRE for a determination in order to provide Collective Worship of a non-Christian or other form. As in previous years, no determinations were requested by schools.

There were no complaints registered with City of York SACRE in 2022/2023 in respect of collective worship.

Updating City of York guidance on Collective Worship has been identified as a development point for City of York SACRE in 2023-24.

### **4. Links with other bodies**

City of York SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). Through the year SACRE members were informed of developments in RE from NASACRE, The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and The Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC).

City of York SACRE has a long- standing relationship with York Interfaith Group. York Interfaith Group have set up a mechanism to support visits and visitors to York schools. In November 2022 York Interfaith Group ran a logo competition for schools which was promoted by York SACRE.

City of York SACRE supports the York Holocaust Memorial Day event. This event took place in January 2023.

During the Academic year 2022-23 City of York SACRE commissioned some specialist RE adviser support from Olivia Seymour, Diocese of York. This support focused on supporting the work of SACRE meetings, training for SACRE members and reporting on regional and national updates.

## 5. City of York SACRE's own arrangements

During the academic year 2022-23 City of York SACRE continued its close relationship with City of York Council's Democratic Services. In autumn 2021 Democratic Services, in consultation with City of York SACRE, finalised the process of reviewing the constitution and it was approved by members. This has led to the role of SACRE being clarified within the Council's constitution and has enhanced the visibility of SACRE.

Structures and processes to enable members to monitor RE were developed during 2022-23 leading to the piloting of school monitoring visits and revision of the Schools questionnaire.

An officer in the Local Authority's Democratic Services Section acts as Clerk to SACRE.

The people who serve on York SACRE are invited to do so by the Corporate Director of Children's Services and Education on the recommendation of various bodies in the local community with a concern for the religious education of school children. The law prescribes that there have to be four "committees" each comprising representatives of specified groups. The current SACRE is constituted as follows:-

### **Committee A - Representing Other Denominations / Faith Communities:-**

Kate Bailey joined March 2021 (Catholic)

Karen Vincent joined August 2022 (Catholic)

Ben Rich (Jewish)

Keith Albans (Methodist)

Iman Abid Salik (Muslim)

Deborah Evans joined March 2021

(Religious Society of Friends)

Vacant (Salvation Army)

Vacant (Sikh)

Daryoush Mazloum (York Baha'i Community)

Penny Coppin-Siddall (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)

Ian Hodgson (Humanist)

### **Committee B - Representing the Church of England:-**

Sue Bland (Diocese of York)

Katherine Harper (Archbishop Holgate's CE Academy)

### **Committee C - Representing Teachers:-**

Andy Todd (Ralph Butterfield)

Taco Michiels (Joseph Rowntree)

### **Committee D - Representing the City of York Council are Councillors:-**

Emilie Knight (Lib Dem)

Martin Rowley (Con)

Sarah Wilson (Labour)

Bob Webb (Labour) appointed Chair June 2023

**In attendance:-**

Maxine Squire(Education Adviser)

Angela Bielby (Clerk)

**Finance – annual budget**

York's SACRE is assigned an annual budget of £3,500. A summary of spend in 2022-23 is shown in the table below:

Item		Total Spend
NASACRE annual membership fee for 2022-23		£105.00
Specialist RE adviser commissioned from Diocese of York		£1,400
<b>Total spend 2022-23</b>		<b>£1,505</b>

**Circulation**

This report is circulated to

- NASACRE
- DfE
- City of York Council Children, Education and Communities Scrutiny
- City of York schools
- SACRE members representative bodies

**Ofsted annual Report, 2022-23****Religious education**

RE in schools is generally of poor quality. Although it is a statutory subject, schools often consider RE as an afterthought. As a subject on the curriculum, it is undervalued. RE is a complex subject, and the lack of clarity and support from government makes schools' job harder.

Some schools steer through these challenges well, but most do not. We found that:

- many schools do not meet the statutory requirement to teach RE at all stages
- pupils are rarely taught enough substance to prepare them to engage in a complex, multi-religious and multi-secular society (where religion and non-religion play different parts in different people's lives)
- too often, schools do not teach topics in the RE curriculum deeply enough for pupils to develop a substantial understanding of the subject matter
- non-examined RE is typically not high quality.

All pupils should develop a broad and secure knowledge of the complexity of religious and non-religious traditions. It will take coordinated effort by stakeholders to improve the quality of RE in schools:

- schools need high-quality professional development to teach RE well
- curriculum publishers need to identify clearly what pupils will learn and when, building on knowledge over time, so that pupils develop a deep knowledge of the chosen religious and non-religious traditions
- the government should provide clear expectations about RE provision in schools. Schools should follow these. Current non-statutory guidance for RE should be updated and include clear information for schools about the breadth and depth of the syllabus they are expected to teach.

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Latest news and updates from NASACRE

[View this email in your browser](#)



National Association of  
Standing Advisory Councils  
on Religious Education

## SACRE BRIEFING

### Issue: 36

*This issue includes:*

- **Welcome from the NASACRE Executive**
- **Meet the new members of the NASACRE Exec**
- **30 years of NASACRE: SACREs for the Future**
- **Encouragement from our Patron**
- **NASACRE Westhill Awards Winners 2023**
- **Online 2023-24 Training Programme**
- **Westhill Awards 2024-25**
- **Party Conference Season - a message from NATRE**
- **RE Hubs - the new 'One-Stop Shop for RE'**
- **Humanism and Group A of SACREs**
- **The Inter Faith Network (IFN)**
- **Items for your SACRE Agenda**

## Welcome from the NASACRE Executive

Welcome to another new academic year with all of its challenges and opportunities. The Autumn may be almost upon us and the torrid heat of

to keep you up to date with national issues and to provide a range of opportunities for you to talk to each other and to us. We are stronger together.

You may have new SACRE members at the start of term and we hope that by offering training for new members twice a year, we can help them to understand the work of SACREs and participate confidently as soon as possible. In turn this helps to strengthen your team. We offer a number of training and support webinars during the year, and you can see a brief summary of our current programme [here](#). Hopefully there is something for everyone!

Deborah Weston attended a **Parliamentary Education Committee** along with representatives from other subjects to discuss teacher shortages, as well as how some schools can recruit and retain staff more easily than others. NASACRE will be working with Deborah and others in the RE community to strengthen conversations around this vital topic.

The Political Party Conference season is upon us and it is good to know that members of the RE community will attend these to raise issues important to RE and RE teachers, including the difficult issue of teacher shortages. Read [this item](#) to see what SACREs can do to support this work by holding conversations with your elected members or MPs.

Here is wishing your SACREs and your schools a successful year ahead.

Denise Chaplin, *on behalf of the NASACRE Communication Team.*

*Linda is on leave at the moment and sends best wishes to all. Her Chair's foreword will return in the next edition.*

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## Meet the new members of the NASACRE Exec

*Several new Exec members were elected at our 2023 Annual Conference and AGM. They introduce themselves on the [website](#).*

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## 30 years of NASACRE: SACREs for the Future

NASACRE's Pearl Anniversary Conference, with more than 100 delegates from over



revised 2023 Constitution, which was approved by conference, Dr Kathryn Wright's keynote set the tone for the day. She challenged SACREs to recognise the things that they do well, and the role the NASACRE has played in strengthening, supporting, representing and celebrating the achievements of SACREs. Her vision for the future of SACREs is that they should continue to develop partnerships with Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) and build better relationships with the government and faith organisations. SACREs need to take a lead in developing the worldviews approach to RE and working to raise awareness of the need for more RE teachers to be recruited.

Recognising that there are challenges ahead formed a major part of the second keynote delivered by the Rt Hon Charles Clarke, Patron of NASACRE. He identified the fractured structure of the current education system as probably one of the greatest challenges, but said that if NASACRE and SACREs get involved in conversations with politicians as the next election approaches, there is an opportunity to influence the future. Charles sees the strength of a SACRE as being able to promote effective social cohesion on a local level and believes that the provision of good RE in schools is a key to achieving that (see notes below).

Another key challenge, and one that was picked up by Dr David Hampshire in his **review of the SACRE annual reports**, is the lack of funding and resources made available to many SACREs. This reflects the fact that many Local Authorities do not yet fully appreciate the value that SACRE can offer their communities. NASACRE and SACREs need to talk openly about the challenges facing communities regarding social cohesion and emphasise the unique position they hold in being able to bring communities together.

If SACREs can learn from each other (and the review of their 2022 annual reports should help them do that), proclaim their achievements more confidently and hold Local Authorities openly to account, they can begin to influence the situation for the better.

Kathryn Wright reminded conference,

*"We have a pearl - RE - and the best pearls are reflective. Challenges and opportunities lie ahead. The world is not the same as it was and SACREs need to think creatively, within the systems that exist. If RE is a treasured pearl, we need keep it on display and admire it."*

**Papers from the AGM can be found on our website.**

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## Encouragement from our Patron

There are some key points from the speech given by our Patron, **Rt Hon Charles Clarke** that SACREs should consider discussing at their next meeting.

difficult for the government to focus on implementing any changes in the educational arena. There has been little opportunity to redefine RE, despite the numerous reports published. The fractured nature of the education system with the academisation and free school programmes has further impeded progress. He anticipates that as the political situation calms down, SACREs and NASACRE have the opportunity to ensure that they are leading the conversation.

SACREs have many **strengths** to offer in this debate. Unlike any other Local Authority organisation, SACRE intentionally brings together people from different communities. In principle, this means that SACREs are well placed to contribute to a more cohesive society. A good SACRE has local connections and contacts and well knows the local area. This knowledge and position gives SACRE a certain moral high ground. SACREs are also concerned with the lives of young people, and this is where long-term change needs to begin.

SACREs do also have their **weaknesses**. The government has not held Local Authorities to account for failing to fund SACREs according to the principles set down. Many SACREs are thus underfunded and marginalised, and so the picture is variable nationwide.

Below are some suggestions from Charles Clarke as **to how SACREs can maximise their strengths**:

- **Talk about the issues raised, highlighting the contribution of RE towards the promotion of community cohesion.**
- **Openly address the polarisation of society, again demonstrating the value of RE.**
- **Identify those who can help build local and national community cohesion.**
- **Ensure that LA members, particularly elected members, play a full part in SACREs.**

***SACREs need to argue for their rightful role!***

**There is a wider role for NASACRE in this debate:**

- **NASACRE could make a 'manifesto for SACREs' setting out the strengths of SACREs.**
- **NASACRE needs to define its role, such as contributing to inter faith dialogue, using best practice info, such as from Westhill Award winners.**
- **Say that SACRE is central to the development of community cohesion across the country and set out the ways that could be done more successfully.**
- **Mention the values we want to see in society.**

**How can we influence this debate in a way that is central and positive?**

**In which areas listed above is your SACRE doing well?**

**Can your SACRE suggest how NASACRE should best engage in this debate?**

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## NASACRE Westhill Awards Winners 2023

At Conference, Westhill Awards were awarded to Doncaster and Bexley SACREs.

**Doncaster's** project is going to bring Primary pupils together with people from a range of worldviews. The project will be pupil-led, and activity days will be delivered in such a way as to ensure that they can be replicated in other venues. The resulting resources will be shared across all Doncaster schools after the event.

The project in **Bexley** is going to focus on storytellers, giving pupils an opportunity to hear stories told by faith representatives and at the same time providing teachers with the chance to see good storytelling in practice. There are plans to make a strong link with the Local Agreed Syllabus. Booklets featuring the stories will also be shared across the borough.

If you have ideas for a project and would like to bid for funding, see the information **below** about how to apply for the next round.

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## Online 2023-24 Training Programme

We are delighted to announce that NASACRE is running another year of **webinars** to support SACREs in their practice. For £50 annually, subscribed SACREs can purchase unlimited access for all their members to each and every webinar, representing incredible value for professional development. SACREs may also book for individual sessions. There are separate rates for delegates from unsubscribed SACREs.

**Monday 16th October 2023, 7 - 8:30pm:**

***Applying for and gaining a Westhill/NASACRE award***

led by Linda Rudge & Anne Andrews

This *free session* will help SACREs consider the practicalities of applying for and

## November 2023 – Regional meetings - for SACRE Chairs/Vice chairs, LA officers and professional RE support officers

*Dates for each region can be found via the links below, along with details of how to book:*

**North West NASACRE regional meeting**

**North East NASACRE regional meeting**

**East Anglia NASACRE regional meeting**

**London NASACRE regional meeting**

**South West NASACRE regional meeting**

**South East NASACRE regional meeting**

**East Midlands NASACRE regional meeting**

**Yorkshire & Humber NASACRE regional meeting**

*Free session* for all SACREs led by the local RE Hub lead and a NASACRE Exec member.

These sessions, taking place in regional groups, will allow for smaller numbers of SACREs to come together, continuing NASACRE's conversation with our membership, sharing good practice, disseminating national and local news and providing time for SACRE leadership teams to raise and discuss issues, thus supporting each other.

### **\*Tuesday 5th December 2023, 7 - 8pm:**

#### ***How may SACREs effectively monitor schools?***

led by David Levien, Catherine Hughes and Claire Clinton

This session is a chance for SACREs to come together and hear about and consider a range of strategies and practices that build relationships with schools and enable SACREs to monitor RE and Collective Worship.

### **\*Thursday 18th January 2024, 6:30 - 8pm:**

#### ***Using data effectively as a SACRE***

Special guest: Deborah Weston

A session for SACRE Chairs/Vice chairs and professional support officers to help them to make effective use of the data that NATRE, NASACRE and the DfE provides, ensuring local data can be drawn upon.

### **\*Thursday 22nd February 2024, 4 - 5:30pm:**

#### ***Being an effective SACRE Clerk, part 2***

led by David Levien, Catherine Hughes and Claire Clinton

This session will help SACRE Clerks to reflect on their present practice and share with other clerks around the country some top tips for fulfilling their role; it will focus

**\*Monday 26th February 2024, 7 - 8pm:*****Dealing with beliefs and practices about loss & death in your Agreed Syllabus***

Led by Denise Chaplin and Paul Smalley with guests from the National Association of Funeral Directors.

This webinar will help SACREs to reflect on what they do currently to cover this aspect of the curriculum in schools. It will provide input from the national body of funeral directors, as well as examples from 2 different SACREs of their support work around these issues within their Agreed Syllabus.

**\*Tuesday 12th March 2024, 7-8pm:*****Convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference – legalities and processes***

Led by Paul Smalley with Linda Rudge

This session will focus on the legal process and consider best practice suggestions for convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) for your SACRE.

**Wednesday 26th June 2024, 6:30-8pm:*****So, you've joined your local SACRE...***

Hosted by Exec members

A rerun of the September *free session*, to help new SACRE members to understand their role, how SACRE works, its statutory responsibilities and how members make their contribution to SACRE's work.

*\*Prices for those sessions marked \**

- Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package
- £20 for a full member SACRE
- £30 for an affiliated SACRE

**To book on to any of these sessions, please email [admin@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:admin@nasacre.org.uk) providing delegate name, email address and SACRE.**

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## **Westhill Awards 2024-25**

NASACRE is once again joining with Westhill to offer awards of up to £4000 for innovative and enduring projects. Any project should offer young people meaningful opportunities to engage in compelling learning experiences in RE (or Collective Worship), within the broad theme of "education into diversity".

Any SACRE wishing to submit an application is strongly advised to review the briefing notes which accompany the application form. There is a webinar on **16th**

package.

The application form and the notes can be found and downloaded [here](#).

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## Party Conference Season - a message from NATRE

In late September and Early October, teams of teachers from NATRE will be joining representatives from Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC), Culham St Gabriel's and RE Today to attend the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat party conferences.

The lobbying work that the RE community does on your behalf is really important because it takes the voices of teachers and pupils to policy makers. At the party conferences we will be sharing the importance of high quality RE for all pupils in all schools, talking about the need for a national standard in the subject, sharing constituency data related to RE with MPs, SACRE members, local councillors and party members and talking about what high quality RE looks like in primary and secondary classrooms.

The RE community needs you, our members, to support this work. SACREs can get involved by contacting local MPs or Councillors and asking them to meet with our team to talk about high quality RE for all pupils in all schools. In previous years, we have had amazing discussions because real teachers in real schools and RE community members have said that it was important to them that their MP spoke to us.

You can contact your MP through their website and via email. Some MPs also use Twitter/X, Facebook or Instagram DM.

Please contact them by the most appropriate means explaining why you, their constituent or a teacher in their constituency would like them to meet with us. Ask them to contact us directly by using the following email [CEO@natre.org.uk](mailto:CEO@natre.org.uk) or contacting Fiona Moss (NATRE CEO) @fionajmoss on Twitter/X, where her DMs are open.

The final way that you can support us is by using social media during the party conference to quote tweets and like or share our posts so that the importance of the campaign is shared with a larger audience.

The teachers we are sending to the three party conferences are both primary and

the RE community who will be giving up their time to speak out for our subject.

Thank you to each of you for contacting your MPs and being part of this important work.

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## RE Hubs - the new 'One-Stop Shop for RE'

Claire Clinton, Lead Director of RE Hubs, is delighted to announce the new website is live: [www.re-hubs.uk](http://www.re-hubs.uk)

It is a freely available one-stop shop that seeks to help teachers and the Religious Education / Religion, Values & Ethics / Religion & Worldviews (RE/RVE/R&W) community locate resources, CPD, inspiration, visits, visitors and events.

The website is being kept up to date by the RE Hubs team, which comprises RE teachers and experts from across England and Wales, specialising in their local area. The newly developed website has, for the first time, a calendar for England & Wales for all stakeholders to advertise events.

Schools will be able to locate and contact speakers and places of interest for visits in the local area; these are trained by the RE Hubs team, and have the RE Hubs kite-mark. We invite SACREs to share the flyer for the FREE training to support those working with schools, as widely as possible, so the list of speakers and places will grow.

<https://www.re-hubs.uk/uploads/regionalrehub/rehubs-training-flyer-23-24.pdf>

For the first time in one central place, a teacher can find local group meetings taking place in their area and make contact with those who run them. New for 23-24 is FREE CPD for those leading local groups/networks in RE, offered in collaboration with NATRE. See [flyer](#) for more details

Finally, the '[Upskill](#)' tab on the RE Hubs website has direct links to a wealth of free resources and contacts useful to all those in the RE/RVE/R&W eco-system from the latest news and blogs to podcasts.

### The specific aims identified by the RE Hubs steering group are:

- To improve communication between teachers, professional development and resource providers, and research communities.
- To improve connections and interactions between different parts of the RE/RVE/R&W eco-system.

- To enable teachers to teach with greater confidence through their access to the support, knowledge, training and resources available in their region.
- To create a sustainable long-term model for future provision.

'RE Hubs' seek to build relationships with advisers, dioceses, universities, SACREs, LAs, governors, MATs, teaching school hubs and more. So, if you haven't heard from us as yet, do visit the website and get in touch with your Regional Lead.

The steering committee, with representatives from RE organisations AREIAC, AULRE, NASACRE, NATRE, REC and TRS-UK, are dedicated to this collaborative working approach. This project is facilitated by RE Today and supported by a number of funders, to whom we are grateful for their investment at the start of this key infrastructure programme for all those working in and supporting RE/RVE/R&W.

For further information contact:

Claire Clinton – [director@RE-Hubs.co.uk](mailto:director@RE-Hubs.co.uk)

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## Humanism and Group A of SACREs

You may be aware of a recent judgement involving the position of Humanists on Group A. In the case of *Bowen v Kent County Council*, Justice Constable clarified that applications for Group A membership from persons who represent holders of non-religious beliefs should be considered in the same way as applications from those who represent holders of religious beliefs.

NASACRE has long been asking the DfE to issue guidance to Local Authorities regarding the position of non-religious worldviews on Group A, and we are pleased that this **guidance** was issued in August.

In brief, the guidance reiterates that the make-up of a SACRE is a matter for Local Authorities (not SACREs themselves), and that the membership of Group A should ensure that relevant traditions and beliefs in the local authority's area are appropriately reflected. This representation may include non-religious belief systems where they are analogous to a religious belief.

SACREs may wish to advise their Local Authorities that they should review SACRE's Constitution, following publication of the 2021 Census data and in the light of this guidance.

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## The Inter Faith Network (IFN)



about the IFN from their website: <https://www.interfaith.org.uk>

The topic under discussion was that of religious literacy, with a wide range of experts sharing their wisdom, sending delegates away with much thinking to do.

One of the key ideas to emerge is that the definition of religious literacy is still contested, but at the same time considered an essential component of society.

There are some implications for SACREs as they consider the disciplinary lenses of RE, the reliability of resources, particularly those accessed through the media and the role of inter faith dialogue in the classroom.

A report on the day, and videos of plenary presentations, will both be made available on the [interfaith.org.uk](https://www.interfaith.org.uk) website in due course.

Inter Faith Week 2023 was launched at the meeting by Minister David Bruton, Spiritualists' National Union and IFN Trustee on behalf of the IFN's Board of Trustees. It is the IFN's largest project.

**Inter Faith Week** this year runs from 12-19 November. The Week is a tremendous opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of religion and belief literacy and to bring people of different faiths and beliefs together in creative and positive ways. The number of schools which took part in 2022 increased by a remarkable 47% on the previous year, indicating how useful they find it to add value to year-round RE learning. SACREs and their members also engaged in many areas and play an important part in the Week. In the run up to this year's Week, you may be interested to:

- Check out the ideas for schools activities for Inter Faith Week [here](#) and perhaps explore a joint activity with one or more of your local schools
- Encourage your local radio station(s) to pick up Inter Faith Week and to include a feature about how schools are taking part and the importance of good and well-resourced RE and/or write a piece for the local paper about this.
- Plan an activity and register it [here](#), requesting a free registration pack with poster, flyers, stickers and a social media card.
- Share any plans and events on social media channels using the hashtag #InterFaithWeek and tagging @IFweek on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter/X.

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## Items for your SACRE agenda

- Write and approve your annual report or make progress towards this, taking account of NASACRE's analysis of annual reports.
- Discuss the **points** raised by Charles Clarke.

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- Check with your LA on the place of Humanist representation on your SACRE in line with the recent **High Court ruling**.
- Check where you are in your agreed syllabus process.
- Are all your agendas and minutes available online e.g., on the LA's website and do you advertise your meetings as public?
- Plan how and when to use the **self-evaluation form**.
- Check that the new 2023-24 membership website password has been shared with your SACRE members.
- Advertise the **RE Hubs free training** to your community.
- Plan your events for **Inter Faith Week**.
- Contact your MP and local councillors to encourage them to engage with the teacher representatives during their **party conference**.



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