



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

**Annual Report 2022-23**

## Table of contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Section One: Introduction and the Work of SACRE  | 3  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Words from the Chair</li><li>• Overview</li><li>• Dates and content of meetings</li><li>• Priorities for 2022-23</li><li>• Self-evaluation</li><li>• Dates for 2023-24</li></ul> |    |
| Section Two: Statutory Responsibilities: Religious Education   | 8  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local agreed syllabus</li><li>• Standards and monitoring</li><li>• Professional development and support</li><li>• Other information</li></ul>                                    |    |
| Section Three: Statutory Responsibilities: Collective Worship  | 13 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standards and monitoring</li><li>• Complaints and determinations</li><li>• Professional development and support</li><li>• Other information</li></ul>                            |    |
| Section Four: Links with other organisations   | 15 |
| Section Five: Other areas of SACRE involvement   | 16 |
| Section Six: Leeds SACRE arrangements  | 18 |
| Section Seven: Advice to the Local Authority   | 20 |

# Section One: Introduction and the Work of SACRE

## Words from the Chair

**We are LEEDS!** This year has been a significant one for Leeds SACRE, and like our local football chant, we are proud to say we are SACRE!

**We Question:** As a SACRE team, we question by monitoring RE provision in schools, encouraging critical thinking on the subject. We question the effectiveness of RE taught in both Primary and Secondary schools. We do this not only by asking how we can support those schools who ask for help but also by reviewing compliance through online digital surveys.

**We are out and about:** We hold our four meetings around the city at different venues, including this last year, the Hindu Mandir in Headingley, Etz Chaim Synagogue in Moortown, Carr Manor High School and Moor Allerton Hall Primary School at Roundhay. We have not only been made to feel welcome by both the faith groups and the schools but also helped forge an understanding of what we do.

**We are connected:** Through being connected to other SACREs in the West Yorkshire region, we have been able to continue to share our learning and best practices with each other. This, in turn, has added to our SACRE's collective knowledge to assist in teaching RE.

In the coming year, our SACRE members will be focusing on Collective Worship. We will be doing this by visiting schools both Primary and Secondary around the city to see what is being achieved and how it is delivered to pupils.

And finally, this coming year will see the launch of our new RE syllabus which builds on much of what has gone before but with an emphasis on 'big ideas' to be included in RE lessons.

Russell Trudgen

Chair of Leeds SACRE 2022 - 23 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 2022-23. 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](mailto:helen.rivers@leeds.gov.uk)

For information on SACRE please contact the clerk, Michael Oates [michael.oates@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:michael.oates@leeds.gov.uk)

## Dates and content of meetings

There were four meetings of Leeds SACRE during the year 2022-23, all held in person at the following times and places:

September 22 2022 (AGM) - Hindu Mandir, Headingley

December 7 2022 - Moor Allerton Hall Primary School, Roundhay

March 13 2023 - Etz Chaim Synagogue, Harrogate Rd.

June 6 2023 - Carr Manor Community School

Meetings are open to the public and minutes are also available on-line via Leeds for Learning RE and SACRE resource page.

At the September 2022 AGM, Russell Trudgen (Pentecostal representative) was re-elected as the chair. Afsha Hussain (Muslim representative) was re-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 academic year 2022 - 23:

- The Local Agreed syllabus review (September 2024); joint WYSACRE meetings have agreed to follow 'Big Ideas'
- Future joint meetings of chairs and vice chairs across West Yorkshire (WYSACRE);
- Guidance on sensitivity to faith in schools approved Sept 22; 'Sharing the Journey'
- Continued clarification of funding for Leeds SACRE responsibilities and activities;

- Review of primary provision for RE, including time allocation, RE visits and CPD.
- Completion and launch of the two films funded by Westhill endowment trust;
- Improving representation on SACRE from those groups currently under-represented – focus on recruiting teacher reps and CE reps.
- Roles of SACRE members; working party for completion of SACRE self-evaluation
- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) – items of interest or action, including information from NASACRE conference on the role and impact of SACREs
- Ofsted reports, including feedback from Deep Dives in RE and issues around SMSC
- Training and induction for SACRE members training
- Collective worship – guidance reviewed and updated.

### **SACRE Priorities for 2022-23**

In the development plan for 2022-23, the priorities for SACRE were:

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 SACREs joint working;
  - 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 and priorities for 2023-24

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 year.

### SACRE

1. Membership and attendance: SACRE needs to ensure there continues to be consistent attendance from all faith groups and teachers. Regular attendance by local councillors needs to be prioritised. Vacancies for faith groups to be filled.
2. 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
3. Communication: An annual discussion of the report will continue to 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 as well as teachers.
4. Planning and Strategy: The development plan should be reviewed regularly and be the focus of every SACRE meeting. An annual questionnaire will 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 will be used to enquire about RE and other matters, alongside other ways of collecting information such as via primary and secondary RE networks. SACRE will continue 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, RE networks and more focused advertising need to be explored.

### Local Agreed Syllabus

1. Planning for the review and revision of the agreed syllabus, due by 2024, started in September 2022. This fully involves teachers, the maintained and academy sector,

and faith representatives. The new syllabus recognises and include latest guidance, research and developments; it will be based around 'Big Ideas'. The review is taking place in partnership with other authorities in West Yorkshire (Calderdale, Kirklees and Bradford.)

2. Agreed syllabus conference to take place in March 2024; Syllabus to be used by schools from September 2024.

#### Collective Worship

1. SACRE members should continue to visit local schools to discover how Collective worship is planned and delivered. This will raise its profile and enable SACRE to offer 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. Continue to reflect on census information on faith, (published in November 2022) and use this to inform SACRE's work in the wider community.
2. Develop further links with the Communities team and others to ensure SACRE is fully engaged with wider city issues.
3. Promote and develop the synagogue and gurdwara films (Westhill-funded) and explore future similar projects.

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

### **Meetings for 2023-24**

SACRE meetings for 2023-2024 have been provisionally arranged for these dates: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (AGM), 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (Joint Local Agreed Syllabus Conference) and 24<sup>h</sup> June 2024. For more information contact the clerk, Michael Oates [michael.oates@leeds.gov.uk](mailto: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 shared with Bradford, 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 SACRE surveys of RE provision in Leeds demonstrate that the majority of secondary academies and many primary academies have adopted the local agreed syllabus.

The agreed syllabus is due to be reviewed and updated by 2024. The process for this review was introduced at the SACRE meeting in September 2022 and there is a timeline for completion. The framework for the syllabus review is based on 'Section 3 of the SACRE self-evaluation (SEF): 'The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus'.

### **Standards and Monitoring**

#### **SACRE enquiry**

##### **Primary Survey results**

In November 2022, Leeds SACRE asked primary schools to complete a brief survey about the provision of RE. The Questionnaire was circulated via Leeds for learning, with follow-up reminders via networks, newsletters and headteacher briefings. Just over 40 schools replied (out of 222).

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 (34/42)
- Most schools teach RE as a discrete subject; some make topic links where appropriate.
- Many schools use HLTAs to teach some or all RE (13/42)



The survey has informed SACRE of the needs of primary schools and enabled targeted support and action. All those who responded have been followed up with offers of support and a reminder of the CPD and curriculum resources available for teaching RE. Eight schools were followed up with an individual letter reminding them of their responsibilities regarding the teaching of RE and with the offer of tailored support. One of these schools has now joined the primary RE network.

A SACRE working party has now been formed in order to undertake regular surveys of primary and secondary provision for RE. It is anticipated that annual surveys of both phases will be used to inform SACRE of school priorities and needs.

### **Examination results**

In 2023, there was a return to post pandemic grading (with some protections) and it is worth noting that GCSE outcomes may have still been affected by the ongoing uneven impacts of the pandemic on schools, colleges and pupils. The DfE have therefore advised that the most meaningful comparison for the year's measures is with the 2019 results, as it is expected that performance in 2023 will generally be lower than in 2022.

Having said that, outcomes for Leeds were very positive. 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, is 0.12 in Leeds; this means pupils in Leeds have made greater than average progress compared to pupils nationally. This placed Leeds as equal 37th out of 152 local authorities (a slight fall of four places from 2022) and in quartile Band B for performance.

This positive picture was replicated in results for GCSE Religious Studies. The number of pupils taking GCSE RE increased with over 400 more entries compared with last year. The average point score for the 2176 pupils who took this qualification was 5.3, compared to the national figure of 5.1. 75% of pupils gained a grade 4 or above, 4% higher than the national figure and 65% gained a grade 5. 32% 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. The gender gap has widened since last year with 69% of boys in Leeds taking GCSE RE gaining a grade 4 or above in 2023, compared to 80% of girls. 65% of pupils who receive free school meals, 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 +0.33. 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 (SACRE, primary schools, training and general RE enquiries), who are contracted through Pennine Learning, a small local company specialising in RE and community cohesion. Pennine Learning also supports SACREs and RE in Calderdale and Kirklees, enabling appropriate collaboration and partnership.

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. In addition, Jake Womack has helped Caroline Dodgeon to facilitate the secondary RE network for Leeds, Kirklees and Calderdale.

Alastair Ross is stepping back from his day-to-day work. Helen will take responsibility for Leeds SACRE, primary RE support and general RE enquiries. Alastair will continue to support the secondary network and will be available for consultancy and support where needed.

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.
- Support for schools wishing to prepare for an Ofsted 'deep dive' in RE.

## **Training**

This year courses have included a termly primary RE network meeting, a day course for new RE coordinators and a day course for RE subject leaders to explore the teaching of Islam. The Islam course was facilitated by Equilibria Experience and funded by Pennine Learning so that it could be offered free to teachers; 35 teachers attended.

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 at different locations around West Yorkshire, including 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 is open to teachers from all three local authorities. This joint secondary network has increased in numbers over the year and provides excellent support and networking opportunities for secondary RE teachers. It is planned to increase the offering from 2 half-days and one full day to 2 full days and one half-day in 2023 -24.

A series of seven twilight webinars on subject knowledge of world faiths began in June 2023 and will continue into the 2023/24 academic year. The webinars include guests from local faith communities, following and building on the successful pattern of last year's series. They are promoted and organised in cooperation with partner local authorities and are open to all.

In the coming year a full range of CPD and consultancy will be available through Leeds for Learning. All details are on the RE resource page of Leeds for Learning.

## **RE Reviews**

The RE review continues to be available to schools as a way of evaluating provision in RE and planning for future improvement. A small number of schools have worked with a consultant to review their RE provision using the framework (available on Leeds for Learning). The review will be promoted through RE networks again this year, and it is hoped that some will feel ready to achieve the SACRE RE Merit award for good quality RE.



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
- Sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools
- Question for RE subject leaders (preparation for Deep Dive in RE)

In addition, a half termly newsletter and index of resources is available to all schools, together with a directory of possible visits and visitors. All are available via Leeds for Learning RE resource page.

## **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. One of SACRE's key priorities in the coming year will be to remind, facilitate and support schools in developing collective worship. This will include offering light-touch review conversations with practical suggestions. SACRE members have visited schools to support and to gain insights into collective worship.

### **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 have been included on the agenda in 2022-23.

A half-day course on planning for collective worship/ inclusive assemblies was offered in summer 2023 to aid schools in developing an effective and inspiring programme. A number of SACRE members attended this training in order to help them become more confident in practical support and monitoring.

### **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. We want to broaden pupils' experience and perspectives of the faith communities in Leeds; to this end, 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 direct engagement and an opportunity for dialogue. It also includes general information about places and organisations.

### Online events: Faith@Home

In the Summer term 2023, Leeds primary schools were invited to participate in an online diversity conference focusing on the practice of faith in the home. Following some subject content and creative activities, pupils were given the opportunity to meet representatives from the Christian, Hindu and Jewish faith communities and to ask questions in an online session. These 'virtual' sessions will continue to be offered and promoted alongside in-person visits and events in the coming year.



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 has been offered at venues in Leeds and Kirklees. 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 is available, along with consultancy support for promoting tolerance and understanding of different faiths in schools. This is available on Leeds for Learning and is promoted via RE networks.

### Westhill Project

Leeds SACRE has been awarded a Westhill grant to fund 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 are included, along with footage of worship and activity in the places of worship themselves. These films were completed in summer 2023 and are freely available to schools locally and nationally.

Leeds SACRE is grateful to Westhill, and to Kirklees and Calderdale SACREs for funding the production of these films. The completion of the films was celebrated with a launch event in Leeds in June 2023, attended by members of local faith communities, SACRE members and representatives from Kirklees and Calderdale councils. Unfortunately, no Leeds councillors were available to attend this event.

### **Faith sensitivities**

Leeds SACRE has worked with partners in Calderdale, Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside to produce advice on sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools. 'Sharing the Journey' was signed off in autumn 2022 and is available to schools via Leeds for Learning as practical information and support to school leaders. It is circulated to all Leeds schools twice a year as a reminder of the support available for sensitive issues.

## 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 2022-3 was as follows:

|                                       |   |                 |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Buddhist                              | A | Chris Smart     |
| Hindu                                 | A | Saroj Chauhan   |
| Jewish                                | A | Gail Taylor     |
| Muslim                                | A | Afsha Hussain   |
| <i>Muslim</i>                         | A | Shazia Mahmood  |
| Sikh                                  | A | Vacant          |
| 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 | Diane Brodowska |
| 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 | Ben Cordy       |
| Church of England                     | B | Vacancy         |
| Church of England                     | B | Vacancy         |
| Teachers associations                 | C | Mel Robinson    |
| Teachers associations                 | C | Sameena Abbas   |

|                       |   |                     |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------|
| Teachers associations | C | Elizabeth Halfpenny |
| Teachers associations | C | Salma Begum         |
| 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 Sam Firth      |
| Local authority       | D | Vacancy             |
| Coopted               | Z | Available           |
| Coopted               | Z | Available           |
| Coopted               | Z | available           |

SACRE needs to ensure that attendance continues to be consistent by local councillors and faith groups. Representation from the Church of England and teacher associations has increased through the year. There are a number of vacancies in group A. Local authority representatives need to attend more regularly.

Contacts with partners, such as HE providers, should be developed. Leeds SACRE is exploring a more structured link with MATs; this is on the list of priorities for 2023/24.

Training is provided by NASACRE and offered to SACRE members, though better induction is needed locally. Induction procedures for SACRE are included in the priorities list for 2023/24.

## 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. The DfE recommends that local authorities allocate 2% of Central School Services Block (CSSB) grant to SACRE. At present less than 0.5% is allocated and this limits the work of SACRE in fulfilling its statutory duties. We urge the council to explore how they fulfil their obligations;
2. To ensure that subject leader networks for teachers of RE are provided at no or very low cost in view of the issues of sensitivity and confidence. Training and support will be especially important once the new syllabus is in place;
3. To review the membership of SACRE annually to ensure it reflects the breadth and diversity of the city in terms of faiths and beliefs; To ensure the designated local councillors attend SACRE meetings regularly;
4. To ensure SACRE's annual report is considered carefully by the Scrutiny Panel of the Council and its content noted.
5. To produce a new local agreed syllabus for September 2024 in collaboration with neighbouring West Yorkshire SACREs. To provide training and support in order to implement this local agreed RE syllabus in schools across Leeds.
6. To note the analysis of GCSE results in Religious Education and to review arrangements for the teaching of RE at Key Stage 4 to non-exam classes.

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](mailto: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](mailto:helen.rivers@leeds.gov.uk)

