



# Northumberland County Council

**Your ref:**

**Our ref:**

**Enquiries to:** Rebecca Little

**Email:** [Rebecca.Little@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Little@northumberland.gov.uk)

**Tel direct:** 01670 622611

**Date:** Tuesday, 30 January 2024

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)** to be held in **COMMITTEE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, MORPETH, NORTHUMBERLAND, NE61 2EF.** on **WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2024** at **4.00 PM.**

Yours faithfully

Dr Helen Paterson  
Chief Executive

**To Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) members as follows:-**



**Dr Helen Paterson, Chief Executive**  
County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF  
T: 0345 600 6400  
[www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)



# AGENDA

## PART I

It is expected that the matters included in this part of the agenda will be dealt with in public.

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

### 2. MINUTES

(Pages 1  
- 6)

Minutes of the meeting of the Northumberland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), Agreed Syllabus Conference, held on Wednesday, 8 November 2023, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record, and signed by the chair.

### 3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required where a matter arises at a meeting;

- a. Which **directly relates to** Disclosable Pecuniary Interest ('DPI') as set out in Appendix B, Table 1 of the Code of Conduct, to disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote and not to remain in room. Where members have a DPI or if the matter concerns an executive function and is being considered by a Cabinet Member with a DPI they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with the matter.
- b. Which **directly relates to** the financial interest or well being of a Other Registrable Interest as set out in Appendix B, Table 2 of the Code of Conduct to disclose the interest and only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain the room.
- c. Which **directly relates to** their financial interest or well-being (and is not DPI) or the financial well being of a relative or close associate, to declare the interest and members may only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak. Otherwise, the member must not take part in discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.
- d. Which **affects** the financial well-being of the member, a relative or close associate or a body included under the Other Registrable Interests column in Table 2, to disclose the interest and apply the test set out at paragraph 9 of Appendix B before deciding whether they may remain in the meeting.
- e. Where Members have or a Cabinet Member has an Other Registerable Interest or Non Registerable Interest in a matter being considered in exercise of their executive function, they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with it.

NB Any member needing clarification must contact [monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk). Members are referred to the Code of Conduct which contains the matters above in full. Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

**4. AN UPDATE OF CONTACTS WITH SCHOOLS AND TRAINING PROVISION**

To receive an update from Caroline Weir, Part-time RE Consultant about the provision of RE in-service training and contacts with schools since the last related meeting.

**5. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

D. Van Der Velde to update members on the Northumberland County Council Holocaust Memorial Day event from Thursday, 25 January 2024.

**6. MEETING OF CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

For members to receive an update following the meeting between the Chair of SACRE, D. Cookson – Head of School Improvement and Audrey Kingham – Executive Director - Children, Young People and Education

**7. SACRE ANNUAL REPORT**

(Pages 7 - 16)

For members to receive and discuss the SACRE Annual Report.

**8. OFSTED ANNUAL REPORT**

(Pages 17 - 18)

For members to receive and discuss the Ofsted annual report – commentary on RE

**9. WORKFORCE AND EXAMINATION DATA**

For members to receive and discuss the workforce and examination data.  
**– INFORMATION TO FOLLOW.**

**10. SACRE CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP**

(Pages 19 - 20)

For members to receive and discuss the Interim Report (Part 2) from the SACRE Constitution Working Group.

**11. NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE ACTION PLAN**

(Pages

To monitor the Northumberland SACRE Action Plan.

## **12. NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE NEWSLETTER AND RESOURCES WEBPAGE**

Reminder of website link: [www.northumberlandeducation.co.uk/sacre](http://www.northumberlandeducation.co.uk/sacre)

## **13. TRAINING AVAILABLE TO SACRE**

For members to note future training sessions and discuss completed sessions.

- 22 February 2024 – Being an effective SACRE clerk, part 2.
- 26 February 2024 – Dealing with beliefs and practices about loss & death in your Agreed Syllabus.
- 12 March 2024 – Convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference – legalities and processes.
- 26 June 2024 – So, you've joined your local SACRE...

## **14. NASACRE ISSUES - ISSUE 37**

(Pages  
25 - 34)

### **The NASACRE Newsletter**

To receive the latest newsletter– for information.

Reminder of web site link: [www.nasacre.org.uk](http://www.nasacre.org.uk) for other interesting articles which Members may wish to view.

## **15. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair, should, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

**IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:**

- Declare it and give details of its nature before the matter is discussed or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date of meeting:</b>	
<b>Meeting:</b>			
<b>Item to which your interest relates:</b>			
<b>Nature of Interest i.e. either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Table 1 of Appendix B to the Code of Conduct, Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest (as defined by Appendix B to Code of Conduct) (please give details):</b>			
<b>Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?</b>		Yes - <input type="checkbox"/>	No - <input type="checkbox"/>

## Registering Interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

**"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest"** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

**"Partner"** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

### Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest.

Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

### Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

### Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in **Table 1**) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
  - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
  - c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2** you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied
9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) **affects** the financial interest or well- being:
- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision 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

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

**Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</b>	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
<b>Sponsorship</b>	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
<b>Contracts</b>	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
<b>Land and Property</b>	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. ‘Land’ excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
<b>Licenses</b>	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
<b>Corporate tenancies</b>	Any tenancy where (to the councillor’s knowledge)—



	<p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.</p>
<b>Securities</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor’s knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</li> <li>ii. if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</li> </ul>

\* ‘director’ includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\* ‘securities’ means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

## Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- b) any body
  - i. exercising functions of a public nature
  - ii. any body directed to charitable purposes or
  - iii. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

### STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

At the meeting of the **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)** held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF on Wednesday, 8 November 2023 at 4.00 pm.

#### PRESENT

C. Seymour  
Chair – in the Chair

#### COUNCILLORS

L. Bowman

N. Morphet

#### CHURCH OF ENGLAND REPRESENTATIVES

P. Rusby

#### REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER CHURCHES & FAITHS

S. Arhad  
S. Dearlove

J. Simpson  
D. Van Der Velde

#### OBSERVERS

R. Cant – Cragside CE Primary School

#### OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

D. Cookson  
R. Little  
C. Weir

Head of School Improvement  
Assistant Democratic Services Officer  
Part Time RE Consultant

#### IN ATTENDANCE

K. Passmore

North East RE Hub

18 **INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from A. Duffield, C. Hudson, T. Marley, J. Miller and Councillor Thorne.

19 **MINUTES**

Councillor Seymour noted that while minute 13 mentioned that the working group members would be J. Miller, T. Marley, D. Van Der Velde and Councillor Seymour, however she was unable to attend the meetings.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Northumberland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), held on Wednesday, 28 June 2023 as circulated, were confirmed as a true record.

20 **AN UPDATE OF CONTACTS WITH SCHOOLS AND TRAINING PROVISION**

C. Weir – Part Time RE Consultant, informed members that since the start of the new term, she had been setting up the training schedule for the year with a number of training events scheduled to support the agreed syllabus, including how to plan a series of lessons using the summary sheets for each unit in the syllabus.

Three network meetings had been planned for the 2023-24 year. The first one had taken place in October for Northumberland teachers, where the discussion was around how to incorporate non-religious world views into various units across the syllabus.

Dates of the networking training would be shared with SACRE members.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

21 **NORTH EAST RE HUB PRESENTATION**

K. Passmore – North East RE Hub, gave a brief overview of the RE hubs website, showing members how to get information on school speakers, regional training events, places of interest and local groups. Members noted that the website was open to all and there were free courses available to join.

Members were encouraged to complete the 'Kitemark' training if they did school visits to speak about their worldview; they could also gain a 'Kitemark' for their place of worship, details of which could be found on the RE Hubs website – [www.re-hubs.uk](http://www.re-hubs.uk)

Members thanked Karenza for attending.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

## 22 GOOD PRACTICE IN RE

R. Cant – Cragside CE Primary School spoke to members around what good practice in RE looks like at Cragside CE Primary School and discussed how they effectively teach RE.

### Knowledge

The school had been focusing on delivering training based on Rosenshine's Principles of instruction which was based on research on how the brain acquires new information and also on the EEF recommendations for metacognition and self-regulated learning strategies, which fed into the planning and teaching of all RE lessons across the school.

Teachers were sent on relevant training delivered by the diocese which had been particularly useful. R. Cant also noted that she regularly attended the RE Networks meetings and shared any updates and training with teaching staff in the school, this had led to in house training on multidisciplinary learning, developing a worldviews approach to teaching RE and beginning to look at the decolonisation of RE.

### Planning

A long term plan with input from all staff had been created to ensure they're following the Northumberland agreed syllabus, ensuring that the units were in a logical and sequential order and that each new unit covered builds on previous learning, with more content being added to the long term plan based on non-religious worldviews.

Teachers were also in the process of decolonising the curriculum and looking for resources where resources had been chosen deliberately to ensure diversity. As part of this the school had recently created an RE library which offered the children access to a wide range of non-fiction and fiction texts to support the teaching of RE, including by showing examples of "real" stories and people of faith.

Teachers planned their own weekly sessions ensuring that there was a balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and social sciences to ensure a breadth of understanding.

### Lessons and Lesson Outcomes

Pupils worked in a range of different ways to explore and find answers to the big question title of each unit – these were broken down into smaller questions for each session, which encouraged pupils to have an enquiring mind and provided a basis for class discussions.

Pupils worked in RE books but also had large floor books which were used to record class-wide discussions, evidencing drama, large pieces of art as well as visits.

Pupils worked in a varied range of ways in the school, with discussions, written work, reading and interpretation of religious texts, visiting places of worship and

talking to visitors from different faith communities. The aim for teachers was for students to be able to talk confidently about what they believe, what others might believe and that they understood the impact that faith can have on the life of a believer.

The school monitored the teaching by dropping into lessons, looking at work and talking to children to get their perspective. Teachers were given feedback and personalised support to ensure the best possible outcomes for all learners in the school.

Members thanked Roz for the presentation.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

23 **SACRE SELF-EVALUATION TOOL**

D. Cookson noted that there had not been a meeting between himself, C. Weir, C Curtis and Councillor Morphet as proposed in the June 2023 meeting but that will happen within the term and the group would report back to the February meeting.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

24 **DRAFT REC HANDBOOK**

C. Weir explained that the Draft REC handbook was aimed at curriculum and syllabus writers and was for members to note. The final report of the project's outcomes would be published once further research was finalised in 2024. Members noted that for some of the Commission's proposals to be enacted, the outcomes of the REC's report would require a change of statute.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

25 **HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

D. Van Der Velde noted to members that she had been involved in the working group for Holocaust Memorial Day and had attended a meeting planning the event for Northumberland and would report back in the February meeting after the event.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

26 **CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP**

D. Van Der Velde introduced the report to the committee and explained that the constitution working group had been looking at tidying up SACRE's current constitution and asked members to note the current recommendations and encouraged member feedback. D. Van Der Velde thanked members of the working group for their efforts, and it was noted that sadly Ted had stepped down

from the group due to ill health. SACRE sent their best wishes.

S. Dearlove enquired as to whether Democratic Services could send out the agenda papers 10 working days in advance instead of 5 working days.

D. Cookson explained that once the final report from the working group was written and presented to SACRE in February 2024, the revised constitution would then be required to be looked at by legal before going to full council to be voted and adopted by County Councillors

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

## 27 **NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE ACTION PLAN**

D. Cookson explained that the action plan in the agenda pack was for the 2022-23 academic year and that the action plan for the 2023-24 academic year would be re-written using a report from a SACRE sub-committee from 2022.

D. Cookson noted that he would supply a copy of the original report to members to read it and asked members to send any feedback to him on whether they felt that those actions were still relevant. If agreed, these suggested actions would form part of the 2023-24 academic year action plan.

**Resolved** that this was noted.

## 28 **SACRE ANNUAL REPORT PROGRESS**

D. Cookson explained that the Annual Report was underway and a draft copy would be sent out to members to gather feedback and would be submitted before Christmas.

**Resolved** that this was noted.

## 29 **NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE NEWSLETTER AND RESOURCES WEBPAGE**

Members were reminded of the website link:  
[northumberlandeducation.co.uk/SACRE](http://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/SACRE)

D. Cookson thanked members of the committee that had submitted information for the SACRE newsletter.

**RESOVLED** that this was noted.

## 30 **TRAINING AVAILABLE TO SACRE**

Members were reminded of the NASACRE 2023-24 virtual training programme and asked to inform the Clerk when they attend training so that it could be recorded for the 2023-2024 Annual Report.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

31 **NASACRE ISSUES - ISSUE 36**

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

32 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education would be held on Wednesday, 7 February 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

**RESOLVED** that this was noted.

**CHAIR**.....

**DATE**.....



**Northumberland Standing Advisory Council  
on Religious Education (SACRE)**

**Annual Report: Academic Year 2022 – 2023**

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2022-23 has been a year of consolidation and change for Northumberland SACRE. Since the publication of the new Agreed Syllabus in June 2022 we have worked with schools to ensure that they were ready for full implementation from 1 September 2023. I would like to thank all those members of SACRE who have given so generously of their time and expertise to enable this. I am also very grateful to Caroline Weir, our RE Consultant, who has challenged and supported us professionally. Her deep understanding of all aspects of RE is highly appreciated. Rebecca Little, our clerk, provides timely advice and guidance to support us and we are very grateful to her.

I would also like to thank Guy Renner-Thompson who chaired SACRE from May 2021 to June 2023. He has overseen the development of the new syllabus, an updated constitution and the introduction of new committee members.

Most importantly, I need to thank teachers and senior leaders in schools for their ongoing commitment to religious education and their excellent engagement with SACRE.

A number of changes to the membership took place:

**Committee A:**

Josephine Cousin and Bhakti Rasa Adhikhara stepped down due to a change in circumstances.

**Committee B:**

Reverend J Scott stepped down due to a change in circumstances.

**Committee D:**

Councillor Guy Renner-Thompson stepped down in order to pick up other committee responsibilities across the council.

Resources to support the work of the SACRE continue to be ring-fenced with a specific financial contribution from Northumberland County Council, and the commitment of all SACRE's members continues to be priceless. We depend on the goodwill of the very small central team who have an impact way beyond their number.

It is a privilege to serve as the Chair of the SACRE and to work with a group of dedicated, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable members. Our meetings are enjoyable and constructive, and based on shared commitment to the promotion of the best possible provision of teaching and learning. We work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and celebrate what we can learn from each other by reflecting our increasingly diverse communities.

These are still challenging times, but with challenges come opportunities to bring about change for the better.

**Councillor Catherine Seymour** (Chair of the Northumberland SACRE)

## SACRE Meetings

SACRE met twice during the academic year 2022 –2023:

- 9 November 2022 - [minutes](#)
- 15 February 2022 – cancelled due to illnesses
- 28 June 2023 - [minutes](#)

The action plan covering the academic year is available [here](#). A new action plan is being drawn up to commence from September 2023.

## The Agreed Syllabus

The Northumberland Agreed Syllabus 2022-2027 was launched in June 2022, with nearly 100 schools in attendance. Stephen Pett (National RE Adviser for RE Today) and Caroline Weir launched the syllabus with sessions for all phases and school types, as well as phase specific sessions tailored for first/primary and middle/secondary/high schools. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Full implementation is due from September 2023. SACRE provided two face to face training sessions throughout the 2022/2023 academic year to support preparations in schools. There were also three network meetings at which the Agreed Syllabus was a topic of discussion., and a specific CPD session on the Muslim units.

Although not part of its statutory role, Northumberland SACRE seeks to serve and support all schools and academies within the county and makes its agreed RE syllabus available to all.

## Working Groups

Joyce Miller is leading a working group on the constitution. The working group was established at a meeting of the SACRE held in July, 2023. Its overarching aim is to carry out Section 16 of SACRE’s action plan with regard to its relationship to the Local Authority and to examine the constitution to see if changes are necessary to improve SACRE’s effectiveness. A number of recommendations have been put forward thus far, and the group continues to meet into 2023 – 2024.

The working group consists of Joyce, Ted Marley, Deanna van der Velde and Chris Hudson

## Standards and Monitoring of RE

Dave Cookson (Lead Officer for SACRE) met with the headteachers and RE Leads of the four local authority maintained secondary/high schools in the county to discuss the provision of RE. Each meeting concluded with a set of actions for the school to consider in order to improve the provision of RE. Communication has continued with the schools, either through direct support from Caz Weir (RE Consultant) or further discussions with Dave.

Dave has also worked with the middle, secondary and high schools to ascertain a more accurate picture of the curriculum time given to the teaching of RE. This was borne from the receipt of an extract of the school workforce census from November 2021 from NATRE. The conclusion was that the information in the census was not accurate; however Northumberland SACRE now possess a much more accurate picture of curriculum provision for secondary pupils.

Public examination data was not collected in 2022-2023.

In 2023-2024 Northumberland SACRE will consider how best to monitor RE, will resume scrutinising publicly available exam data, conversations with schools, teacher groups, and website trawls.

SACRE introduced a new standing agenda item in 2022 – 2023, “Good Practice in RE”. Schools are invited to attend and present on the aspects of RE provision in their school that they feel are most effective. We are grateful to Clare Curtis from Mowbray primary School for providing the first of these sessions in June 2023.

SACRE is not aware of any schools applying for REQM status.

SACRE monitors the Ofsted reports to note progress and excellence in SMSC and RE delivery, as well as issues requiring support. Four schools had a deep dive into RE (3 first/primary schools and a secondary school). This was twice the number of deep dives than in 2021 – 2022. No other reports have mentioned RE explicitly.

In November 2022 SACRE discussed the analysis of SACRE Annual reports provided by NASACRE.

## Support for Schools

A programme of training and support was offered to schools to help with colleagues' transition to the new Locally Agreed Syllabus (launched June 2022) during the academic year 2022-23. Full implementation was expected from September 2023. Sessions were planned in response to data gathered at the Locally Agreed Syllabus launch event. Colleagues highlighted the need for support around subject knowledge, and planning schemes of learning based on the unit outlines within the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The key focus this year has been on subject knowledge enhancement, with a particular focus on Christians and Muslims, and how to plan using the syllabus.

The following training sessions took place:

- Understanding Christianity training – first / primary (28.9.22 and 18.10.22)
- Understanding Christianity training – middle / secondary / high (4.10.22)
- RE Network meeting – cross phase – focus on enhancing subject knowledge with signposting to where RE leads can access support with their own and their colleagues' RE knowledge (7.12.22)
- Summer term network meetings - cross phase - Embedding the new Locally Agreed Syllabus 'drop in' sessions for colleagues to share ideas and ask questions (12.6.23 and 12.7.23)
- Working with the Muslim units in the Locally Agreed Syllabus (cross phase) – 14.6.23

Feedback from these sessions has been overwhelmingly positive and teachers have valued the opportunity to meet with colleagues and feel 'less alone'. Some comments shared by colleagues at the end of the Muslim units CPD:

*"Thank you so much. That was really useful."*

*"This has been a really useful session and overview. Thanks for this."*

*"Thank you; a very useful session."*

*"It has been an excellent session - a big thank you. it has given me more confidence to teach the LKS2 unit."*

In the year 2023-24, the focus will be on three other worldviews: non-religious, Jewish worldviews, Hindu Dharma, and planning the thematic units to weave in a number of worldviews in response to the unit enquiry questions.

In addition to central training, the RE consultant provided support for individual schools with curriculum planning (both primary and secondary) – via email, online, and school visits.

Training attended by RE Consultant to help her support SACRE / schools:

- AREIAC North East meeting (Nov)
- NASACRE webinar: SACREs – a way forward – (17.11.22)
- NASACRE webinar: How to effectively use pupil and teacher voice in your SACRE – (6.12.22)
- NATRE: Strictly RE (28.1.23 and 29.1.23)
- NASACRE webinar: What's happening to Collective Worship beyond determinations – (14.3.23)
- RE Today webinar - KS3 Buddhism (21.3.23)
- Holocaust Educational Trust webinar – An approach to teaching about the Holocaust (25.4.23)

## Withdrawals and Complaints

There were two withdrawals (from both RE lessons and collective worship) brought to the attention of Northumberland SACRE in 2022 – 2023. Both withdrawals were managed very well by the primary school with the support of staff at the local authority.

Information on withdrawals has been circulated via the [SACRE newsletter](#), signposting schools to [this document](#).

Northumberland SACRE has a role in investigating complaints against schools in relation to RE and Collective Worship. In 2022-23 there were no such formal complaints to deal with.

## Collective Worship

In September 2021 Northumberland SACRE launched an updated [collective worship policy](#). The legislation determining the nature of collective worship in community schools has not altered since the Education Reform Act 1988, with the corresponding guidance offered in Circular 1/94. However, understanding of how to make the legislation meaningful in increasingly multifaith but predominantly secular school communities has changed considerably. There is now far greater agreement among teachers, educationalists, and others about what constitutes good practice in relation to collective worship.

Whilst the changes were minimal (even though the previous policy was written in 2006) it felt like an appropriate time to remind schools of their responsibilities and use the new policy to focus their minds.

In 2022-23 there were no formal complaints to deal with.

## Determinations

The Education Reform Act of 1988 (sections 6, 7, 9, and 12) entitles schools to apply to the SACRE for a 'Determination'. This allows the school to adjust the legal requirements to enable collective worship of a different character to take place for some or all pupils in the school. Determinations are made where a school, on behalf of a group of parents, requests Collective Worship other than that set down by statute. There were no determinations in 2022-23 for Northumberland SACRE to consider.

Northumberland SACRE has not commissioned any formal training on Collective Worship or the Determination process for Headteachers, Governors and teachers in schools during this recent period. This should be considered a development area going forward. However, SACRE members continue to generously offer schools their time and expertise. Religion and Worldview representatives offer to deliver assemblies, support curriculum planning, and provide guidance to individual teachers.

## Links with Local and National Bodies (to complete)

Attendance at the NASACRE Conference is offered each year – Caroline Weir attended.

Members of SACRE were also signposted to the NASACRE training events as access to all events was purchased.

AREIAC (Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants): The RE Adviser is an AREIAC member. The meetings provide an excellent network of RE leads and the sharing of best practice and ideas.

NATRE (National Association of Teachers of Religious Education): Northumberland SACRE promotes the resources and CPD provided to NATRE through the SACRE newsletter. Caroline Weir is a member of NATRE.

The Northumberland SACRE maintains excellent relationships with the dioceses. The Directors of Education meet regularly to see how all parties can support each other. The Northumberland School Improvement Team attended the Church of England diocesan conference in June 2023.

## Northumberland SACRE's own arrangements

Northumberland SACRE is supported by Dave Cookson, Head of School Improvement and Caroline Weir, part-time RE Consultant. SACRE feels well supported by the team.

The Head of School Improvement acts as the conduit between the LA and SACRE on issues such as finance, data, and councillor representation.

Democratic Services appoint a clerk to attend each SACRE meeting. Rebecca Little continues in this role.

The LA supports the funding of the RE Consultant time for around 25 days a year.

The RE Consultant provides specialist RE advice and governance support, facilitates the collaborative working groups required for the Agreed Syllabus Conference, attends AREIAC/ NASACRE/NATRE meetings or conferences and deals with day-to-day matters.

To raise the profile of SACRE, and raise school awareness of the role and support that SACRE can provide, a new page on the [Northumberland Education](#) website has been created to act as a central point for resources.

A sub-committee met to focus on how the effectiveness of SACRE can be improved. A report was produced in July 2022 providing a list of points for implementation over the next two academic years. As a result of this work the SACRE action plan was amended to cover those points raised by the sub-committee. 7 of the 15 action points were achieved fully. 8 were still being addressed. The action plan is available [here](#).

## Membership, representation & recruitment

The RE Consultant and Head of School Improvement work in partnership with the chair and members of the SACRE to identify gaps with representation of the local faith communities and wider group membership. This is an ongoing process.

A full membership list as of September 2023 is available as appendix A. Vacancies are being addressed as they arise.

## Training for SACRE Members

All SACRE members have been offered access to NASACRE training. That offer was taken up by the following:

### **So, you've joined your local SACRE – 22 September 2022**

- Nick Morphet
- Les Bowman

### **Applying and gaining for Westhill/NASACRE award – 13 October 2022**

- Les Bowman

### **SACREs – a way forward – 17 November 2022**

- Joyce Miller
- Les Bowman

### **How to effectively use pupil and teacher voice in your SACRE – 6 December 2022**

- Les Bowman

### **Being an effective SACRE clerk – 21 February 2023**

- Rebecca Little (Clerk)

### **What's happening to Collective Worship beyond determinations – 14 March 2023**

- Clare Dixon
- Nick Morphet
- Les Bowman

### **SACRE annual report analysis conversation – 13 July 2023**

- Jean Simpson
- Deanna Van Der Velde

Joyce Miller also completed the following training from AREIAC:

- AREIAC webinar on interpreting the census data on religion (January)
- Webinar on the REC draft handbook (January)
- Kitemark training (February)
- AREIAC North East regional meetings (February/June)

Three members of the committee (Paul Rusby, Joyce Miller and Deanna Van der Velde) have been accredited with the Regional Hubs Kitemark.



## Finance Given to SACRE

In 2022 – 2023 School's Forum provided £7000 which equated to 0.29% of the Dedicated School's Grant. Whilst the figure of £7000 has remained static it has grown as a proportion of the DSG over time, from 0.26% in 2020 – 2021.

The majority of the funding pays for the time of the RE Consultant. The remainder is used for room hire/refreshments for training events.

Northumberland County Council provide a clerk and back office functions at no cost to SACRE.

## Circulation Details

The report will be shared, discussed, and agreed by Northumberland SACRE in November 2023. The report will be made available to Headteachers and teachers through the ecourier. The report will also be added to the [SACRE page](#) of the Northumberland County Council website. The report will be shared with Northumberland County Council.

The SACRE clerk will send a copy of the SACRE report to the Department for Education: via [ministers@education.gov.uk](mailto:ministers@education.gov.uk)

The report will also be emailed to NASACRE for publication on its website: SACRE reports via [admin@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:admin@nasacre.org.uk)

## Appendix A: SACRE Membership as of September 2023

### Committee A: Other Faiths

- Reverend E. H. Marley, OBE: United Reformed Church (URC). (*The Methodist Church (SE Northumberland Ecumenical Area) is currently represented by the URC*)
- Nayankumar Vyas – Hinduism
- Sohail Arshad: Islam
- Jean Simpson: Baptist
- Joyce Miller: Buddhist
- Mrs. D. Van der Velde: Judaism
- Mr S Dearlove: Humanism
- Vacancy: Assembly of God
- Vacancy: Roman Catholic Church
- Vacancy: Salvation Army
- Vacancy: Society of Friends
- Vacancy: Jehovah's Witnesses
- Vacancy: Sikhism

### Committee B: Church of England

- Mr. C. Hudson
- Mr. P. Rusby
- (2 vacancies)

### Committee C: Teaching Associations/Unions

- Mr. A. Duffield (middle school teacher/NASUWT)
- Mr. T. Nicholls (secondary/high school teacher/NEU)
- Vacancy (NAHT)
- Vacancy (ASCL)

### Committee D: Local Authority

- Councillor N. Morphet
- Councillor L. Bowman
- Councillor C Seymour (Chair)
- Councillor T. Thorne

### Co-opted Representatives

- None

### Observer (representing the academies and free schools)

- Vacant

### Observers

- Miss C Curtis (Mowbray Primary School)
- Mrs R Cant (Cragside C of E Primary School)
- Mrs C Dixon (Slaley First School)

### Local Authority Officers in Attendance

- Caroline Weir, Northumberland RE Consultant
- David Cookson, Head of School Improvement
- Rebecca Little, Clerk to the SACRE, Democratic Services

# Agenda Item 8

The [Ofsted Annual Report](#) looks at schools, early years, further education and skills and children's social care for the academic year 2022 to 2023. Ofsted's findings are based on inspection evidence from inspections of, and visits to, schools, colleges and providers of social care, early years and further education and skills. The report also draws on findings from our research and analysis this year.

The main points, extracted from the report, relating to RE, are that:

'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 under-valued. 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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## Constitution Working Group Interim Report (Part 2)

In November, 2023, the working group presented its first interim report for preliminary discussion by SACRE. It drew SACRE members' attention to specific points in the existing constitution, it recommended minor changes and removed errors and repetitions. Receipt of this report was noted by the meeting

We now offer a further interim report, setting out more complex changes which, we hope, will make SACRE a more effective organisation. This report follows the ordering of the constitution for ease of reference.

### **Recommendation:**

That SACRE considers this report, amends where necessary and invites the chair of the working group to produce a final report which will set out all the changes recommended in both of the interim reports for adoption at the next SACRE meeting in June.

### **A. Additional changes /clarifications**

#### **RE and Collective worship:**

1. 3.3 should read 'religious education and **collective** worship in Community and Voluntary **Controlled** schools...' (Voluntary Aided schools are not within SACREs' remit.) These amendments reflect more accurately the Law on RE and CW
2. 3.7 the order of 'collective worship' and 'religious education' should be reversed (again, reflecting the Law and government guidance)

#### **SACRE procedures:**

3. 5.1 bullet 1 delete '**municipal**' and replace with '**academic**' year. SACRE is concerned with schools and there is a statutory duty to report annually to the Department for Education, based on the school year
4. 5.1 bullets 10 and 11 should be combined to read: 'receive the agenda and all relevant reports at least **ten** working days before a meeting; any member can submit agenda items for inclusion at least **15** days before the meeting'
5. 5.1. Insert three new bullet points:
  - The dates of SACRE meetings should be agreed at least one calendar year in advance
  - The draft minutes of meetings should be sent out within three weeks of the meeting date
  - Agendas should include 'matters arising' after 'minutes'

#### **Membership of SACRE committees:**

We need to consider the membership of SACRE in the light of recent census data and professional need and to amend the constitution accordingly.

6. 6.2 Committee A: Christian denominations (other than the Church of England) , **independent church networks** and other faiths or belief systems active in Northumberland, eg: the Assembly of God, the

Baptist Church, the Methodist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Salvation Army, the Society of Friends, the United Reformed Church, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, the Jehovah's Witnesses, Judaism, Sikhism, Humanism (one representative for each church **denomination, network** or religion).

7. 6.2. Committee A: Amend to include a representative of the Baha'i community
8. 6.2. Committee C: Amend to include a representative of higher education professional associations whose members are involved in initial teacher education
9. 6.2. Committee C: Amend to include a representative of local RE network meetings
10. 7.5. Delete the last sentence and replace with: Any co-options will be for a period of **two years and then reviewed by SACRE**
11. 11.1. Include: The Chair and Vice Chair will be members of different committees
12. 11.1. Amend to read: 'The Chair and Vice Chair are appointed from **members of** committees A,B, C and D. Any appointments will be **for four years....\***
13. 13.0 to include 'It should be understood that all participating members agree to follow the Religious Education Council of England and Wales's Agreed Code of Practice when representing the SACRE (See Appendix x, where the Code of Practice will be included')

\* This is already under discussion as part of our current action plan

#### **AGM:**

14. Insert new section before section 20: The AGM will be held annually, as part of the first meeting of the academic year. Its remit will be three-fold: to consider changes to the constitution, to examine membership and representation, and to receive a report on finance

#### **B. Procedural matters/ standing orders**

Additional to changes to the Constitution, the following recommendations were raised during our meetings and are offered for further consideration by SACRE:

- I. All papers should be circulated electronically and all SACRE members should have internet access during meetings
- II. Documentation that is only relevant to Councillors, such as Disclosures of Interest, should be removed from SACRE's papers but it should remain as an agenda item

	Objective	Action	Responsible	Cost	Start date	Achieved?	Action/Outcome
1	SACRE members, where appropriate, should support schools by visits to classrooms, accompanying teachers and pupils on visits to places of worship or other sacred spaces, and by offering Q and A Zoom sessions.	Create and promote a list of volunteers and their topics	Consultant	nil	Jan 23		List to be circulated for comment at the spring meeting
		Circulate the list	Lead Officer	nil	Feb 23		List to be circulated once agreed
2	SACRE members, where appropriate, should offer Q and A sessions online.	Create a list of volunteers and their topics	DVDV	nil	Jan 23		List to be circulated for comment at the spring meeting
		Circulate the list	Lead Officer	nil	Feb 23		List to be circulated once agreed
3	SACRE should continue to pursue the question of its status in relation to the Local Authority through further discussion with NASACRE and other national bodies	Discussions to take place with NASACRE	JM	nil	Nov 22		JM to feedback at the spring meeting
4	SACRE members should take responsibility for contacting the Chair and officers to raise agenda items before meetings and, where appropriate, provide papers for circulation to enable an	Explore whether Council policy will allow hybrid meetings	JM	nil	Nov 22		JM to feedback at

	informed discussion when SACRE meets. These would include, e.g., resources developed by worldview communities; conferences attended; relevant projects, reports or research that affect RE/ CW						the spring meeting
5	The development plan should spread responsibility for actions beyond the officers to include SACRE members, where appropriate	Explore whether Council policy will allow the chair to serve a four year term	Clerk	nil	Nov 22		Clerk to feedback at the spring meeting
6	The development plan should identify topics for SACRE members 'training, determined at the end of each academic year for the following year						
7	When the latest census data is published, we should look at the membership of Committee A and, if necessary, update the Constitution and seek new members						
8	SACRE should investigate ways in which it can support teachers 'continuing professional development in RE and Collective Worship by providing or promoting existing CPD modules to Head Teachers						
9	SACRE members, particularly on Committee A, should help the Consultant gather up-to-date information on places of worship and other centres, locally and regionally, that would welcome visits from school groups						
10	SACRE members should help collate a list of names of people from religious communities and other worldviews who would be willing to visit schools or						



	engage in Q and A Zoom conversations with pupils/teachers to support RE						
11	When the AS is established, SACRE should work with the Consultant to identify and support training themes, including contentious issues, for teachers for the following academic ye						
12	SACRE should make a bid for Westhill funding to run a project in schools that would culminate in a day conference to which teachers, headteachers and governors would be invited. This should become the basis for future annual conference						
13	We should run the first of biennial sixth form conference						
14	SACRE should seek other partners with a view to hosting the Anne Frank Exhibition, or another major exhibition, in Northumberland						
15	As part of its annual review, members should evaluate SACRE's webpage						
16	SACRE should work with the Governor Service so that school governors understand the Law and are able to provide challenge and support to their school						
17	SACRE should consider developing closer ties with other Northern SACREs and dioceses, similar to Lead Teach RE in the South West of England, with a view to sharing support for teachers						

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National Association of  
Standing Advisory Councils  
on Religious Education

## **SACRE BRIEFING**

**Issue: 37**

*This issue includes:*

- **Welcome from the Chair**
- **Westhill Awards**
- **AGM and Conference**
- **Executive Committee Elections**
- **Subscribing to NASACRE**
- **Webinar Programme**
- **Website Update**
- **Ofsted and RE**
- **RE Hubs Update**
- **Holocaust Memorial Day 2024**
- **Ramadan 2024**
- **Items for your SACRE Agenda**

### **Welcome from the Chair**

Welcome to the NASACRE Briefing and we wish you a peaceful and productive year. As you can see from this edition, the NASACRE Executive committee is already busy supporting members and raising with subject associations and partners, and we are planning our AGM and conference in May.

Looking back over introductions to past Briefings, this isn't new. I have been overwhelmed again by the evidence of great RE – or in Religion and Worldviews education. There is some evidence to show the opposite, but we won't dwell on that here, although the OFSTED annual report findings are evidenced **below**. The report is clearly pointing towards government action on RE.

Where there is good or excellent practice, it's important to celebrate it locally and nationally, and the Westhill Awards (**item below**) are a great opportunity to engage in promotion and celebration of innovative and positive practice. The **NATRE 'Spirited Arts' competition** (in its 20th year), and the **RE Quality Mark** and **WIRE Awards** are also used by some SACREs and schools to achieve similar aims. Is your SACRE aware of schools with these awards? Could you set up a project or event to share their work?

The Association is also aware of the need for members to be supported through challenges as well as positive achievements. The two are often co-dependent. As many prepare for Agreed Syllabus reviews, we offer training and networking to see you through the complexities of curriculum change and professional development (see **webinar programme section** and our March webinar). We have also noted key events for religions and worldviews below and encourage you all to discuss the significance of commemorations, festivals and rites of passage in your communities. SACREs have a vital part to play in interfaith dialogue and adult education, and the shared resources section of the website (see **website update section**) is where to look for SACREs that have experiences and resources to pass on.

And it is time (again) to start thinking about who could join us here on our Executive committee - please raise this on your agendas. NASACRE is not a national SACRE, it is a membership organisation that only exists because of the volunteer time and expertise shared with others, and the subscriptions from the membership and their local authorities.

Thank you all for your work locally, regionally, nationally – and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

*Linda*

*We're sad to report the peaceful passing of our Baha'i colleague Elizabeth Jenkerson, who faithfully served on the Exec for 10 years or more. We acknowledge her valued contribution to NASACRE, especially her enthusiastic work on planning our annual conference and AGM over several years.*



## Westhill Awards

It's the time of year for SACREs to submit their applications for a Westhill/NASACRE Award. The £4000 (max) award is intended to fund a SACRE-led project that will enhance the quality of RE and or collective worship in local schools, with the potential to have wider, lasting impact. The theme for this year is ***Education into Diversity***. The **Westhill website** has further information and reports from many winning projects.

The **NASACRE website** has more information, providing links to the application form/notes, as well as to a **recording of the autumn term webinar**. This session demonstrated the application process, the criteria and some examples of recently successful projects.

**The closing date for applications is 31 March** and winners will be announced at our 2024 AGM and Conference in May.

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## AGM and Conference

**Monday 20 May 2024 #NASACRE24**

**Venue:** Hilton York

**Theme:** *How can SACREs support high quality RE & Collective Worship?*

Maximum 2 delegates per SACRE, after which a waiting list will be offered.

Whilst we hope that many of you will join us in person, we also offer an online Zoom option at the same price.

For further details and to book, please visit the **Conference page** on our website.

### **Subscribed SACREs**

£120 per delegate, including a choice of 2 online workshops to be delivered in June\*

£170 per delegate, including a choice of 2 online workshops to be delivered in June\*

which 2 additional SACRE members may attend

### **Non-subscribed SACREs**

£160 per delegate, including a choice of 2 online workshops to be delivered in June\*

£30 per delegate per online workshop

### **\*ONLINE CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS**

**Dates: Monday 3 June - Thursday 6 June** on Zoom at various times - details will be on the **website** once confirmed.

We will be running an inspiring range of workshops, and if your SACRE would like the opportunity to present work you are proud of, please email

**admin@nasacre.org.uk** by the end of February. SACRE winners of

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## Executive Committee Elections

We ask your SACRE to consider nominating up to two candidates to the NASACRE Exec. At the AGM, there will be elections for at least 3 new members, plus the Secretary and Treasurer roles. We shall be looking for skills in managing conference, communications and development planning. Further details, once confirmed, will be on the [website](#) with nomination forms.

Catherine Hughes, a member of St Helens SACRE, was elected last year.

She writes:

*It has been a privilege to be elected on to the NASACRE Executive after being nominated by my SACRE. I have felt welcomed and that my personal skills and experience are valued, especially when I share my current experience from the classroom and from other teachers. It is a great opportunity to be part of such an important organisation that has such a national voice and a clear drive to ensure all students receive quality RE across the country. It has allowed me to develop my own CPD and understanding of SACRE and the work of NASACRE, as well as growing my own network of support and making national links.*

**Nominations must be received by 5pm on Friday, 10 May 2024**

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## Subscribing to NASACRE

Is your SACRE a **subscribed member** of NASACRE?

If not, you are missing out on the subscriber-only content and a range of other benefits such as:

- answers to FAQs about SACRE's work
- opportunity to take advantage of a generous **virtual training package** for any number of your SACRE members
- access to training resources
- opportunity, at reduced cost, to attend NASACRE conference and other meetings.

If you want to check your subscriber status, look for the coloured logo after the name of your LA on the **SACRE Contacts** page for further information. The rates for 2023-24 are:

Annual subscription: **£105**

Additional training package: **+£50**

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## Webinar Programme

Since September we have run 5 webinars with over 145 people attending – so a lot has been going on and this next term is no less busy!

Recent feedback from participants:

*The webinar programme is great as there is always clear information given, you get to see what others are doing around the country and often get to chat with colleagues.*

*Webinars provide me with lots of clarification. Good sharing of best practice always enriches me.*

Please see below our webinars in the next three months.  
(Sometimes we also have joint seminars with AREIAC.)

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

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

Special guest: Deborah Weston

Description: This session will help SACRE chairs/vice chairs and professional support officers to make effective use of the data that NATRE, NASACRE and the DfE provides, as well as ensuring that local data can be drawn upon.

*Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package.*

*£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE.*

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

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

Led by David Levien, Catherine Hughes and Claire Clinton

Description: 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 the clerk's role within SACRE, focusing on minute-taking, SACRE composition and your constitution/terms of reference.

*Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package.*

*£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE.*

### **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 the National Association of Funeral Directors

Description: This session will help SACREs to reflect on what they do at present 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 themes in their Agreed Syllabus.

**Tuesday 12th March 2024, 7-8pm:**

### **Convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference – legalities and processes**

Led by: Paul Smalley with Linda Rudge

Description: This session will share the legal process and best practice suggestions for convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) for your SACRE.

*Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package.*

*£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE.*

**For further details, please contact [admin@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:admin@nasacre.org.uk)**

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## **Website Update**

The Communications Group on the Executive, working closely with our Administrator Marie, is working hard to revamp the NASACRE website. We aim to make it more accessible and useful to all SACREs. You will find some new sections and see that others have been revised. One new page, which draws together materials previously posted in a range of sections, is the '**Managing SACREs**' page which is accessible to all SACREs and contains some items, e.g. relevant FAQs and responses that were previously password-protected for subscribing SACREs.

A **Noticeboard** is now included for all SACREs, where news and up-to-date information will be posted regularly.

Meanwhile, the '**Shared Materials from SACREs**' subscriber-only section where SACREs share their work with others, is reorganised. If you are a subscribing SACRE, please share useful advice and guidance when you can. If SACREs want to rebadge or use the work of others, please make sure you inform the original creators and acknowledge the work of others within your document.

The NASACRE website revamp is work in progress, so keep looking for more changes going live. We welcome your comments and suggestions to make the site even better!

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## **Ofsted and RE**

At the end of the Autumn Term, Ofsted published its **Annual Report** from the Chief Inspector. This year there were references to individual subjects, including RE:

*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*



- *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.*

These findings reflect what NASACRE and other RE organisations have been saying for many years, so there are really no surprises! Discuss this document at your next SACRE meeting and consider your response.

The long-awaited Ofsted *RE Subject Report* is due to be published soon, so please ensure that you keep your eyes open for that. We will get a link to it on our new **Noticeboard** page as soon after publication as possible.

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## RE Hubs Update

1. NASACRE was very pleased to partner with RE Hubs to hold nine *In Conversation* events across England during November. Notes were made of questions, ideas, concerns and developments at each meeting where SACREs sent a representative. The NASACRE Exec meets in early February to discuss and process these and we will let you know any updates. We are very grateful for the time given by many hard-working colleagues on SACREs and hope we can hold more such meetings in the future.
2. RE Hubs continue to run FREE Places of Interest and School Speaker training (POI & SS). Has your SACRE invited your religion and worldview representatives to do the training? Feedback from SACRE members: *The training was very informative, and it provided a good opportunity to discuss thoughts in the breakout groups. Very focused and engaging presentation where we were able to share and learn from experience. I*

Please advertise the **training flyer** to local worldview communities.

3. RE Hubs are now partnering with NATRE to run FREE training for those new to leading a local RE group and supporting other teachers.

If your SACRE has teacher members who are interested to help to lead your group or maybe to start up a new group, the next series of virtual trainings are:

Session 1 - Thursday 14th March @ 4-5:30pm

Session 2 - Thursday 18th April @ 4-5:30pm

Session 3 - Thursday 16th May @ 4-5:30pm

4. RE Hubs partner with NATRE and AREIAC to provide professional development opportunities for those advisers and teachers who already run a local RE support group. The next virtual meeting is:

Wednesday 17th April @ 4-5:30pm

5. RE Hubs partner with the REC, NATRE and AREIAC to work with MAT RE leads (those leading RE across several schools). Such new positions are starting to appear, so we are bringing colleagues together to learn from each other. The next virtual meeting is on 25th April @ 4-5:30pm and if your SACRE has a MAT rep or contact with local MATs, please highlight this opportunity.

6. SACRE members may find our website **www.re-hubs.uk** useful as we aim to be a one-stop resource for everyone involved in high quality RE/RVE/R&W.

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## Holocaust Memorial Day 2024

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) has been commemorated nationally on January 27th every year since 2001. This date was selected as it marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest concentration and death camp, by the Soviet army in 1945. This year's theme, '**Fragility of Freedom**', reflects the persecution and genocides of 6 million Jewish men, women and children by the Nazis and more recent genocides in Rwanda, Bosnia, Cambodia and Darfur.

Many areas hold local events to mark this day and details can be found on the internet. We would be happy to share details on the NASACRE website of any events that are being organised or supported by SACREs.

For further information, please see the **Holocaust Education Trust**.

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## Ramadan 2024

The Islamic calendar is lunar and has 354 or 355 days. Therefore, precise dates cannot be forecast as they depend on the sighting of the moon.

In 2024 Ramadan begins on March 10th plus or minus a day, dependent on the moon sighting. Prayer times for Ramadan may be found on many mosque websites.

Your SACRE may wish to remind schools to support the needs of Muslim pupils and staff during the fast. As in previous years, teachers will appreciate that the routine of Muslim families is entirely different during Ramadan. Young children may well become more tired or excitable during school time, even if they are not fasting themselves. Those students who are fasting may become very tired and thirsty during the school day.

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## Items for your SACRE agenda

- Share materials with your schools about Holocaust Memorial Day
  - Ensure that schools have up-to-date Ramadan guidance
  - Sign up for NASACRE webinars
  - Explore the RE Hubs website
  - Discuss the Ofsted report
  - Consider nominations to the Exec and who to book for conference
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