

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION (SACRE)

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

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## INTRODUCTION

### FROM THE CHAIR OF SACRE

This has been a disappointing year. It is a near-universal goal for all SACRE members that they are part of an initiative that is making a difference in schools. No-one wants to be giving their time to a venture that is simply treading water.

So hopes were high that the Royal Borough would accept SACRE's proposed 'Plan to Summer 2023' when it was submitted in October 2021. The fruit of extensive consultations over six months, both at SACRE itself and through a task force appointed by SACRE for this purpose, the Plan set out five Focus Areas for the period up to Summer 2023 when the updated Agreed RE Syllabus will be launched.

The Plan proposed essentially a reboot for SACRE. Its overriding objective was to make SACRE more effective. It set out detailed actions, target outcomes and timescales for each of the five focus areas. It drew inspiration from many sources, in particular the shared experience of teachers and SACRE members, but also from the views of other stakeholders, not least Ofsted:

“In religious education (RE), pupils enter into a rich discourse about the religious and non-religious traditions that have shaped Great Britain and the world. RE in primary and secondary schools enables pupils to take their place within a diverse multi-religious and multi-secular society. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It affords pupils both the opportunity to see the religion and non-religion in the world, and the opportunity to make sense of their own place in that world.”

*Ofsted – Research Review on Religious Education, May 2021*

SACRE's 'Plan to Summer 2023' sought to minimise the budgetary implications of SACRE's proposed new way ahead. It assumed that:

- the input from the RE Adviser would increase from 5.5 to 15 days per year (that is, to five days per term)
- an external specialist would be engaged for 5 days per year to help SACRE to support teachers responsible for collective worship to ensure that it is always invitational, inspiring and inclusive
- (to make the most of its budget) SACRE would continue to collaborate with the other Berkshire SACREs on the development of the Agreed Syllabus and other initiatives to deliver new RE resources.

The Plan called for an increase in SACRE's budget from its existing £6,200 to £13,200 for the 2022-23 financial year to enable this higher level of effectiveness. This would more than double the SACRE budget – but it would enable a quadrupling of the number of days of input from specialist advisers, from 5 days per year to 20 days per year.

This appeal for additional funding was not made lightly. SACRE members were naturally aware of the budgetary pressures on all local authorities. With this ongoing financial stress in mind, SACRE had even tried in the past to secure supplementary funding from a range of external sources – though without any success.

It is an unfortunate truth that SACRE has for many years struggled to become more effective in supporting high quality RE teaching, and uplifting collective worship, in the Royal Borough's schools.

From 2014 through to 2017, SACRE invested considerable time in using the NASACRE Self-Evaluation Toolkit for SACREs to probe exhaustively what it was doing and why, and to come up with initiatives that would enable SACRE to become properly and sustainably effective.

Those performance improvement initiatives ran out of road by 2018, by which time it was obvious that SACRE could never be significantly more effective without additional resources. That realisation led finally to SACRE's decision to invest time and effort in the extensive consultation process that created a new vision and the 'Plan to Summer 2023'.

Understandably therefore, the rejection of that Plan was deflating.

I wish the incoming Chair the very best as SACRE renews its search for ways to make a difference in supporting high quality RE teaching and uplifting collective worship. After serving for a decade as SACRE's Chair, perhaps it's high time for a fresh approach!

Michael Gammage  
Group A – Representative for Bahá'í Faith

## OVERVIEW

Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) SACRE has continued to meet four times during the year 2021-22, following the pattern set last year. All but the final meeting of the year were held online and broadcast on YouTube by the Local Authority. The June meeting took place in a school and due to the prevalence of Covid became a hybrid meeting with only the chair, clerk, adviser and two members actually present in the room. Most meetings were quorate, though attendance was variable. This year Group C has had the most challenges with attendance, as the pressure on schools has been quite considerable. There have been further resignations during the course of the year, and vacancies remain in Groups A, B and C.

- The September meeting again tried to put forward an ambitious forward plan, which was fully costed and approved by SACRE members and was felt to be helpful to schools.
- The meeting in December was not quorate and so decisions were deferred to the next meeting. The budget update from the Local Authority suggested that SACRE was unlikely to get the extra funding that had been requested as part of the forward plan, but the LA officer suggested that a more formal proposal should be submitted.
- In March, there was confirmation that the LA had rejected the SACRE proposals and that no further funding would be made available to SACRE.
- The June meeting took place in a school and members received a brief overview of how RE and collective worship are delivered in this context. There were also discussions around latest developments in RE, focusing on the worldviews debate
- There is no ASC sitting at the moment but as the syllabus review is due next year at the latest there has been much discussion about this.

## RE (STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES):

### THE LOCAL AGREED SYLLABUS AND RE

The survey conducted across the Pan-Berkshire area in the early part of the year did not gather a sufficiently large number of responses, particularly in Windsor and Maidenhead. This means that SACRE still does not have much information about the impact of the syllabus on standards of RE. One issue that the survey did highlight was a lack of understanding among teachers of the difference between the Locally agreed Syllabus and a Scheme of Work. The decision was taken to write an article in the SACRE newsletter addressing this item and to talk about it at the network meetings.

### STANDARDS AND MONITORING OF RE

The school that achieved REQM gold last year has also been awarded Excellent in their recent SIAMS inspection. No other SIAMS inspections have been carried out in the borough, and the LA reports that while all schools inspected under Ofsted have maintained their grade there has been no mention of RE or collective worship in reports. Members of the LA attend Ofsted feedback and SACRE has been assured that any mention of RE or collective worship there will be relayed to SACRE.

With RE network meetings continuing online, ascertaining standards in RE has not been effective. Because of the pressure that schools are still facing Covid, the decision was taken not to undertake a website trawl this year, but to plan for that in 22-23.

#### TEACHER TRAINING, MATERIALS AND ADVICE OFFERED

RE Networks, delivered online, continue to be the main training that is offered to schools, though there are discussion underway about expanding the offer.

- The autumn term meeting looked at the issues of decolonising the RE curriculum, using some of the NATRE Anti-racist materials.
- The spring term meeting explored what makes for Good RE, using a range of techniques
- In the summer term the focus was on assessment and progress.

The regular termly SACRE newsletter draws teachers attention to new materials and resources, as well as providing a summary of the network meetings for teachers who are unable to attend.

SACRE has advised the LA that more impact would be had if the RE networks are incorporated into the borough wide training offer, so that teachers see that RE is expected to be taught. The LA have agreed to advertise the sessions alongside their provision and so for 22-23 all the dates have been set and sent to the LA.

The LA has also been advised that where LA officers attend Ofsted feedback, SACRE would appreciate any information shared about RE. SACRE have also asked that where officers are visiting schools, they should feedback to SACRE about any issues or success that they encounter with RE. Working more closely with the LA would enable SACRE to be more effective and to begin to gather more information about standards on RE across the LA.

#### COLLECTIVE WORSHIP (STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES):

##### STANDARDS AND MONITORING OF CW

There has been no monitoring of collective worship and so SACRE has no up-to-date information about standards of collective worship in schools. The teachers on SACRE have shared that in their schools worship has continued largely online, as Covid has continued to impact on schools.

##### DETERMINATIONS

There are currently no determinations in place or in progress. The documents are available on the LA website [here](#).

##### TEACHER TRAINING PROVIDED

SACRE does not currently offer training in collective worship, though the Diocese of Oxford offers training to the Church schools, which could be made available to community schools as well.

The SACRE newsletter frequently contains information about collective worship, along with resources and articles to support teachers.

#### OTHER INFORMATION

SACRE has not been made aware of any withdrawals from collective worship and receives no information from the LA on what LA officers find when they visit schools.

#### ADVICE TO THE LA

No advice has been given to the LA about collective worship, though it was included in the draft proposal that was rejected.

#### LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

- SACRE has again engaged with NASACRE, with members attending the online training events, and the AGM and Conference. The adviser to SACRE is on the NASACRE executive and ensures that briefings are distributed, and information is shared in both directions. NASACRE has been advised that some of its documentation does not satisfy LA accessibility criteria and cannot be published in agenda or in minutes.
- SACRE members have engaged with and advertised the activities of the local inter-faith groups – Windsor and Maidenhead Community Forum (WAMCF). This group has run evening conversations about issues of interest from a variety of faith perspectives.

#### SACRE INVOLVEMENT LOCALLY

- SACRE has not been involved in Governor training
- SACRE has not issued any advice on issues within the community.
- The adviser to SACRE has been involved in Respect and Tolerance training for primary and secondary ITT students within the borough, running an event that brought together a panel of representatives from a range of worldviews to answer questions.
- SACRE has also continued its involvements with the Pan-Berkshire hub and been involved in the production this year of four more films for the [Real People, Real Faith](#) resource. The new films cover Catholic Christianity, Orthodox Judaism, Sunni Islam, and Humanism. The survey that went to Berkshire schools at the beginning of the academic year was produced and analysed by the hub, which has members from all the Berkshire SACREs including RBWM. Discussions are already beginning within the hub about how the syllabus review will be conducted.

- The RE Network meetings are NATRE linked and NATRE resources are used in many of the meetings.

### SACRE'S OWN ARRANGEMENTS (STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES):

SACRE is supported by an experienced clerk who publishes agendas, produces minutes and attends meetings. There is a professional adviser, employed by the Diocese of Oxford who is paid for 5.5 days per year for support to SACRE at a cost of £2,200. There is an LA officer attached to SACRE but there are no formal links to council initiatives, although councillors are often very engaged with the meetings.

#### Membership and attendance

| Name                          | Group                   | 13-09 | 09-12 | 24-03    | 30-06 |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|----------|-------|
| Vacancy                       | Baptist (A)             |       |       |          |       |
| Vacancy                       | Free Church (A)         |       |       |          |       |
| Margaret Dudley               | Methodist (A)           | P     | P     | P        | P     |
| Barbara Meaney                | Roman Catholic (A)      | P     | P     | P        | P     |
| Ila Gongotra                  | Hindu (A)               | A     | A     | P        | A     |
| Saghir Ahmed                  | Islam (A)               | P     |       |          |       |
| Hilary Harris                 | Judaism (A)             | P     |       | A        | A     |
| Ravinder Singh                | Sikh (A)                | A     | P     | A        | P     |
| Chris Sayers                  | Buddhist (A)            | P     | P     | P        | A     |
| Michael Gammage               | Baha'i (A)              | P     | P     | P        | P     |
| Rev Darcey Chesterfield-Terry | Church of England (B)   | A     | P     | P        |       |
| Vacancy                       | Church of England (B)   |       |       |          |       |
| Karen Butler (Vice-Chair)     | Church of England (B)   | P     | P     | P        | P     |
| Maggie Callaghan              | Secondary HT            | P     | A     | A        |       |
| Clare Roberts                 | Primary                 | A     | A     | P        | A     |
| Tom Kingsley-Jones            | Secondary (KS3) (C)     | P     | A     | P        | A     |
| Sarah Bradley                 | Secondary (KS4) (C)     | P     | A     | P        | A     |
| Dai Prendiville               | Secondary               |       |       | P(obs)   | P     |
| Richard Rhodes                | Headteacher Primary (C) | P     | A     | Resigned |       |
| Cllr Donna Stimson            | RBWM (D)                | P     | P     | A        | A     |
| Cllr S Shelim                 | RBWM (D)                | P     | A     | P        | A     |
| Cllr J Sharpe                 | RBWM (D)                | P     | P     | P        | P     |
| Anthony Lewis                 | Humanist (co-opted)     | P     | P     | A        | P     |
| Clive Haines                  | Local Authority Officer | A     | P     | P        | A     |

|              |                      |         |             |         |         |
|--------------|----------------------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|
| Anne Andrews | Professional Advisor | P       | P           | P       | P       |
| Mark Beeley  | Clerk                | P       | P           | P       | P       |
|              |                      | Quorate | Not Quorate | Quorate | Quorate |

The table above shows the current membership and attendance at meetings. The LA have been advised particularly of the importance of recruiting more members to group C; the headteacher association, BASH has been approached, but as yet no replacement for Maggie Callaghan has been proposed. The area deans were approached to nominate new members for Group B with no response. The LA has been asked to make contact with the free churches to find new representatives, but again with no response. This is even more important for 2022-23 as Margaret Dudley (free church) retired in August. No formal training has been given to SACRE members, outside of the NASACRE training programme which has been advertised to all members, with a pre-paid package.

**Finance given to SACRE for its work**

RBWM SACRE is given an annual budget of £6,260, although clerking is paid from a different budget. From this budget SACRE contributes £900 to the hub for filming and preparation for the syllabus review, pays NASACRE subscription, training package and attendance for two delegates at the AGM, pays the adviser and this year supported teachers to attend Strictly RE. Bursaries for other training events were offered, but none taken up.

SACRE proposed the following to the LA following discussion about the FOI that NASACRE had raised and the recommendation that SACREs should receive 2% of CSSB:

| RBWM SACRE                                    | 2021/22 Budget | 2021/22 Actual YTD | 2022/23 Proposed Budget |
|---|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Supplies and Services</b>                  |                |                    |                         |
| NASACRE annual subscription                   |                | 200                | 200                     |
| NASACRE AGM                                   |                | -                  | 300                     |
| CPD support: bursaries for RE conferences etc |                | 160                | 1,500                   |
| RE Teacher Working Groups - expenses          |                | -                  | 300                     |
| <b>RE Adviser (from Diocese)</b>              |                | 4,400              | 7,500                   |
| <b>Collective Worship Adviser</b>             |                | -                  | 2,500                   |
| <b>Pan-Berkshire Hub contribution</b>         |                |                    |                         |
| Agreed Syllabus                               |                | -                  | 900                     |
| Projects                                      |                | 200                | -                       |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | 6,260          | 4,960              | 13,200                  |

**Note:** 2021/22 was not a normal year of course. There were no in-person RE conferences or other training events, so SACRE expenses were minimal. Normal life should hopefully return in 2022/23.

However, the LA was unable to agree to the proposal and a new forward plan will now need to be drawn up. The discrepancy if charge for the adviser over the usual, was that the payment in 2020-21 was overlooked, and so had to be included in 2021-22.



## APPENDICES

- Table of GCSE – short and full, A/S & A Level RS results
- Details on CPD provided to schools
- Any LA/SACRE policy statements on RE or CW
- Development plan tied to funding
- Circulation details for this AR