

## **West Sussex SACRE's Draft Annual Report 2022/2023**

Welcome to the draft annual report for the West Sussex SACRE, covering the year 2022/2023. The report sets out the matters that have been covered by SACRE during the academic year, plus the advice and support given to schools. It has been my privilege to continue being the Chairman during this time.

The school year saw continued disruption, due to the various restrictions necessary to deal with the on-going Covid situation; and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in education across West Sussex, be they head teachers, teachers, governors, administrators, classroom assistants or parents, for the dedication and determination they have shown to continue to provide an excellent educational experience for all our children and young people.

Thanks to excellent administrative and technical support from West Sussex County Council's Democratic Services, SACRE was able to meet in hybrid form for each of the three agreed meetings throughout the year. Our attendance improved during the year and members became adept at participating in the online meetings, which were broadcast live.

We have had a few changes of personnel in SACRE during the year. A special mention to Charles Gauntlett and Ann Little from Democratic Services, whose advice and support have been invaluable. We welcome Katherine Delamora (Senior Advisor) and Jack Bacon (Clerk) as their replacements. Many thanks to Paul Wagstaff, Assistant Director of Education and Skills (LEA - Local Education Authority) for his continued support and to Karen Hammond, External Consultant.

During our extended November meeting, time was spent familiarising ourselves with and reviewing the NASACRE (National Association of SACREs) Self-Evaluation Form (SEF). A working group was established to produce the SACRE Development Plan and lead on actions from the SEF review. Also, during the year, a number of members have accessed the online training available through NASACRE. We have been working through our Development Plan and have been successful in creating active links between the LEA and SACRE and in beginning to increase member participation. However, we still have considerable work to do to operate effectively in our relationship with schools and in increasing and utilising our members' skills.

My sincere thanks go to all our members and officers for the work that has been accomplished during the year.

I commend this report to all its readers.

Richard Burrett, Chairman of West Sussex SACRE

## Introduction

### SACRE's Statutory Duties

The Education Reform Act 1988 required Local Education Authorities to convene a SACRE consisting of members appointed by the Authority to represent:

- Group A: Christian denominations and other religions
- Group B: Church of England
- Group C: Associations representing teachers
- Group D: Local Education Authority

The main functions of SACRE include:

- Addressing issues relating to RE and Collective Worship in local schools and other educational establishments.
- Developing ways of supporting schools with the delivery of the Local Agreed Syllabus and RE curriculum as well as monitoring this delivery.
- Developing and maintaining links with local and national faith communities.
- Considering applications for determinations from head teachers. This is an application that the school be released from the requirements for Collective Worship to be of a mainly Christian character.
- Producing an annual report of its work.

### Purpose of the Report

The Education Act 1996, Section 391 (6) and (7) requires that each year the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) of each Local Education Authority will 'publish a report as to the exercise of its functions and any action taken by representative groups on the Council during the last preceding year.'

### West Sussex SACRE

SACRE met three times in 2022/2023.

The attendance by Committee, is set out below:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Meeting date - 21 March 2022</b>	<b>Meeting date - 20 June 2022</b>	<b>Meeting date - 21 November 2022</b>	<b>Possible maximum attendances at each meeting</b>
Committee A	8	7	9	13
Committee B	3	4	2	4
Committee C	3	5	4	7
Committee D	7	6	7	8
Co-optees	1	1	0	1
Total Members	21	23	22	33

External Consultant to SACRE	1	1	1	1
Local Authority Officers	2	2	3	3

We have a broad membership that represents the religious diversity within the local community. This is regularly reviewed, and communities are contacted in order to increase their representation when necessary. SACRE members of faith communities visit schools and are involved in individual projects.

Each meeting contains updates from the Local Authority Officers and the External Consultant for SACRE. Through the latter's reports the committee has been appraised of various national updates.

The Committee has also reviewed or discussed:

- The Development Plan
- Local draft GCSE results
- Support and training for schools
- Updates on the Agreed Syllabus
- School Workforce Data (2020)
- Ofsted Research Review Series paper on RE
- Department for Education research into the resourcing of RE
- Still Standing Report
- 2022 RE Report Card
- White Paper on Education
- School web-site review in relation to RE and Collective Worship

SACRE undertook a self-evaluation on 21 November 2022.

SACRE members found this a valuable exercise and led to action points being included in the Development Plan.

Since the COVID pandemic, all meetings have been hybrid, although members are encouraged to attend in person.

**The number of schools within West Sussex are as follows:**

	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Special</b>	<b>Alternative Provision College</b>
Community	86	12	10	2
Foundation	1	1	0	0
Voluntary Controlled	44	1	0	0
Academy	56	17	1	0
Free	3	3	0	0

## **The Local Agreed Syllabus**

The Local Agreed Syllabus was reviewed and updated in 2020 but publication was delayed until 22 April 2021 due to the COVID pandemic. The syllabus is available online for all schools in West Sussex.

## **Standards and monitoring of RE**

SACRE has been unable in the past academic year to actively monitor the use of the Local Agreed Syllabus across the schools in West Sussex due to the COVID pandemic and the additional pressures on schools. This will be a focus for 2023/2024. However, updates have been received from the teacher representation of Group C.

SACRE has received no formal complaints regarding RE provision or quality this year.

## **Collective Worship**

SACRE encourages all schools to comply with their legal duty to provide a daily act of Collective Worship for their pupils. This may take place at any time of day and in class, year group, or whole school settings. West Sussex SACRE believes that acts of collective worship or spiritual reflection should be meaningful and relevant to all those present.

Schools may apply to SACRE for a determination in order to provide Collective Worship of a non-Christian or other form. No schools have done so during this academic year.

There were no complaints registered with the local authority or SACRE in 2022/2023 in respect of collective worship. As in previous years, no determinations were requested by schools.

No work was undertaken to monitor Collective Worship in 2022/2023. Schools were reminded of the legal requirement in the Agreed Syllabus.

## **Links with other bodies**

West Sussex SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). Through the year, SACRE members were informed of developments in RE from NASACRE, several members of SACRE have attended training sessions. One member of SACRE attended the NASACRE conference and reported back to members.

## **WSSC arrangements for SACRE**

During the academic year 2022/2023, the Local Education Authority has financially supported SACRE through the allocation of officers and other resources.

Staffing costs have been covered to provide officers from Democratic Services to fulfil the administrative preparation and clerking of SACRE meetings. Additional officer and technology resource has also been allocated to ensure that SACRE meetings could be held via video conference and live streamed.

The costs of the Professional RE Advisor, an external consultant, are met through Local Authority funds.

An officer in the Local Education Authority's Democratic Services department acts as Clerk to SACRE; advising on governance matters and acting as a link between the Local Education Authority and SACRE.

In addition, a Senior Advisor from Democratic Services provides professional support and advice to SACRE, principally on matters of governance and matters relating to the work of the Council and its Committees.

## **Membership**

### **Committee A – Faith Group Representatives:**

Baha'i – Mrs Meenou Jones  
Baptist – Vacancy  
Free Churches – Rev David Pitkeathly  
Hindu – Mr Ashwin Soni  
Humanists UK – Vacancy  
Jewish – Mrs Barbara Bell  
Methodist – Rev Dawn Carn  
Muslim – Mr Arif Syed  
Quaker – Ms Maria Hock  
Roman Catholic – Mrs Anna Flood  
Salvation Army – Major Mike Warner  
Sikh – Mrs Divinder Kaur Ghundale  
United Reformed Church – Rev Helen Higgin-Botham

### **Committee B - Church of England Representatives**

Mrs Rosie Black  
Mr Andrew Simpson  
Mrs Angela Smith (Vice-Chairman)  
Vacancy

### **Committee C - Teachers of Religious Education**

Rev Chrissie Millwood, The Holy Trinity CofE Secondary School, Crawley  
Ms Helen Elphick – Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School  
Teachers – Vacancy  
National Education Union – Ms Anne Barker  
NASUWT, The Teachers' Union, Mr Ben Cornford  
Two union vacancies

### **Committee D - elected Members of West Sussex County Council**

Cllr Zack Ali  
Cllr Brenda Burgess  
Cllr Richard Burrett (Chairman)  
Cllr Nigel Jupp  
Cllr Kirsty Lord  
Cllr Katie Nagel

Cllr Jacky Pendleton  
Vacancy

### **Co-opted members**

Ms Joanna Tulloch

### **SACRE visits to schools**

The Jewish representative on SACRE (Mrs Barbara Bell) organised a visit to Brighton and Hove Shul on 12 October 2022 led by Rabbi Gabriel, a Shul guide and Mrs Bell. Twelve teachers attended an 'Introduction to Judaism' session.

Evaluation comments:

- Left with positive image of Judaism
- It was interactive, extremely welcoming and allowed participants to reflect on Judaism
- Speakers were knowledgeable
- Good use of resources to inspire and share with staff
- Good response to questions we asked
- The use of different speakers was very effective
- Good links to other religions such as Christianity
- Some practical ideas were shared
- The session was quite inspirational and even made some staff consider their own religious journeys.