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National Association of  
Standing Advisory Councils  
on Religious Education

## **SACRE BRIEFING**

### **Issue: 34**

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## Welcome and Update from the Chair

Welcome to our first briefing of this new calendar year. The NASACRE Executive wishes you and your SACRE well, and thanks everyone for all their work to support the subject and its teachers. Let's celebrate the best of all our work together – this Briefing shows just how much is going on already and how we might share it. Top of our own celebratory committee agenda this term is the continued planning for our Conference and AGM in May. NASACRE is celebrating its 'Pearl Anniversary', and we hope to see as many of you as possible in person at the **Fishmongers' Hall, London**. All the details are below.

New Executive Committee members are always welcome, and the nomination process is described here and on the website. We are still hoping that someone will be enthusiastic enough to stand for **the role of Vice-Chair**. The VC sometimes chairs meetings, and especially subgroups, but also covers invitations to external meetings with other networks and keeps the Chair on track. Someone with the appropriate skills emerging from their work with local authorities, SACREs or national/regional groups would be very welcome on our team. Please just drop me a line on **chair@nasacre.org.uk** if you would like to know more.

Since our last Briefing in October, we have continued our **CPD programme**. Feedback shows that sessions are greatly appreciated and well attended. Thanks to all who have offered time as speakers and those who are hosting the events, and thanks to all of you who give up your time to attend. As an organisation NASACRE has a vibrant and well-informed community and these sessions demonstrate the range of experiences across England, the depth of knowledge and understanding about RE – and collective worship – that provide us with the authority to support you, and schools, and to advise others like the DfE. A particular 'thank you' at this time to anyone who has helped their local authority to respond to NASACRE's Freedom of Information request about funding.

We did say that we would report more in this Briefing on teacher recruitment and retention in RE and I expect many SACRE members have picked up the depressing news through other networks and from local schools that the current situation with regard to recruitment of secondary teachers of RE is at a crisis point. The Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education (AULRE) is leading a campaign to address this issue. More to follow as the campaign progresses...

If you would like an antidote to this news, have a look at

**<https://www.cstg.org.uk/activities/campaigns/parent-survey/>** to

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The RE Council of England and Wales (NASACRE is a member organisation) is also engaged in political campaigns – please have a look at <https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/political-engagement/>

The REC would also appreciate any feedback on its draft resource to support the teaching of Religion and Worldviews

<https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-resource/> and some SACREs will be using this, and other resources such as <https://bigideasforre.org/> as they consider agreed syllabus reviews in partnership with their LAs. Many of these resources have been presented and discussed in our CPD programme over the last two years.

And more positive news still - SACREs and local authorities form an essential part of the structure supporting the subject and all its related areas every week of the year, including during the school holidays. Please have a look at the section on sharing resources mentioned below. We need to do more to share our good practice and all that SACREs do – including work that promotes inter-faith and cross-worldview dialogue and takes account of individual patterns of belief within traditions as well.

One opportunity to bring together SACRE members, teachers of RE and those who advise them will be at the AREIAC conference in July – please see details on the [AREIAC website](#) as they are posted.

Another celebratory event happening around now is NATRE's '[Strictly RE](#)' – it would be great to hear from SACRE members who attended.

And there is still time to apply for a [NASACRE Westhill Award](#) to celebrate work that is happening, or that needs support to launch it.

The new panel is looking forward to meeting to consider this year's applications – there is a recording on the CPD section of our website that helps SACREs consider their projects and how to apply.

I would like to acknowledge and celebrate all the efforts individuals are making through these very difficult times. Many people in our wider community are struggling for health reasons - including two long-standing members of our committee whom we are holding in our thoughts - or for financial and other anxieties in a world that seems to need an education in religion and worldviews more than ever.

*'To teach is to learn'* – and to teach RE is one of the sharpest learning curves in education. Thank you for helping each other (and me) to negotiate the bends and the gradients.

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## White Paper scrapped

You may have seen in the news that the government has decided to not proceed with the Schools Bill that was designed to enact the ideas in the 2022 Education White Paper. From speaking to DfE officials it seems clear that the intention of government is still the same - all schools are to be part of MAT by 2030. One major difference from March 2022 is that the Conservative party is no longer confident that it will be in power until 2030.

Nothing of this intention currently changes the roles or responsibilities of SACREs. Our Assistant to the Chair, Paul Smalley, has written an academic journal article suggesting a way forward, if the Government's ambitions are fulfilled. You can read that [here](#).

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## RExChange

The RExChange conference was held online on 7–8 October 2022. There were many presentations of interest to SACRE members, including some given by SACRE Chairs and advisers. The sessions were recorded and you can view them [here](#).

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## Freedom of Information (FOI) request

As mentioned in our last Briefing and in an email to Chairs before Christmas, the **Freedom of Information (FOI) request** was sent out by NASACRE on 10 January 2023 to all Local Authorities. This focuses again on SACRE funding following our [previous report](#) in 2021. Please check that your LA has received this and is preparing to respond, as there is a deadline of 20 working days, meaning that answers should have been given by **Tuesday 7 February**.

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## 2023 Conference & AGM

### Celebrating 30 years: SACREs for the Future

Date: Monday, 22 May 2023

Time: 10:30am -15:30pm

Venue: Fishmongers' Hall, London

Twitter tag: #NASACRE2023

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shall finally be able to hold our Conference in London and catch up with colleagues and friends – old and new!

We aim to bring together many RE professionals, academics and those who champion RE and support SACREs, to celebrate **30 years of NASACRE** - our **Pearl Anniversary**.

**Pricing:** Prices are per delegate - maximum 2 per SACRE, after which a waiting list will be offered.

### **Subscribed SACREs**

£120 per delegate. Each delegate may choose 2 virtual workshops delivered in June.

#### **Bonus deal for subscribed SACREs**

For £170, one delegate at conference plus 2 additional SACRE members (not attending conference) may each choose 2 virtual workshops in June.

### **Non-subscribed SACREs**

£160 per delegate. Each delegate may choose 2 virtual workshops delivered in June.

### **ELECTIONS**

At the AGM, we hope to elect our Vice Chair, and we have vacancies for up to 5 Executive members. This is a golden opportunity for your SACRE members to offer to contribute their skills and experience to the work of NASACRE. SACREs may nominate up to 2 candidates for election. Further details of the roles and nomination forms may be found [here](#). Nominations to [secretary@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:secretary@nasacre.org.uk) must be received by **5pm on Friday, 12 May 2023**.

### **AWARDS**

We'll be celebrating 30 years as an organisation, and as part of that, we'd like to recognise SACRE members who have played a special part in the life of your SACRE over the last 30 years. We will share a PowerPoint at the Conference and later upload it to our website.

We're inviting SACREs to nominate, with a photo (jpeg) of the nominee and your reasons for selecting them. (Please ensure you have permission for us to display the image.)

Kindly nominate your member(s), past and present, under the 2 following categories:

- Most active SACRE member
- A SACRE member who has made a significant impact in your area

## 30 YEAR MEMORY TIMELINE

To mark the 30 years celebration, we ask SACREs to send in photo/s (jpeg), so we can play a presentation during arrival and break time.

Any SACRE wishing to add their memories must send photos with a short message by **5pm on Friday, 12 May 2023**, via email to: **[admin@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:admin@nasacre.org.uk)**.

Further details and how to book a place can be found on the **conference page** of our website.

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## Conference workshops

**Dates: Monday 5 June to Thursday 15 June**

Times: Various - please see the programme on our **website**

Venues: Online using Zoom

Details: Each member may choose 2 virtual workshops delivered in June '23.

Workshops will include SACREs who have won Westhill/NASACRE Awards sharing their projects.

***Don't forget to look at the bonus deal for subscribed SACREs.***

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## SACRE teacher survey

NASACRE wants to consider the best timing for future AGMs and Conferences, so we have created a Google form for SACRE Clerks and Chairs to send to teacher members.

**<https://forms.gle/Gxum6LLBNBgV6iVs5>**

This survey should take no longer than 5-10 mins to complete and we'd really value as many responses as possible to enable us to make a good decision on the future timing of Conference each year.

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**There is still time to apply!** Please have a look at the opportunities outlined in the website section. SACREs are often undertaking work already that would fit in with the award criteria.

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## NASACRE Online Training

Coming soon to a screen near you are the next **NASACRE training opportunities:**

**21 February 2023, 4-5:30pm**

***Being an effective SACRE Clerk***

Hosted by Exec members

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

**14 March 2023, 7-8pm**

***What's happening to Collective Worship beyond determinations?***

Host to be confirmed

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

**26 June 2023, 7-8:30pm**

***So, you've joined your local SACRE...***

Hosted by Exec members

Free online session

Last year, delegates said:

"Great way to see and be part of the bigger picture."

"I think the programme has been excellent this year, relevant and well-paced. Circulating materials afterwards has been productive and a useful aide-memoire."

**To book a place on any session, or to purchase our training package, please email [admin@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:admin@nasacre.org.uk)**

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## NASACRE website

Have you looked at our new SACRE **sharing page** on the website, where there are several new items that may be of use to your SACRE, e.g., a letter of congratulation to schools for gaining an REQM award.

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## Other RE work and News

*NASACRE reserves the right to publish news items from members of the Executive and from members of the Association that the editors judge to be of interest to the membership. These items reflect the views and aims of the individual or organisation, and not necessarily those of the Association. Unfortunately, limited editorial time and resources mean that we cannot accept all items submitted. Thank you for your understanding.*

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## Conceptualising Religion and Worldviews for the School by Kevin O'Grady – webinar report

[2022, Routledge, available in hardback or on Kindle]

On 19 December 2022, Culham St Gabriel's ran an in-conversation webinar with Kevin O'Grady about his book, published last summer. The author gave a summary of the recommendations that he drew from his research:

1. We need to pay attention to the CoRE report if we want to follow a worldviews curriculum, but international sources, such as the European Signposts project, should not be ignored.
2. Pupils need to examine and gain conceptual fluency in different theories of religion.
3. This means that there needs to be a clear definition of what is meant by worldviews, otherwise it is potentially too broad.
4. Teachers need a good understanding of the pedagogical background to RE, which has informed current practice.
5. RE needs to be set in the context of public good and give pupils opportunities for encounter and dialogue.
6. The Big Ideas approach to RE needs to be given positive consideration.

This was followed by a Q&A session, which covered issues of knowledge and disciplines in RE.

The vision of RE presented in this webinar would contribute to learning about diversity, development of a pupil's own worldview and enable critical consideration of alternatives. It should be compatible with Church schools and faith schools and offer the ability to operate without examinations.



countercultural on its own.

A full recording of the discussion can be found on the Culham St Gabriel's **Vimeo Channel**.

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## Regional REHubs

The **regional REHubs project** is pleased to announce FREE training for those interested in helping schools to deliver high-quality RE/R&W/RVE.

The training aims to help participants understand the purpose and context of RE/R&W/RVE in England and Wales and offers top tips for working well with schools by hosting visits or visiting schools.

The training session lasts 1.5 hrs, and sessions are running monthly, for you to select one that fits your schedule.

After training, providers that have signed up to the agreed principles for working with schools will be accredited with the RE Hubs Kitemark. Providers will then be featured on the website to be launched soon.

Upcoming dates:

Monday 20 February 6-7:30pm

Thursday 23 March 2-3:30pm

Tuesday 18 April 9:30-11am

Wednesday 17 May 11-12:30pm

Tuesday 20 June 10-11:30am

To sign up, email **[marketing@regionalrehubs.co.uk](mailto:marketing@regionalrehubs.co.uk)**

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## Items for your next agenda

- Use your **SEF** to design your development plan
- Submit applications for a **Westhill Award**
- Discuss and feedback on the REC resource
- Ask your LA to answer the NASACRE FOI request by 7 February
- Ask your LA about **2021 Census** data and consider whether you need to revise SACRE membership
- Book for **NASACRE Conference** and webinars
- Ask your SACRE Clerk to encourage your teacher members to fill out the Google form: **<https://forms.gle/Gxum6LLBNBgV6iVs5>**

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