

Sheffield SACRE Annual Report 2023-24

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Words from the Chair

As I reflect on the past year, as Chair of SACRE, having started this role in September 2023, I am proud of what we have achieved together and aware of the challenges that we still face.

This year has been difficult for our communities, with civil disturbances, showing how important it is to build understanding, respect, and open communication between people from all backgrounds.

The spread of misinformation, especially on social media, has made it even more vital to help young people think critically and see the world with informed and open minds. Religious Education has a unique role to play in this. It encourages young people to understand and respect others, to be empathetic, and to value diversity. These are the qualities that can bring people together and help create a stronger, more connected society.

As we reflect on the past year's work, let us celebrate the difference RE makes in shaping young minds, building bridges between communities, and inspiring a future where respect, knowledge, and unity are at the heart of everything we do

Pat Butterell
Chair of SACRE

RE Results 2023-2024

GCSE

Percentage of cohort entered for GCSE					
No	%	%	No	%	%
Sheffield		National		National	
Boys		Boys		Girls	
(801)	25.6%		(884)	29.7%	37.0%

Percentage of those entered achieving grades 4+					
Sheffield		National		National	
Boys		Girls		Total	
58.2%	66.0%	70.4%	77.1%	64.6%	72.0%

AS Levels

% Achieved grades A-C					
Sheffield		National		National	
Boys		Girls		Total	
	57.3%		67.5%	(1)100%	64.4%

A Levels

% Achieved grades A*-C					
Sheffield		National		National	
Boys		Girls		Total	
	76.2%		78.6%	(94)79.8%	77.9%

() Figures in brackets denote the overall number of entries

Meetings 2023-24

Two meetings, during this academic year, were held remotely, one meeting was held face to face.

The three meetings were held in; November 2023, February 2024 and June 2024. There was a fluctuation in attendance throughout the year.

The Chair to SACRE was Pat Butterell, from Sheffield LA.

Clerking support was provided by Debbie Royles from Sheffield LA.

Attendance at these meetings was recorded as follows:

November 2023

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Stephen Betts	Learn Sheffield	Debbie Royles	SACRE Clerk
Heather Bower	Secondary Teaching	Helen Sheehan	Sheffield Hallam
Michael Heap	Co-opted - Sheffield Humanist Society	Srivati Skelton	Buddhist
Chris Holder	Primary Headteacher	Alistair Stevenson	Church of England
Lisa McCalla	Teaching - (Primary/Secondary)	Fiona Walton	Church of England
Greg Nettleship	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	Cllr Cliff Woodcraft (Fulwood)	Liberal Democrat Councillor

February 2024

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Stephen Betts	Learn Sheffield	Debbie Royles	SACRE Clerk
Heather Bower	Secondary Teaching	Helen Sheehan	Sheffield Hallam
Michael Heap	Co-opted - Sheffield Humanist Society	Fiona Walton	Church of England
Chris Holder (from 18.15)	Primary Headteacher	Katherine Wedell	To be co-opted
Greg Nettleship	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	Cllr Cliff Woodcraft (Fulwood)	Liberal Democrat Councillor
Ellen Co-field	Primary Teaching		

June 2024

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Dr V Patel	Hindu	Michael Heap	Co-opted - Sheffield Humanist Society
Greg Nettleship	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	Katherine Wedell	To be co-opted
Fiona Walton	Church of England	Srivati Skelton	Buddhist
Helen Sheehan	Sheffield Hallam	Debbie Royles	SACRE Clerk
Chris Holder	Primary Headteacher		

The agendas for the meetings focussed on the following areas:

- Agreed Syllabus Updates
- Annual Report/Development Plan
- Monitoring of RE provision in schools
- CPD
- Curriculum Planning – Short/Medium/Long Term
- Local & national updates
- Validated RE results
- RE Resources
- Collective Worship
- National Content Standard

Religious Education (Statutory responsibilities)

Sheffield Agreed Syllabus 2024-2029 (available [here](#))

The new Agreed Syllabus was formally launched on 31 October 2023 at Sheffield Cathedral, where 81 schools attended the event, hosted by RE Today.

Additional resources, from RE Today, have been made available to settings to purchase. The launch of the new syllabus was also supported by the RE networks that are coordinated by Learn Sheffield to support RE Coordinators.

Standards and monitoring of RE

Learn Sheffield have continued to provide a report to SACRE in order to support two aspects of SACRE monitoring of RE provision in schools:

- Review of comments relating to RE in Ofsted reports
- Curriculum content through review of RE curriculum information published on a sample of school websites

Learn Sheffield have reviewed the reports of all Sheffield settings that have been inspected in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years. Their report includes the name and sector of each school along with a record of any Ofsted reports comments relating to RE and a link to their online curriculum information about RE. This interim document is designed to support discussions and enable colleagues to sample school websites themselves, using the group of schools who have been inspected as the sample group.

Across the last two years, comments specific to RE were found in 36 of 92 published reports (33%). 9 of these were faith schools, 5 of which did receive a comment. This reflects the relatively low priority given to RE in current inspections.

Ofsted report comments tend to focus on pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures, and wider personal development matters such as respect for, and tolerance of, other faiths and cultures.

The curriculum content relating to RE published on a sample of school websites was also reviewed. The sample consisted of 30 school websites. Points of interest to note are shared below:

- The level of detail in published information about RE curriculums varied quite widely, from almost nothing other than the appearance of 'RE' in a list of taught curriculum subjects, to overviews/'roadmaps', to detailed half-termly plans spanning entire key stages.
- In secondary school information, KS4 content largely references the relevant GCSE RE examination awarding body specifications, and less on the 'core' KS4 curriculum.
- In almost all cases, faith-based primary schools made explicit reference to the RE curriculum being that of the relevant denomination and diocese.

- In 3 cases (2 of them faith schools), websites made explicit reference to the RE curriculum as being based/partly based on a commercially available curriculum, Discovery RE (now Jigsaw RE).
- Reference to the SACRE Sheffield Agreed Syllabus could only be found in one of the 10 faith schools, and in 8 non-faith schools (7 primary and 1 secondary) - 30% of the sample. Caution is needed here, however: SACRE SAS may be referenced and it was missed in the review of documentation; or, it may just not be stated explicitly.
- Faith school curriculum overviews/summaries make clear that the school's faith (Christian) and denomination (mostly RC) will be foregrounded in the curriculum.
- All curriculums include coverage of the principal religions present in the UK.
- Throughout the sample, there is reference to teaching children about respect and tolerance for people of other religions. Usually, 'religion', 'faith' and 'culture' are expressed as inter-related concepts, and framed as necessary foundations for children to go on to lead lives as respectful citizens with a pluralistic worldview.
- All sampled curriculum information included reference to teaching what might be called 'What it means to be human' and 'Ways of understanding the world'. This is often located within topics/units related to teaching skills such as critical thinking and developing argument and debate.
- In some curriculum information, concepts as 'What it means to be human' and 'Ways of understanding the world' are framed through explicit lenses such as Philosophy, Ethics, Sociology, Human Rights, Theology, Anthropology, History and Environment.

Teacher Training Materials and Advice for Schools

Whilst SACRE does not take sole responsibility for the provision of training, we have continued to work with partners in 2023/24 to provide CPD opportunities for Sheffield educators. This has included regional opportunities from NATRE, opportunities provided through Learn Sheffield, offers from Sheffield Anglican Diocese and signposted opportunities by Culham St Gabriel's.

Other information (withdrawals and how the SACRE monitors, advises or supports schools with this, complaints)

SACRE did not deal with any complaints or withdrawal issues during this academic year.

Advice to the LA

SACRE continues to have a strong working relationship with the local authority.

Collective Worship (statutory responsibilities)

Standards and monitoring of collective worship

During this academic year we have not done anything to actively monitor collective worship and we have not had any approaches from schools, in relation to this.

Determinations

Details of the determinations process for Sheffield can be found at the link below.

[Microsoft Word - Appendix 6 - The Determination Process \(sheffield.gov.uk\)](#)

We are not aware of any school in Sheffield who currently has a determination. We continue to highlight this lack of intelligence in our SACRE self-assessment and we will continue to review our approach in 2024-2025.

Teacher training

We have not organised or promoted any training in relation to collective worship.

Links with other bodies

National

We continue to be members of NASACRE and offered free places, to SACRE members, to the 2024 conference. One member attended on behalf of Sheffield SACRE.

Some members attended training, via NASACRE and RE Today, during the last year.

Members of SACRE also have links with the National Association of the Teachers of RE, the Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education (our vice-chair sits on the executive committee for both organisations) and Culham St Gabriel's; through them we keep-to-date with the work of these organisations and with new resources and CPD opportunities (for both teachers and SACRE members). During the year we welcomed an observer to one of our meetings who is completing the Culham St Gabriel's Leadership Scholarship programme.

Local

SACRE continues to have strong links with Sheffield Hallam University, and we have developed further our working relationship with the Sheffield Diocese. With the latter we continue to support their CPD offer.

Local Involvement

SACRE continues to have a strong working relationship with Learn Sheffield, a not-for-profit organisation owned by Sheffield schools and colleges and Sheffield City Council. The relationship facilitates both a connection between SACRE and the education community, and a route into effective communication with all schools and academies. They also continue to host our webspace: <https://www.learnsheffield.co.uk/Partners/sacre/Purpose>.

SACRE Statutory Responsibilities

SACRE continues to receive administrative support from the LA in the form of a clerk to manage the administrative aspects of our meetings. The LA also pays the annual NASACRE membership fee.

However, there is no subject advisor provision for RE in Sheffield.

In 2023-2024 we contacted all members of committee A to check that they were keen to continue their involvement with SACRE. This has resulted in some new members being recruited to the committee and, in other cases, highlighted where we have vacancies that will need to be addressed going forward. This will be a key priority for 2024-2025.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Sheffield SACRE Development Plan 2024-2025

Section 1: Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders				
<i>How far does the SACREs partnership with the LA enable it to carry out its responsibilities effectively?</i>				
Objectives	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	Review
Continue to improve the attendance of Committee A members to ensure that the diverse nature of the city is represented.	Chair and DR	July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee A membership is reviewed with each faith group/denomination. Committee A attendance improves. Partnership with key stakeholders is productive 	
Members of SACRE receive appropriate training to enable them to fulfil their duties.	HS and DR	July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SACRE members continue to be offered the chance to attend regular training organised by NASACRE. SACRE members are offered the opportunity to attend events and conferences (e.g. CStG online events, NASACRE conference, etc.) to develop their knowledge. 	

Section 2: Standards and quality of provision of Religious Education

How effectively does the SACRE in partnership with the LA evaluate standards and the quality of provision for RE in schools? How effective are the strategies to improve standards and the quality of provision?

Objectives	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	Review
The analysis of SACRE monitoring of RE provision is shared with the sector to support the development of provision.	SB and chair	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The systems established to monitor the provision of RE are working effectively and are used to target support. Monitoring of provision remains a standing item within the SACRE agenda and SACRE respond to any issues arising. Analysis of provision monitoring is shared with the sector in Spring 2025. 	
The SACRE development offer to settings supports improved standards and quality of provision	SB/HT	July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A training and development offer to settings is developed with a view to preparing schools for the implementation of a new Agreed Syllabus. The SACRE website is fully utilised to communicate opportunities to schools. SACRE continues to work in partnership with the Anglican Diocese and Rotherham LA to ensure a universal CPD offer for settings in the city. 	

Section 3: The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus				
<i>How effectively does the SACRE, in partnership with the LA, monitor the impact and evaluate the effectiveness of the agreed syllabus in raising standards?</i>				
<i>How effectively does the Agreed Syllabus Conference in partnership with SACRE make decisions about the use of national guidance and exemplar material in a review of the agreed syllabus?</i>				
Objectives	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	Review
Support Sheffield settings in the implementation of the new Agreed Syllabus from September 2024.	Chair/HS/SB	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A plan to support teachers through CPD to implement the new syllabus is in place. Schools are supported with appropriate support materials to develop curriculum in line with the new syllabus. 	

Section 4: Collective Worship				
<i>How effectively does the SACRE fulfil its responsibilities for the provision and practice of collective worship?</i>				
Objectives	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	Review
SACRE fulfils its responsibilities in relation to collective worship	Chair	July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SACRE establishes effective approaches to information gathering to develop an understanding of collective worship provision across the city SACRE agendas consider collective worship and the use of determinations as a standing item. SACRE takes a more active role in ensuring that school understand the determinations process. 	

Section 5: Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community

How effectively does SACRE, in partnership with the Local Authority and the faith communities, contribute to the promoting of cohesion across the community?

Objectives	Lead	Timescale	Success criteria	Review
SACRE makes a clear contribution to civic community cohesion in Sheffield	All	July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership and attendance enable diverse perspectives to contribute to decision making. • SACRE agendas include strategic discussion of educational issues and initiatives which have a faith dimension. 	
Consider the potential benefits of closer cooperation between South Yorkshire SACREs	HS/SB/ Chair	July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links are established with Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster SACREs • Identify medium- and long-term shared priorities (e.g. potentially a South Yorkshire agreed syllabus) and opportunities for collaboration (e.g. development of training opportunities). 	