



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

Annual Report 2021-22

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Section One: Introduction and the Work of SACRE

Words from the Chair

In this my first Annual Report as Chair, I take great pleasure in thanking the four committee groups which make up the Leeds SACRE. They have volunteered their time to fulfil this significant statutory role for Leeds City Council. In this report, you will see in detail some of the significant outputs achieved by the members as teaching professionals, local councillors and faith groups, including those of no faith, have put in. To monitor our effectiveness as a SACRE, we have initiated questionnaires for both Primary and Secondary Schools to help identify the areas where support may be needed to plug any holes. In addition, being associated with two other SACREs in West Yorkshire, Calderdale and Kirklees, we can offer best practice ideas for schools and the classroom.

As a SACRE, we take our responsibilities seriously and critically to ensure that schools and teachers receive the best syllabus and advice. The Westhill project is an excellent example where we, as a SACRE, have engaged and initiated a classroom resource by making a film in both a Leeds Synagogue and Gurdwara.

Like politics, religion must often navigate firm beliefs. We aim to support and provide advice by signposting resources for RE specialists or non-specialist teaching staff to have ready answers when asked. In a 24-hour rolling news world, we know this is probably a weekly, if not daily, occurrence highlighting the need for religious education and understanding of the subject.

If you know anyone interested in RE or want to be involved with the process, please do not hesitate to contact Leeds SACRE.

Russell Trudgen

Chair of Leeds SACRE 2021 - 22 and Pentecostal representative

Overview

This annual report is prepared by Leeds SACRE. SACRE as a body is required to advise the Local Authority on matters relating to Religious Education and Collective Worship. This report provides a picture of the support given for Religious Education and Collective Worship during 2021-22. The report is a public document which is also sent to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) and the Department for Education.

For further information on the report or on RE and Collective Worship in Leeds, contact Helen Rivers at helen.rivers@leeds.gov.uk or Alastair Ross at alastair.ross@leeds.gov.uk. For information on SACRE please contact the clerk, Michael Oates michael.oates@leeds.gov.uk

Dates and content of meetings

There were four meetings of Leeds SACRE during the year 2021-22, all held via Zoom with the exception of the final meeting in June 2022, which was held at Makkah Mosque, Leeds. Meetings are open to the public and minutes are also available on-line. These meetings were held on 21st September 2021 (AGM), 16th November 2021, 22nd March 2022 and 7th June 2022.

Mark Edon (Humanist representative) stood down as chair at the September AGM, following four years' service. Russell Trudgen (Pentecostal representative) was elected as the new chair. Afsha Hussain (Muslim representative) was elected as vice-chair.

As well as considering the general position of RE and collective worship in the city, SACRE discussed the following issues at its meetings during the year:

- The Local Agreed syllabus – due to be reviewed and revised by 2024;
- Revision of guidance on sensitivity to faith in schools;
- Clarification of funding for Leeds SACRE responsibilities and activities;
- Review of secondary provision for RE, including time allocation;
- Progress on the two films funded by Westhill endowment trust;
- Faith and education project to encourage engagement between faith communities and schools;
- Improving representation on SACRE from those groups currently under-represented;

- Discrimination and prejudice, including discussions about antisemitism, a presentation on Islamophobia awareness, and the promotion of best practice in schools;
- Completion of SACRE self-evaluation
- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) – items of interest or action, including information from NASACRE conference on Ofsted developments.
- Future joint meetings of chairs and vice chairs across West Yorkshire (WYSACRE);

SACRE Priorities for 2021-22

In the development plan for 2021-22, the priorities for SACRE are outlined below:

1. Communication, information and guidance.
 - Produce regular information for schools, including regular updating of intranet for schools and half termly newsletter;
 - Provide updated guidance on key areas: RE, Collective Worship, Celebrating diversity, and nurturing tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
2. Professional development and support
 - Provision of CPD, regional networks and consultancy for primary and secondary schools;
 - Begin the process of reviewing and updating local agreed syllabus for RE;
 - Monitor compliance and provision of RE in secondary schools.
3. Strategy and priorities
 - Widening participation and involvement in SACRE;
 - Further develop the West Yorkshire SACRE Hub;
 - Implement new format for annual report; report to be presented to scrutiny panel.
4. Promoting understanding and tolerance
 - Continuing to develop 'Schools Welcome!' project to encourage visits and visitors to and from faith communities; update and maintain visits directory;
 - Offering free training to faith communities;
 - Complete Westhill funded film project;
 - Produce guidance on faith sensitivities.

Self-evaluation

During the year, Leeds SACRE completed a process of self-evaluation based on the NASACRE template. Arising from this the following areas future development were identified and will be built into the development plan for the next two years.

SACRE

1. Membership and attendance: SACRE needs to ensure there continues to be consistent attendance and needs more teacher representatives. Contacts with partners, such as HE providers, should be developed. It is worth exploring whether a more structured link with MATs is feasible and beneficial
2. Communication: An annual discussion of the report should take place at CYP Scrutiny or similar. Procedures should be put in place so that meaningful contact can be made with and between members outside of SACRE meetings. More opportunities should be found to hear from pupils and teachers.
3. Planning and Strategy: The development plan should be reviewed regularly and be the focus of every SACRE meeting. An annual questionnaire should also be sent to all schools to elicit relevant information and to enquire about what support might be needed.

Religious Education

1. Information: An annual questionnaire should be used to enquire about RE and other matters. Arrangements should be made to receive and analyse data from public examinations. Together with reviewing Ofsted reports this information should be used to focus on appropriate support and intervention.
2. Issues with communication need to be resolved and alternative routes such as direct mailing explored

Local Agreed Syllabus

1. Planning for the review and revision of the agreed syllabus, due by 2024, should start in September 2022. This should fully involve teachers, the maintained and academy sector, and faith representatives. It should recognise and include latest guidance, research and developments and should be in partnership with other authorities in West Yorkshire.

Collective Worship

1. The pandemic has narrowed the scope of Collective Worship and SACRE now needs to raise its profile and offer some review or professional development to schools.
2. Although there are no current determinations in Leeds schools, there needs to be a process for considering these should one arise. SACRE members need some training and briefing about determinations

Community Cohesion

1. Review and reflect on census information on faith, due in autumn 2022, and discuss how this might affect SACRE's work.
2. Develop further links with the Communities team and others to ensure SACRE is fully engaged with wider city issues.

Further details of the self-evaluation or the development plan can be obtained via the clerk to SACRE.

Meetings for 2022-23

SACRE meetings for 2022-2023 have been provisionally arranged for these dates: 22nd September 2022, 7th December 2022, 20th March 2023 and 6th June 2023. For more information contact the clerk, Michael Oates michael.oates@leeds.gov.uk

Section Two: Statutory Responsibilities: Religious Education

The Local Agreed Syllabus

The Local Agreed syllabus, 'Believing and Belonging', is the statutory curriculum for all maintained schools in the city. This syllabus is now shared with Bradford, as well as Kirklees and Calderdale. Other academies and free schools must teach RE according to the requirements of their trust deed or funding agreement. Although SACREs and local authorities do not have any responsibility or authority for their curriculum, it welcomes use of these resources by all local schools. Results from the recent SACRE survey of secondary RE provision in Leeds demonstrated that the great majority of secondary academies have adopted the local agreed syllabus.

The agreed syllabus is due to be reviewed and updated by 2024. The process for this review will be introduced at the SACRE meeting in September 2022 and a timeline for completion will be put in place. Following the recent completion of the SACRE self-evaluation (SEF), it was agreed that 'Section 3: The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus' will be used as a framework for the syllabus review.

Standards and Monitoring

SACRE enquiry

In November 2021, Leeds SACRE asked secondary schools to complete a brief survey about the provision of RE. Most schools replied (34/42) and those who did not respond have been followed up.

The main general findings and issues from the survey were:

- Most schools use the local agreed syllabus
- Most schools make adequate time and curriculum provision at KS3.
- Only about 1/3 of responding schools had adequate provision for RE at Key Stage 4.
- A few schools seemed to be unaware of the requirements to follow a syllabus, citing the 'national curriculum' or 'we are an academy'

The survey has informed SACRE of the needs of secondary schools and enabled targeted support and action. All schools received an individual and specific response to their entry. In

some cases, schools have been offered some tailored support which has made a real difference to their RE provision. At least three secondary schools have increased their provision for RE at key stages 3 and 4.

A similar survey for primary schools was sent out towards the end of the summer term 2022 and will be followed up in the coming year.

Examination results

In 2022, GCSEs took place for the first time since 2019. Due to the pandemic, external assessments were cancelled in 2020 and 2021 and no school headline measures were published. Instead, grades were awarded based on centre and teacher assessment.

Despite a return to external examination, accountability measures at an institution and city level should be considered with some caution this year because the impact of the pandemic on schools and pupils differed from one institution to another. In addition, the methodology which was used to calculate performance measures at KS4 was markedly different this year.

Having said that, outcomes for Leeds were very positive. In the progress 8 measure, which looks at the progress pupils make from the end of their primary education to the end of their compulsory school education aged 16 placed Leeds as the 34th highest performing authority nationally, out of a total of 151.

This positive picture was replicated in results for GCSE Religious Studies. The average point score for the 1770 pupils who took this qualification was 5.5, compared to the national figure of 5.3. 79% of pupils gained a grade 4 or above, 3% higher than the national figure and 69% gained a grade 5. 37% gained a grade 7 or above, which is the equivalent of an old A grade.

In the past girls have outperformed boys by some measure. This is still the case but the gaps appear smaller. 75% of boys in Leeds taking GCSE RE gained a grade 4 or above compared to 82% of girls. 67% of pupils who receive free school means, or have received them in the past 6 years, gained a grade 4 or above. There is little overall difference in the average point score for pupils with English as a second language and pupils with English as a first language.

The progress 8 figure for RE is very high at +0.38. This is equivalent to one in three pupils in Leeds being awarded one grade higher than their peers nationally with the same starting point.

Professional development and support for schools

General support

During the year this professional support continued through two consultants, Alastair Ross (SACRE and secondary schools) and Helen Rivers (primary schools, training and general RE enquiries), who are contracted through Pennine Learning, a small local company specialising in RE and community cohesion. Together the two consultants provide forty days support per year in total, though this is arranged as flexibly as possible to facilitate effective working with schools and others. They also support SACREs and RE in Calderdale and Kirklees, enabling appropriate collaboration and partnership. Jake Womack has recently joined the team and will be helping to facilitate the secondary RE network for Leeds, Kirklees and Calderdale.

Through the Learning Service and the RE consultants, support has been available to schools, and used by teachers, in a number of ways, including:

- Maintenance of the syllabus and its schemes of work, including prompt response to queries or difficulties;
- Consultancy over specific or general RE issues, including advice about withdrawal from RE;
- Availability by phone, email or virtual meetings;
- Support for schools wishing to develop and improve RE following Ofsted inspections.

Training

This year courses have included a termly primary RE network meeting, a day course for new RE coordinators and two half-day courses for experienced RE subject leaders.

A secondary Subject Leaders Development Meeting (SLDM) is organised by the Learning Partnership and organised by leading teachers Caroline Dodgeon from Abbey Grange CE Academy and Jake Womack from Pennine Learning. SLDMs took place each term, virtually. In the summer term the SLDM took the form of a full day of training and networking for Secondary RE teachers at Abbey Grange Academy Leeds. The secondary RE network is

organised in partnership with Kirklees and Calderdale RE networks and open to teachers from all three local authorities.

A successful series of five twilight webinars on subject knowledge of world faiths took place over the academic year and included guests from faith communities. These were held in cooperation with partner local authorities. In the coming year a full range of CPD and consultancy will be available through Leeds for Learning.

RE Reviews and SACRE RE Award

The review and award continue to be available on line and face to face. A small number of schools have worked with a consultant to review their RE provision using the award framework. A 'Deep Dive' in Religious Education is also offered to schools. This half-day session focuses on a review of curriculum provision, looking at its scope, rigour and sequencing. These opportunities are promoted via RE networks and on Leeds for Learning.



Other information

A range of guidance continues to be available to Leeds schools on a wide range of related areas, including:

- RE Policy
- Withdrawal from RE
- Collective Worship
- Celebrating Diversity
- Engaging with faith communities

During the year Leeds SACRE has worked with partners in Calderdale, Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside to produce advice on sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools. This will be signed off in the autumn of 2022 and be available to schools as practical information and support to school leaders.

In addition, a half termly newsletter and index of resources is available to all schools, together with a directory of possible visits and visitors.

Section Three: Statutory Responsibilities: Collective Worship

Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship

Guidance is offered to schools and Ofsted reports are scrutinised in order to keep up to date with current issues and concerns. It has been difficult for schools to maintain an effective programme of collective worship during the pandemic and one of SACRE's key priorities in the coming year will be to remind, facilitate and support schools. This will include offering light-touch review conversations with practical suggestions.

Complaints and determinations

There were no complaints made during the year to SACRE about Collective Worship. There are no determinations to vary statutory requirements in any maintained school in Leeds. Responsibility for determinations in English academies and free schools rest with the Schools Funding Agency. The Determination Process is to be reviewed by Leeds SACRE in the coming year.

Professional development and support for schools

Through the consultant, SACRE is always ready to advise or support schools on request. It has been noted that some SACRE members are well-placed to support collective worship in schools and opportunities for discussion about this will be included on the agenda in 2022-23. A half-day course on planning for collective worship/ inclusive assemblies will be offered in summer 2023 to aid schools in developing an effective and inspiring programme. It is hoped that SACRE members will become more involved in practical support and monitoring. These questions may be helpful to SACRE members in reflecting on the value and effectiveness of collective worship in school:

1. Collective: How does the assembly celebrate and promote a sense of community within the whole school (or group)?
2. Educational: Is there a clear aim and focus, with appropriate learning? Does it engage and interest pupils and staff?

3. Spiritual: How does the assembly nurture pupils' awareness of their beliefs and values - and those of others (including non-religious beliefs)? How does it develop a sense of the meaning, purpose and value in their lives?
4. Reflective: Is there space and opportunity for thoughtful reflection, in the assembly or as a follow up? If prayers are used do these allow for different approaches and responses?
5. Inclusive: How does the assembly programme develop understanding of different perspectives and cultures? How does it promote values of tolerance, diversity and equality?
6. Responsive: How did pupils respond and participate?

Other information

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their children from collective worship. Guidance on good practice and protocols for withdrawal is available to schools; consultants are available if further support is needed. SACRE recognises parents' legal rights but hopes all children will be enabled to receive stimulating and balanced RE as part of their entitlement to a broad curriculum. Guidance is also provided to schools in fulfilling statutory obligations over collective worship and promoting good SMSC development.

Section Four: Links with other organisations

SACRE has active links with the following organisations:

- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)
- West Yorkshire SACREs (WYSACRE)
- The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC)
- Local faith organisations and interfaith groups
- Leeds for Learning
- The School Improvement Service
- RE Today Services
- And other local organisations and charities such as Equilibria

Section Five: Other areas of involvement

Welcoming Schools

Visits to local places of worship and links with faith communities continue to be promoted to fulfil our obligation to promote fundamental values of respect and tolerance. As in-person visits resume following the pandemic, we want to broaden pupils' experience and perspectives of the faith communities in Leeds. A directory of faith visits and visitors is regularly updated. It includes individuals from faith communities who are willing to come into school and bring some direct engagement and an opportunity for dialogue. It also includes some general information about places and organisations.

In the Spring term 2022, Leeds primary schools were invited to participate in an online diversity conference about 'Spring Celebrations'. Following some subject content and creative activities, pupils were given the opportunity to meet representatives from local faith communities and to ask questions in an online session. It is anticipated that 'virtual' sessions will continue to be offered and promoted alongside in-person visits and events.



Free training is offered to faith communities in order to inform them of the requirements of the Leeds RE Syllabus, and to support them in hosting visits from schools. Training was offered online for most of the year, but has now resumed in-person at venues in Leeds and Kirklees. Some SACRE members have participated in training and this project continues to build up worthwhile links between schools and faith communities. Local organisations such as Concord Interfaith Fellowship and Leeds Interfaith are supportive in publicising and supporting training events.

An audit tool and consultancy support is available for promoting tolerance and understanding of different faiths in schools. This has been promoted via Leeds for Learning and in RE networks.

Westhill Project

Leeds SACRE has been awarded a Westhill grant to support Religious Education in the local area. Alongside some additional funding from Kirklees and Calderdale SACREs, this grant is funding the production of two professionally-produced films to introduce young people to a

synagogue and a gurdwara in Leeds. Interviews with representatives from the two faith communities have been filmed and edited along with footage of worship and activity in the places of worship themselves. The films will be offered to schools, alongside supporting materials and the option of a live session online or in person with representatives of the faith community.

Faith sensitivities

During the year Leeds SACRE has worked with partners in Calderdale, Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside to produce advice on sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools. This will be signed off in the autumn of 2022 and be available to schools as practical information and support to school leaders.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education

Last year SACRE members and local authority advisers felt it would be helpful to offer support to teachers and schools as they began to follow statutory guidance on teaching Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). Although SACRE is not responsible for RSHE, they recognise that this is a sensitive area, especially at the interface between beliefs, sex and relationships. 'Voices and Viewpoints' aims to offer a range of viewpoints from people of faith about the specific areas covered in the RSHE curriculum and to support teachers. It also aims to reassure parents that faith perspectives are recognised and to signpost appropriate sources of guidance.

Section Six: Leeds SACRE arrangements

Leeds City Council funds the operation of SACRE by contracting its consultants, providing a clerk and supporting its work through links with senior education officers.

SACRE membership includes representatives from all four constituent committees.

Committee A	Faith communities except for the Church of England
Committee B	Anglican representatives
Committee C	Teachers and schools
Committee D	Leeds City Council

Membership for 2021-2 was as follows:

Buddhist	A	Chris Smart
Hindu	A	Saroj Chauhan
Jewish	A	Gail Taylor
Muslim	A	Afsha Hussein
<i>Muslim</i>	A	Shazia Mahmood
Sikh	A	Harvinder Singh
Humanist	A	Ian Harris
<i>Bah'ai</i>	A	<i>Vacancy</i>
Christian denominations (Methodist)	A	Ruth Barlow
Christian denominations (Orthodox)	A	Vacancy
Christian denominations (RC)	A	Nessa Nedd
Christian denominations (Pentecostal)	A	Russell Trudgen
Christian denominations (Quaker)	A	Pauline Leonard
Christian denominations	A	Vacancy
Christian denominations	A	Vacancy
Christian denominations	A	Vacancy
Church of England	B	Denise Brogden
Church of England	B	Ann Nicholl
Church of England	B	Vacancy
Church of England	B	Vacancy
Church of England	B	Vacancy
Teachers associations	C	Leanne Ward
Teachers associations	C	Lisa Walsh

Teachers associations	C	Elizabeth Halfpenny
Teachers associations	C	Vacancy
Teachers associations	C	Vacancy
Local authority	D	Cllr Ryk Downes
Local authority	D	Cllr Zara Hussain
Local authority	D	Cllr Andrew Scopes
Local authority	D	Cllr -
Local authority	D	Vacancy
Coopted	Z	Available
Coopted	Z	Available
Coopted	Z	available

SACRE needs to ensure there continues to be consistent attendance and needs more teacher representatives. Contacts with partners, such as HE providers, should be developed. It is worth exploring whether a more structured link with MATs is feasible and beneficial

Training is provided by NASACRE and offered to SACRE members, though better induction is needed locally.

Section Seven: Advice to the Local authority

The following advice is given by SACRE to the local authority:

1. To review the funding of SACRE to ensure it is in line with national recommendations and good practice;
2. To review the membership of SACRE to ensure it reflects the breadth and diversity of the city in terms of faiths and beliefs.
3. To ensure SACRE's annual report is considered carefully by the Scrutiny Panel of the Council and any of its content noted.
4. To begin the review of the local agreed RE syllabus in collaboration with neighbouring West Yorkshire SACREs.
5. To consider how a network for teachers of RE could be provided at no or very low cost in view of the issues of sensitivity and confidence.

No appendices are attached to this report; all the relevant information is contained within the main body. However, any further information can be requested via the clerk, Michael Oates michael.oates@leeds.gov.uk



This annual report is prepared for Leeds Standing Advisory Council on RE (SACRE) as part of its statutory responsibility. For further information on the report or on RE and Collective Worship in Leeds, please contact Helen Rivers at helen.rivers@leeds.gov.uk

