

Terms of Reference of the West Sussex SACRE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 According to section 390 of the Education Act 1996 each LA must establish a permanent body called a standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE) and should fund and support SACRE in line with the duty to constitute and convene this body and to enable SACRE to carry out its functions.

2. Membership and Voting Rights

- 2.1 Each local education authority (LEA) is required to constitute a standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE). The Education Act 1996 (as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) stipulates in Section 390 the following membership:-
- 2.2 The council shall consist of such groups of persons appointed by the authority as representative members ("representative groups") as are required by sub-section (1.4).
- 2.3 The council may also include co-opted members (that is, persons co-opted as members of the council by members of the council who have not themselves been so co-opted). Co-opted members may take part in all discussions but do not belong to any of the groups and do not have voting rights.
- 2.4 The representative groups required by this sub-section are:-
- (a) a group of persons to represent such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;
 - (b) a group of persons to represent the Church of England;
 - (c) a group of persons to represent such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area; and
 - (d) a group of persons to represent the authority.
- 2.5 The number of representative members appointed to any representative group under sub-section (4)(a) to represent each denomination or religion required to be represented shall, so far as consistent with the efficient discharge of the group's functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area.
- 2.6 On any question to be decided by the council only the representative groups on the council shall be entitled to vote, and each representative shall have a single vote."

- 2.7 Voting within the representative groups shall be governed by the group and any vote will be carried by a simple majority.
- 2.8 Voting by the council shall take place following discussions and votes with in the individual committees. Except on the matter of reviewing the Agreed Syllabus (see below) a matter will be carried by a simple majority. There is no casting vote in the case of a tie and in those circumstances the matter is not carried.

3. **Functions**

- 3.1 Section 391 of the Act (as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) sets out a SACRE's functions as follows:-

- "(1) (a) to advise the local education authority upon such matters connected with:-
- (i) religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which (within the meaning of Part II of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) do not have a religious character, and
 - (ii) the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus in accordance with Schedule 19 to that Act,
- as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit, and
- (b) to carry out the functions conferred on them by Section 394 *[relating to the question as to whether the general requirement for Christian collective worship is not appropriate for a particular school]*.
- (2) The matters referred to in sub-section (1)(a) include, in particular, methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.
- (3) The representative groups on the council required by Section 390(4), other than the group consisting of persons appointed to represent the authority, may at any time require a review of any agreed syllabus for the time being adopted by the authority.
- (4) Each representative group concerned shall have a single vote on the question of whether to require such a review.
- (5) Paragraph 3 of Schedule 31 has effect to require the authority, on receiving written notification of any such requirement, to cause a conference constituted in accordance with that Schedule to be convened for the purpose of reconsidering any agreed syllabus to which the requirement relates.
- (6) The council shall in each year publish a report as to the exercise of their functions and any action taken by representative groups

on the council under sub-section (3) during the last preceding year.

(7) The council's report shall in particular:-

- (a) specify any matters in respect of which the council have given advice to the authority,
- (b) broadly describe the nature of the advice given, and
- (c) where any such matter was not referred to the council by the authority, give the council's reasons for offering advice on that matter.

[(8) and (9) have been repealed]

(10) The council shall send a copy of each report published by them under sub-section (6):-

- (a) in the case of a council for an area in England, to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority;"

4. West Sussex SACRE

- (i) SACRE members shall be appointed for a period of 4 years to coincide with the local government elections.
- (ii) The chairman and vice chairman shall be appointed by the local authority and shall serve for the duration of the SACRE.
- (iii) A quorum shall consist of at least one member from each of the four constituent groups.
- (iv) SACRE shall normally meet three times each year.
- (v) SACRE may appoint Members to Working Parties. The terms of reference will involve exploratory work rather than decisions making . the composition of a Working Party will normally include members for all groups.
- (vi) Co-options to the council can be made by recommendation of the SACRE to the county council.

5. Membership

5.1 Membership of the West Sussex SACRE is as follows:-

Committee A: Christian Denominations and other religious and religious denominations

Roman Catholic	Quaker
Salvation Army	Muslim
United Reformed Church	Hindu
Baptist Union	Baha'i
Methodist	Jewish
	Sikh

Committee B: The Church of England

4 members nominated by the C of E Board of Education

Committee C Associations Representing Teachers

(Comprising 8 teachers' representatives, 2 Primary Headteachers' representatives, 1 Secondary Headteachers' representative, 1 representative from Special Schools and 4 teacher union representatives)

Committee D The Local Education Authority

Up to 8 members representing the county council