



# WAKEFIELD SACRE Annual Report

## June 2025

This report provides members and NASACRE/DfE with details of the work of the Wakefield Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) for the academic year 2024 – 2025.

### Background

Under the provision of the 1988 Education Reform Act every local education authority has a responsibility to establish a permanent body, called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

### Memberships

The people who serve on SACREs are invited to do so by the Director of Children's Services on the recommendation of various bodies in the local community with a concern for the religious education of school children. The law prescribes that there must be four 'committees' each comprising representatives of specified groups. These four committees can together co-opt further non-voting members, provided a majority agree. The actual members change over time and the current Wakefield SACRE is constituted as follows:

- ❖ Group A (5 places) Christian and other religious denominations which reflect the principal religious traditions in the area
- ❖ Group B (5 places) Church of England
- ❖ Group C (5 places) Teacher Associations
- ❖ Group D (5 places) Local Authority Representatives

**The report follows the format requested by the DfE.**

*1. An introduction including:*

- *Table of contents*
- *Words from the Chair of SACRE*
- *Overview, number of times SACRE has met and attendance at meetings, venues, agendas, content of these meetings – link to SACRE Development plan*

*2. A section on RE (statutory responsibilities) including:*

- *The local agreed syllabus and RE in schools*
- *Monitoring the AS, relationship with an AS review*
- *Work of the ASC and associated working parties if this is currently sitting showing progress, links to other work nationally or locally*
- *Standards and monitoring of RE*
- *Teacher training and materials and advice for schools*
- *Other information (withdrawals and how the SACRE monitors, advises or supports schools with this, complaints)*
- *Advice to the LA*

*3. A section on Collective Worship (statutory responsibilities) including:*

- *Standards and monitoring of CW*
- *Determinations*
- *Teacher training provided (locally or national training circulated to schools) materials and advice for schools*
- *Other information (withdrawals and how the SACRE monitors, advises or supports schools with this, Complaints)*
- *Advice to the LA*

*4. A section on links with other bodies*

*5. A section on other areas of SACRE involvement locally*

- *Governor training*
- *Advice on issues within the community*

*6. A section on SACRE's own arrangements (statutory responsibilities) including:*

- *Professional and administrative support and how the LA supports the SACRE (clerking, adviser, links to council initiatives)*
- *Membership, representation & recruitment - quoracy, issues and successes with recruitment*
- *Training for SACRE members*
- *Finance given to SACRE for its work*

*7. Appendices*

- *Details on CPD provided to schools*
- *Any LA/SACRE policy statements on RE or CW*
- *Circulation details for this AR*

## **Section 1: Introduction**

### **Table of contents**

1	Comments from the Chair; overview of the work of SACRE 2024– 2025 linked to SACRE development plan
2	Statutory responsibilities
3	Collective worship
4	Links with other bodies
5	SACRE involvement locally
6	Arrangements for SACRE
7	Appendices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wakefield SACRE membership</li><li>• CPD evaluations</li><li>• Guidance for schools on Collective Worship</li><li>• Images from SACRE art competition displays</li><li>• Circulation details</li></ul>

### **Chair’s comments**

The past year has been full and active again for Wakefield SACRE. In line with our development plan, we were able to meet our target of providing Collective Worship to schools which is now published on the SACRE page of Wakefield Education Services. We are very grateful to Lat Blaylock, RE Today, for his support with this work and to Claire Clinton, consultant to Newham SACRE for generously sharing her work with us.

Our termly networks for teachers have been well-attended throughout the year, supported by RE Today as part of an annual package of training. We are currently considering a primary conference during the autumn term 2025. Training has linked closely to the implementation of the locally agreed syllabus and has been very well received by teachers and subject leaders.

We have been delighted to promote the work of Muslim Learner Services in providing training to school leaders, subject leaders and class teachers. Imran’s work with teachers and pupils has been greatly appreciated.

As we look to the next academic year, our focus is now on supporting schools in reviewing and developing provision linked to SMSC. This work will be informed by the excellent training provided by NASACRE, led by Bill Moore from Buckinghamshire SACRE. We plan to support schools in developing a rich curricular and extra-curricular offer to further develop pupils’ SMSC understanding and skills, making use of the toolkit provided at the training.

Schools have participated in our annual art competition with the theme of Living a Good Life. Wakefield SACRE has been delighted to receive entries from schools which will be displayed at Wakefield Cathedral during July 2025. Children have given some serious thought to the theme and produced very thoughtful work.

Wakefield SACRE was also able to support schools this year in their work in developing and improving collective worship, in line with this year's focus for SACRE. The outcomes of these projects will be shared in the summer newsletter to schools.

We renewed our constitution this year in line with agreed timescales. The past year has seen some changes in membership; we have welcomed a representative from the Hindu faith who has observed a meeting and has requested to join SACRE at the next meeting in July. The contribution to our work from our new members is greatly appreciated.

In line with our development plan, our focus for 2025- 2026 will be to support schools in ensuring pupils have access to rich learning opportunities working with pupils of other faiths and beliefs. This aligns with our focus on SMSC in schools.

I offer my thanks to all the hardworking and supportive members of Wakefield SACRE and look forward to the year ahead.

**Kieron Flood**

**Chair of SACRE**

### **Overview of the work of SACRE 2024 - 2025**

- The group has met termly online, with two additional face-to-face meetings: April 2025 to judge artwork submitted by schools entering this year's Wakefield SACRE art competition; June 2025 to review work completed during 2024-2025 and to undertake strategic planning for 2025-2026.
- During the autumn term 2024, the information available to school was improved and updated through revisions to the SACRE page on Wakefield Education Services website. Schools can now access a wealth of information linked to the agreed syllabus, SACRE membership and the work of SACRE, resources and updates, local sources of support including Yorkshire and Humber RE Hub.
- Full Meetings and sub-meetings have focused on the following areas:
  - Reviewing and improving the information about SACRE which is readily available to schools.
  - Ensuring high quality training for primary schools, linked to the revised Locally Agreed Syllabus – reviewing numbers at training and delegate feedback
  - Continuing discussion around the implications for SACRE of the Ofsted curriculum review report: Deep and Meaningful
  - Reviewing guidance for schools on Collective Worship – shared with schools during 2024-2025
  - Reflecting on messages shared at the annual NASACRE conference in determining our key priority for 2025 - 2026
  - Promoting the work of SACRE through termly newsletters.
  - Promoting and supporting the annual art competition: Living a Good Life

- Supporting schools financially through a bidding process in line with our annual theme and sharing the work undertaken by schools.
- NASACRE training opportunities and feedback to members following attendance at regional meetings

Meetings have been attended by the following representatives: members of the Local Authority (Senior School Improvement Adviser and LA councillor); representatives of the Church of England; representative of Leeds Humanist Society; representative of the Catholic denomination; representatives of the teaching unions; representative of headteacher association. Three full SACRE meetings were held virtually; two focus groups meetings were held face to face at a local authority training venue.

## **Section 2 – Statutory responsibilities**

### **The locally agreed syllabus**

- Wakefield SACRE shared the revised Locally Agreed Syllabus with schools during the summer term of 2023, supported by a full day conference for headteachers and RE leaders.
- SACRE newsletters have reminded all schools of the new syllabus and the accompanying support materials and training.
- Wakefield SACRE provided opportunities to share best practice in relation to delivery of the syllabus through three termly networks for primary schools and three for secondary schools during 2023-2024.
- Senior School Improvement Advisers seek support from SACRE when providing bespoke advice to schools around the implementation of the syllabus.
- SACRE will undertake a survey of academies (both primary and secondary) to ascertain uptake and adherence to the locally agreed syllabus during 2025-2026.
- Our SACRE website and Agreed Syllabus are continuously under review. The next full review of the Agreed Syllabus will be in 2028. Our updated website also includes a wealth of additional support for schools including visits to support RE and visits to local places of worship. The SACRE Chair and LA representative attend regional network meetings and discuss the strengths of the syllabus with other colleagues from the Yorkshire and Humber region.

### **Standards and monitoring of RE**

- Seventeen of the eighteen secondary schools in Wakefield are academies.
- There are wide variations between schools in the hours of RE offered to pupils in different year groups.

- Training is scheduled once again for governors during June 2025 to support their understanding of their role in monitoring provision for Religious Education. Legislation in relation to provision in RE is shared with governors during the training.
- Members of Wakefield SACRE continue to offer support to schools during inspection when requested, liaising with our contacts in RE Today.
- Wakefield SACRE supports schools with additional resources in addition to providing the locally agreed syllabus. Schools that participate in the art competition receive texts to support their work in school. This year schools received:
  - Big Questions; Big Answers: How we live
  - Big Questions; Big Answers: Investigating good and evil
  - At RE events, additional resources are shared with schools which include teaching packs and guidance on assessment.
  
- Subject Leaders inform SACRE of positive visits to places of worship which they highly recommend to teaching colleagues. These recommendations are shared with all schools at Teacher Network Meetings and by email.
  
- Wakefield SACRE reviews and analyses GCSE outcomes and the numbers of pupils taking RE at GCSE during the autumn term meeting. Data in 2024 indicated the following:
  - The highest percentage of GCSE entries are from the two Catholic academies with entry percentages of 96.4% and 95.2%. The next highest entry percentage is 22%. Some academies did not enter any pupils for GCSE 2024.
  - 689 pupils were entered for GCSE in Religious Studies. (649 in 2022)
  - 9 of 18 schools/academies entered pupils for GCSE in Religious Studies. (10 schools/academies in 2023)
  - Results at 4-9 range from 57.2% to 100%.
  - The number of entries across schools ranged from 23 to 268. This represents a slight increase on entries in 2023.
  
- There have been two SIAMs inspections of primary schools during 2024-2025:

Featherstone All Saints Church of England Academy

St. Giles Church of England Academy

Both reports highlighted many strengths and celebrated the quality of RE provision in school.

## **Teacher training and advice for schools**

Wakefield SACRE continues to provide training opportunities for primary schools within the district. Network meetings are very well-attended. This year meetings have focused on the following themes:

### Meeting 1

- Deep and Meaningful – how can primary schools ensure they are delivering the very best provision in line with key messages from the report?
- How can schools ensure they properly sequence learning around worldviews – what might this look like in EY/KS1/ LKS2 / UKS2?

### Meeting 2

- Examples of RE with a philosophical, social studies or theological focus demonstrating the value of paying attention to different ‘ways of knowing’ in RE; ideas for enabling pupils to express personal knowledge.

### Meeting 3

- Examples of work from Hindu and Christian sources that enable teachers to identify clearly progress in RE for pupils who are age 5, 7, 9 and 11.

100% of delegates rated each aspect of the training as Good or Excellent. Comments in relation to termly network meetings are shared within the appendices to this report.

## **Withdrawals and complaints**

None were made to SACRE during this reporting year.

## **Section 3 – Collective Worship**

SACRE has previously monitored collective worship by reviewing Ofsted reports, through conversations with senior leaders / teachers/ local clergy/ ministers and through occasional visits to acts of collective worship in school. SACRE publishes clear advice on ‘Hosting speakers for acts of collective worship’.

In line with last year’s development plan, schools have been supported during 2024-2025 in developing provision in collective worship. SACRE recently published guidance for schools which is included as an appendix to this report, having sought advice and collaboration from

RE Today and Newham SACRE. SACRE also invited bids from schools this year and was able to support one infant, four primary and one secondary school financially in improving their current offer. Their work will be shared with schools during the summer term 2025 via the SACRE website and through the termly newsletter.

Wakefield SACRE continues to benefit from close collaboration with Gillian Bunn, Community Outreach Officer at Wakefield Cathedral, where school groups are routinely welcomed. This year the winning entries from Wakefield SACRE art competition will be exhibited at the Cathedral.

Visits to places of worship are shared with schools via the SACRE webpage and many schools have formed strong links with local faith communities.

### **Determinations**

From time to time a school may request from the SACRE a “determination”; i.e. permission to waive the legal requirements for religious education and collective worship to be “wholly or mainly Christian”. The SACRE has received no requests for determinations during this reporting year.

### **Complaints regarding Collective Worship**

None were made to the SACRE during this reporting year.

### **Advice to the LA**

Councillors and the clerk provide advice, as needed.

### **Section 4 – links with other bodies**

Wakefield SACRE is a member of NASACRE and makes use of the resources and training materials provided by NASACRE. In past years members have attended AGMs/conferences in London and York. The Chair and LA representative attend termly regional meetings and maintain close links with Yorkshire and the Humber RE Hub.

Wakefield SACRE continues to work closely with RE Today, commissioning training, promoting competitions for schools, accessing high quality resources for schools.

Wakefield SACRE has links with Wakefield Cathedral and Wakefield Churches Together and links with other faith groups including the Catholic and Church of England dioceses. Leeds Humanists now have links with Wakefield SACRE.

### **Section 5 – SACRE involvement locally**

#### **Governor training**

For several years governors have been invited to attend all training events for schools, as part of the governor training offer. During 2023-2024 Wakefield SACRE supported a

separate training event for governors, linked to their responsibilities in ensuring statutory and effective provision in RE. This meeting was attended by governors from both primary and secondary schools – LA maintained and academies. A further training event focusing on RE and SMSC for governors is scheduled for June 2025.

Bespoke governor training is also available on request either to a governing body or members of a governing body. Schools continue to handle sensitive issues and SACRE is always willing to support schools with any questions, issues or concerns that may arise.

### **Wakefield SACRE art competition 2025**

The schools listed below entered this year’s art competition entitled ‘Living a Good Life’, launched during spring 2025, with judging of artwork and exhibitions during the summer term 2025. Winning entries for each school will be displayed in Wakefield Cathedral during July. Certificates and prizes were presented to winning entries in each school.

Participating schools:

<b>School</b>
Outwood Freeston Academy
West Bretton School
Ryhill Junior, Infant & Nursery School
Methodist Junior & Infant School
Pinders Primary School
St. Ignatius Catholic Primary School
Crofton Junior School
Southdale Junior School
Hendal Primary School
South Ossett Infant Academy
Dane Royd Junior & Infant School
Holy Family Catholic Primary School

### **Advice to schools on issues within the community**

Through 2024-2025, Wakefield SACRE published updates within a weekly newsletter to schools from the Service Director. In addition, SACRE published termly newsletters. In December 2023, Wakefield SACRE shared guidance to schools:

#### **Advice for schools on sensitivity and awareness around faiths & beliefs – Sharing the Journey**

This guidance included shared practice from three schools within the district: Outwood City Fields Academy, Kettlethorpe High School and Pinders Primary School.

## **Section 6 – Wakefield SACRE’s arrangements**

The LA is very supportive of Wakefield SACRE. A Senior School Improvement Adviser supports the Chair in establishing routine communication, identifying agenda items, sourcing high quality training and promoting the work of SACRE across the district.

Meetings are clerked by the LA and supported by a very efficient and accommodating clerk.

The SACRE has representation from all four groups and continues the focus of widening membership with greater representation from faiths within the district. This year Wakefield SACRE is pleased to welcome a representative from the Hindu faith. We continue to seek new members to SACRE including representatives from different faiths within the district, new members representing the Church of England and additional members to Group D.

Wakefield SACRE receives £7,010 annual budget. This was supplemented in summer 2023 with an additional contribution of approximately £8,000 to support the introduction of the revised syllabus.

Requests for finance to support the work of SACRE are always treated fairly within LA budget restraints. Wakefield receives a minimum budget of £7010 per annum.

## Section 7 – Appendices

### SACRE membership

June 2025

	Role	Group / Denomination
Kieron Flood	Chair	A – Catholic
Lyndsay Ranby	Vice Chair	C - NAHT
Nicola Madarasz		C – Teachers’ associations
Olivia Rowley		D – Local Authority
Trudi Garratt-Ward		B – Church of England
Safiyah Munshi		C – Teachers’ associations
Gerard Segovia		A – Humanist
Rachel Redfearn		D - Local Authority
Claire Cade		C – Teachers’ association
Margaret Brownlee		A – Free Church and non-conformist
Rhadi Devi		A – Hindu

Comments from CPD evaluations – termly networks:

*I love the worldview idea. My children love sharing about their own religion.*

*I always love hearing all the ideas and exploring different ways of teaching RE.*

*The worldviews are an excellent PoV for self-reflection and criticality.*

*Lots of amazing ideas as always. I would be interested in a session about RE assessment.*

*I enjoy listening to children's different opinions and viewpoints and how they have the opportunity to express these in different ways.*

*I used the Easter artefacts with EY2 last year, it was a brilliant lesson - they will definitely remember what they learnt*

*I like the microscope/telescope approach with art because its always difficult to engage all those different learning styles.*

*Thank you. Lots of really good ideas again.*

*Thank you for another informative session. I always love the use of the children's real work to underpin the discussion.*

*Thanks for a great session.*

*Thank you - interesting ideas as always*

*Thank you! I always love your amazing ideas that I can suggest to all our teachers across school*



# Guidance on Collective Worship

## Introduction

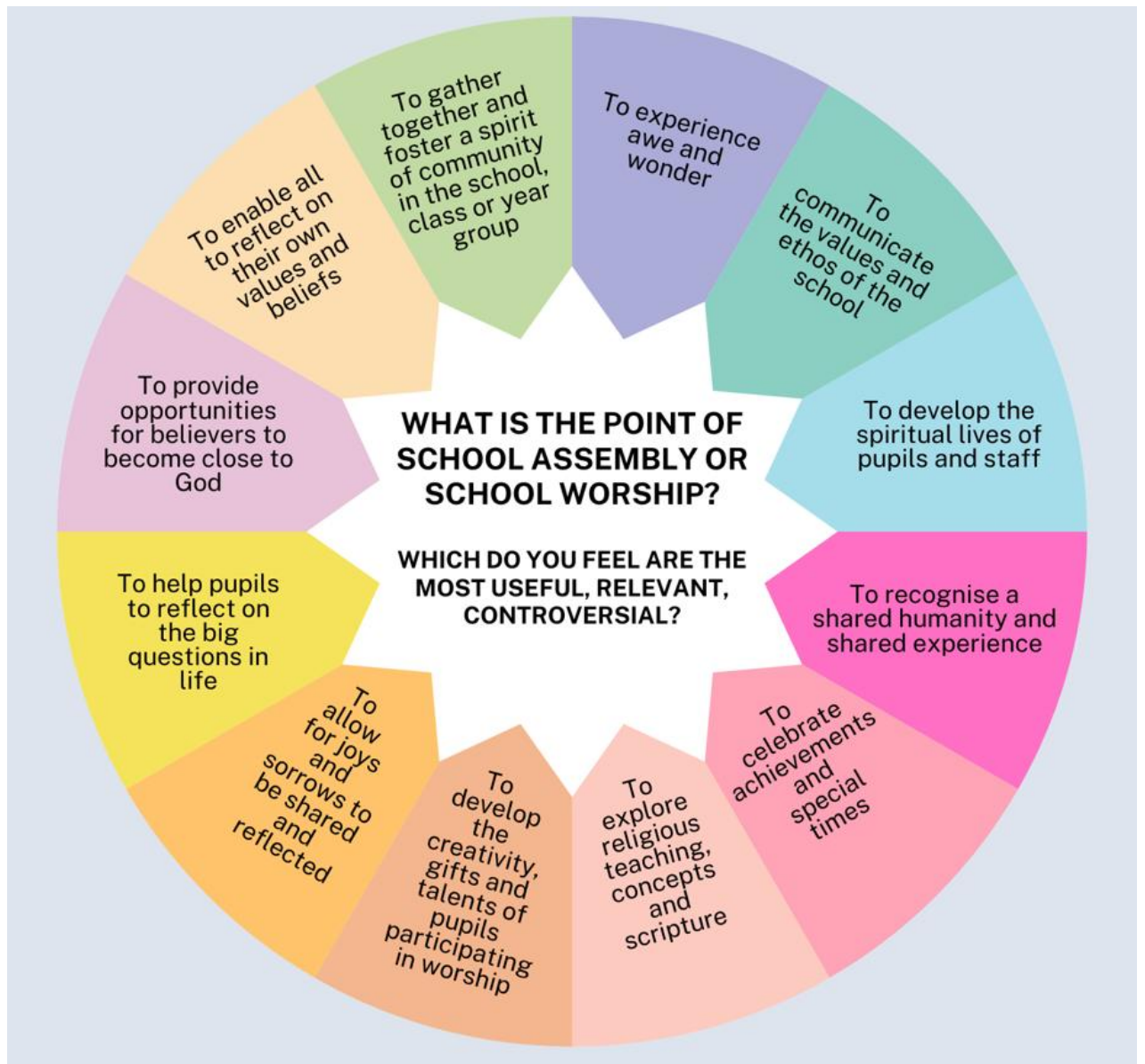
Wakefield SACRE provides this booklet to support schools in developing their programme of collective worship. The guidance is intended to offer help and advice and to share examples of effective practice.

We believe in the value of collective worship and the impact it can have on the lives of all members of the school community. We recognise its contribution to the ethos and values of the school and the opportunity it provides to enrich the experiences of pupils and adults. Wakefield SACRE is hopeful that by sharing this information we will encourage and facilitate further development of high-quality collective worship in schools across the district.

We welcome contributions from schools and case studies of good practice in school worship which we will share on the SACRE page of Wakefield Traded Services. If you would like to contribute a case study or resource, please contact Wakefield SACRE: [sacre@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:sacre@wakefield.gov.uk)

**What is the point of school assembly or school worship?**

Which do you feel are the most useful, relevant, controversial...?



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## **Why do we have collective worship in schools?**

Collective worship can both reinforce and contribute to the ethos of the school, in addition to offering a unique occasion in the school day to pause and explore life beyond the prescribed curriculum.

It encourages members of the whole school community, teachers and learners together, to challenge assumptions and reflect upon issues which transcend normal day to day experiences, thus broadening understanding and contributing to our search for meaning in life. By enabling pupils to acknowledge the value of diversity in terms of race, gender, culture, faith and differing abilities, it fosters inclusion and breeds tolerance.

Government guidance circular 1/94 (still in force and unamended) states:

*Collective worship should aim:*

- To provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs;
- To encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered;
- To develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

## **Collective worship and religious education (RE)**

- Collective worship, or assemblies, and RE are separate areas of school life. The legal requirements for RE and collective worship are distinct and should not be confused. RE is a subject in its own right - and should be treated as such. Time in worship cannot contribute to time for RE.
- Schools should have separate policies for RE and collective worship.
- Schools should not assume that the RE co-ordinator is responsible for collective worship - this should be a matter of negotiation.
- The only part of the law which is similar for both areas is that of withdrawal. All other areas including time, the character of collective worship, and determinations, DO NOT apply to RE. Nevertheless, there may be overlaps with RE work, just as there may be overlaps with other academic subjects.

## **Collective worship and assembly** *(contributions from Newham SACRE guidelines)*

An assembly is a gathering of part or all of the school. It is concerned with administrative matters and other announcements about school life. Schools often gather for achievement assemblies, singing assemblies and curriculum assemblies. These can be made into an act of collective worship through the addition of an opportunity for reflection or prayer at the end of these times. Without it they stay as an assembly. Collective worship is a special time for pupils to reflect upon life

experiences and ultimate questions and, if appropriate, focus on God. It should allow the pupils to be able to make a spiritual response. Schools should be mindful that the term spiritual does not mean religious. It is possible for someone who does not believe in God to become more spiritual.

The following lists may be helpful in considering how collective worship can contribute to your school's work around SMSC.

### **Spiritual development**

- Do the pupils have an opportunity to experience worship of God, if appropriate?
- Are feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy evoked through collective worship?
- Are pupils supported through times of crisis and challenge?
- In what ways can pupils respond to the aesthetic e.g. music, poetry, art, literature?
- How do pupils explore a sense of the sacred?
- Do pupils explore their place in the world and their search for meaning?
- Are pupils given an opportunity for reflection and contemplation?
- Are pupils asked ultimate questions? (Questions around human existence, for example, why is there suffering, what happens when we die?)
- Are pupils given opportunities to reflect on themselves, their relationships with others, the beauty and wonder of the world and the nature of transcendence, or God?

### **Moral development**

- How do we encourage respect for others and care for the environment?
- Do pupils understand the importance of commitment in human living?
- How far can pupils foster the virtue of fair-mindedness and a willingness to consider the views and values of others?
- In what ways do we help pupils understand the balance between rights and responsibilities?
- How do we help pupils make informed moral choices?

### **Social development**

- How do we develop the school as an inclusive community through collective worship?
- How do we promote a feeling of community, with a shared ethos and values?
- Do our pupils empathise with others?
- How do we provide an opportunity for pupils to become acquainted with school governors and other community leaders?
- In what ways do we celebrate gifts, talents and achievements through collective worship?
- Do pupils know a sense of belonging through collective worship?

## **Cultural development**

- How does collective worship reflect the school as a diverse community?
- Do we provide an opportunity for pupils to become acquainted with local leaders, including religious ones?
- How do we celebrate cultural and religious festivals?
- Do we give opportunities for pupils to consider the dynamic nature of culture and how it impacts on society?

## **‘Collective Worship shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’**

This statement means that collective worship must reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief. It does not mean that all acts of collective worship should contain only Christian material. Also, it does not assume a personal position of faith for those leading worship or those participating.

- There are religious and human values that many religions and life stances (e.g. Humanism) have in common: for example, justice, love, peace, charity, sacrifice, morality, saying sorry. Worship with a theme such as ‘forgiveness’ or ‘honesty’ is broadly Christian even if specific Christian material is not used.
- Many Christian beliefs are shared by other world religions. For example, God as creator, humankind as stewards of the world, goodness overcoming evil. For example, the Jewish festival of Hanukkah celebrates freedom from oppression and the power of God. In collective worship, material based on this celebration would allow those who believe in justice to share, and would be broadly Christian too.
- Specific Christian beliefs should not be ignored: for example, Jesus as the son of God. The major Christian festivals will give the school an opportunity to reflect on these specific Christian beliefs. Schools may make use of Christian visitors to contribute to this element of the law. By using these principles, it is possible to provide collective worship of a broadly Christian character in a school where a large majority of students have a faith other than Christianity or have no faith. Using the language of ‘Most Christians believe’, recognises and respects the diversity that exists within Christianity.

## **Creating the right atmosphere and attitude**

The purpose of this guidance is to support Wakefield schools in developing quality acts of collective worship. Planning obviously plays an essential role in this but to ensure quality we must create the ‘right atmosphere’ and the ‘right attitude’. The right atmosphere will aid ‘pupils’ feel good factor’ and with a positive attitude towards assembly and collective worship, pupils are more likely to respond in a positive way – a way which could be considered by any one faith group or many as being ‘worshipful’.

## **Creating the right atmosphere**

## Space

- Is there adequate space so that the pupils do not feel claustrophobic or feel that their 'personal space' is being invaded?
- How do you make a large space feel inviting, secure and welcoming?
- If the room or hall is multi-functional, ensure that it 'changes' to make the space more special for worship.
- Are pupils expected to stand, sit on chairs or sit on the floor? Standing for the duration will affect the pupils' ability to see what is going on at the front and they are more likely to become restless. Sitting on the floor may be acceptable to younger pupils, but older pupils often feel it is undignified and resent having their clothes dirtied. Can all pupils have a seat, or a place on a bench?

## Artwork by Eloise, Age 10, Ryhill Junior, Infant & Nursery School



*My sacred space is being outdoors in nature. I wanted to show the calmness of the water flowing, the trees swaying and the beautiful colours of the sunset. I feel relaxed and peaceful when I am outdoors.*

## Acoustics

- The quality of 'sound' can be affected by a number of factors, including the size of the room, and its furnishings. Meeting in a gym hall or having a kitchen adjacent to where you meet, may also affect the quality of sound and pupils' ability to hear clearly.

## **Vision**

- Can all pupils see the leader and worship activities clearly? Sometimes the arrangement of seating makes this particularly difficult.
- Consider changing the way seating is arranged if you have a particularly long hall – pupils at the back are more likely to feel excluded from the activities because they cannot see (or hear) clearly.
- Use display space available for prayers, prose, quotations and artwork of a spiritual, reflective nature.

## **Punctuality**

- Pupils become restless when they are waiting for long empty minutes until all of the school is assembled.
- If you have a large school population, which is spaced out, consider staggering the time pupils are expected to leave their classrooms to meet in the hall, and open more than one entry into the hall.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the importance of this and that they release pupils for assembly on time.
- Provide a focus for the worship activities. This may change daily or weekly or take the form of a permanent piece of artwork on the wall.

## **Creating the Right Attitude - a worthwhile experience**

- As professionals we have to ensure that we are providing valuable experiences for our pupils and making the most of time we have available to us.
- Are we providing valuable experiences?
- Are we taking into account the various backgrounds of pupils in the worship activities we provide?
- Are we ensuring that the act of 'collective' worship is 'inclusive' of all faiths and none?
- Addressing issues which are meaningful and relevant to our pupils will encourage them in feeling that we are offering worthwhile experiences in collective worship.
  - Do we ask pupils what they think of worship and the ways in which it has impacted on them?

## **Pupil ownership**

- Involving pupils in the planning and delivery of acts of worship is very important. It increases motivation, promotes self-esteem, enhances their understanding and opportunities for spiritual development.

## **Artwork by Fatou, Age 10, Pinders Primary School**



*My ideal sacred space would enable people to contemplate life's deepest questions and feel a sense of spiritual connection. This building is covered in coloured glass to reflect the love and forgiveness taught in religious teachings, creating a serene atmosphere for reflection and prayer. Creating this artwork has made me think about the universal themes of love, hope, and resilience. My main ideas revolve around showcasing the beauty of faith and the strength of the human spirit. I find inspiration in the grand buildings, where stained glass has been a symbol of divine beauty for centuries.*

### **Positive experience**

- Ensure that you are offering 'positive experiences' even though some elements may be challenging.
- Delivering an address on the environment and using it as a stick to beat the pupils with over the state of litter in the school yard is not a positive experience!
- Any matters of discipline should be dealt with at another time, allowing clear reflection on the focus of the assembly/act of collective worship.

### **How can we be sensitive with our use of language? (Newham SACRE guidance)**

Should we ask pupils to pray? Pupils do not have to be asked to pray, but they must have the opportunity to reflect and respond to God if appropriate for them. The issues concerning prayer are often to do with language. Pupils should not be asked to pray to their God as they may not have one, and the act of worship should be fully inclusive. Therefore, sensitivity should be shown in the choice of words teachers use, which should be invitational.

The following phrases may be useful for teachers:

1. 'We are now going to have a moment of silence. You may want to use this time to pray or think about God, you may want to focus on today's theme or message'.

2. 'I'm going to say a prayer, if you would like to pray, please say the words with me in your head. If you do not want to pray, please think carefully about today's message and what it means for you'.
3. 'If you pray, please listen to this prayer. If you don't pray, think about today's theme carefully'.
4. 'Christians have a special prayer about today's theme. Please listen to it and, if you would like to make this prayer your own, please join in with Amen at the end.'

The words used will depend on the individual teacher and the nature of the act of collective worship.

**Ella, age 10, St. Joseph's Catholic Primary, Castleford, created her artwork when reflecting on the theme: Where is God?**



*'I created this artwork to show how God is always there to support and forgive you, in bad and good times, when you are happy or sad, in the dark and in the light. The hands represent God welcoming you into his world, no matter where you come from. The rainbow symbolises the hope that God can bring, and that tomorrow is always a day for you to make amends for the things you've done wrong.'*

### **Developing your school policy**

Every school should have a policy on collective worship which is regularly reviewed and updated (every 3-5 years) as in line with other policies. This policy should include:

- The legal requirements e.g. the 1988 Act, the distinction between assembly and collective worship, the distinction between RE and collective worship. If the school has a determination this should be clearly stated.
- The aims of collective worship in the school e.g. reference to school ethos or mission statement, reference to SMSC and personal development.
- How collective worship is organised e.g. time of day, year groups, teacher responsibilities.
- The use and role of visitors e.g. guidelines for inviting in guests, roles of people who frequently lead acts of collective worship.

- Collective worship and inclusivity e.g. meeting the needs of different ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- Collective worship and the right to withdraw e.g. parents'/carers' right to withdraw; a statement about the process for this to happen within your school. This might include a meeting with the head teacher and the need for this to go to governors/trustees for sign off.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

#### *The role of the head teacher in community or foundation schools without a religious character:*

It is the overall responsibility of the headteacher in consultation with the governors to ensure that legal requirements are met and that quality collective worship is taking place in the school.

#### *The role of the governing body:*

- Governors should be aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to collective worship taking account of the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988/Education Act 1996 and the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. In foundation schools with a religious character or voluntary schools, the arrangements for collective worship are to be made by the governing body after consulting the head and must be in line with the schools' Trust Deed or Diocesan guidelines in the case of church schools.
- Governors must be familiar with all documentation regarding collective worship issued on their behalf and may be actively involved in the process of collective worship development in the school.
- Governors should ensure that collective worship is appropriately reviewed as part of the Whole School Development Plan.

#### *The role of the collective worship co-ordinator or team:*

The role of the collective worship co-ordinator/team will vary depending upon the individual needs of the school. In some cases, they will be solely responsible but may at times involve other members of staff or professionals. Duties may include the following:

- assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to collective worship.
- reporting to the governors and headteacher on matters of concern and development
- communicating with members of the school community regarding the significance and content of acts of collective worship.
- ensuring that there is a development plan for collective worship which may at times form part of the Whole School Development Plan.

- developing and maintaining documentation for the effective planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating of acts of collective worship.
- developing and maintaining effective procedures for planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating acts of collective worship.
- being responsive to the needs and views of other members of the school community.
- developing the resources available for collective worship including new and relevant books, posters, visual aids, artefacts, music, visitors, leaders

### **Auditing Collective Worship**

1. Does your job description describe your duties and opportunities fully?
2. How would you outline your main responsibilities?
3. To what extent are colleagues involved in the development of collective worship?
4. Do you have any non-contact time to fulfil your responsibility?
5. Is there an opportunity to support colleagues, and co-ordinate teachers' planning?
6. What are your current priorities for the development of CW? In terms of resourcing? In terms of content?
7. Is collective worship a current priority within the school development plan?
8. How do you monitor the quality of provision and delivery?
9. What systems of planning, recording and evaluation are in place?
10. Do you have a separate allocation of funds for resources?
11. Is the accommodation for collective worship appropriate and have efforts to create the right atmosphere been successful?
12. How much time is allocated each day for collective worship and is the timing within the school day effective?
13. Have there been opportunities for in-service training over the past two years?
14. Do visitors contribute in any way?
15. How do you keep yourself and colleagues abreast of new developments and evaluate new approaches?
16. How do you promote parental interest and understanding?
17. Are there any tasks relating to collective worship which you would like to take up but are unable to do at the moment? Do you ask pupils what they think about collective worship and reflect on the impact it has on participants?

### **Improving your offer**

In order to ensure that adequate monitoring of collective worship takes place, the following questions need to be addressed:

- Is the monitoring of collective worship part of the School Development Plan?
- Is the monitoring/improvement of collective worship of importance to the governing body and therefore an item on their agenda?
- Is the Headteacher/Worship Co-ordinator /Worship team the most appropriate person /people to do the monitoring?
- How will the monitoring process be used to further develop collective worship? What is to be monitored? The school may have a document on curriculum monitoring which could be

appropriately adapted for collective worship. In the absence of such a document the following may be considered:

- Is the documentation for collective worship in place and effective? This will include a collective worship policy statement, evidence of planning acts of collective worship, records of each act of daily worship, evidence that the quality of acts of worship have been evaluated.
- Is sufficient time set aside to ensure that monitoring can take place? This may include observations of acts of collective worship. Discussions with those who lead worship i.e. staff and visitors. Discussions with those who experience worship i.e. pupils, staff, parents, governors and other members of the school community.
- Is the documentation for collective worship consistent with observed practice?
- Is collective worship adequately resourced in terms of leaders, materials, visual aids etc.?
- Is there a record of, and requirement for, staff development or In-service training?
- Are the various groupings and environments for collective worship maximising opportunities for worship?

## **Evaluation**

Monitoring will lead onto evaluation – how well are we doing? What do the pupils think? What is working well? What do we need to do to improve? Where shall we start?

## **Resources (Newham SACRE guidelines)**

### Resources for collective worship

Don't just do something sit there: Mary K Stone ISBN 1 85175 105 X (RMEP 1992): An excellent book for helping teachers to develop stilling and visualisation. Aimed at the primary school, but equally useful for secondary teachers.

On-line festival calendar: [www.reonline.org.uk/supporting/festivals-calendar](http://www.reonline.org.uk/supporting/festivals-calendar) shows all major and minor festivals for each year.

Buddhism For bedtime ISBN 1844838806 by Dharmachari Nagaraja

The Lion storyteller Bible ISBN 9780745964331 by Bob Hartman has stories that are short enough for primary school assemblies, but well-written and engaging

Spirited Poetry go to [www.natre.org.uk](http://www.natre.org.uk) and click on spirited art, and then search for spirited poetry winners. Amazing range of thoughtful poetry written by children and young people across the UK

Secondary assemblies for community cohesion ISBN 9781905538713 by Jan Thompson

We are family ISBN 1898255318 by Geoff Davies

Multi faith activities ISBN 0415303591 by Elizabeth Pierce

Secondary assemblies for community cohesion: What's the story? ISBN 9781848676756 by Claire B-Evans – an instant years' worth of primary Christian based assemblies

### **Websites**

[www.assemblies.org.uk](http://www.assemblies.org.uk) A good source of assemblies for use in all schools. Though some aspects may need adapting in more multi-cultural schools e.g. use of prayers with the word Jesus.

[www.assemblytube.com](http://www.assemblytube.com) is packed with clips and ideas to support assemblies at primary and secondary schools

<https://www.cdbe.org.uk/schools/collective-worship-resources> A good source for ideas from Chelmsford Diocesan Board of Education

[www.blackburn.anglican.org/education](http://www.blackburn.anglican.org/education) A good source of collective worship, particularly for church schools. However, much material can easily be adapted for use in multi-faith settings

[www.natsoc.org.uk](http://www.natsoc.org.uk) A useful website, particularly for those looking for more explicit Christian material e.g. biblical stories. Has a good range of themes and topics.

[www.christian-aid.org.uk/learn](http://www.christian-aid.org.uk/learn) A variety of resources for use in whole school and class based collective worship. Links to a range of different themes including Christian festivals, poverty, justice and the environment.

[www.cafod.org.uk/schools.htm](http://www.cafod.org.uk/schools.htm) Similar to the Christian Aid site.

[www.re-xs.ucsm.ac.uk/assemblies](http://www.re-xs.ucsm.ac.uk/assemblies) Gives background to collective worship and the law. Useful tips for staff training and development as well.

[www.truetube.com](http://www.truetube.com) Set up by teachers, it is like YouTube but has no adverts and covers RE, PSHE and collective worship

[www.collectiveworship.com](http://www.collectiveworship.com) [www.literacyshed.com](http://www.literacyshed.com) Gives you stories and themes for use in English, but can be useful for collective worship

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/primary-school-songs-songs-for-collectiveworship-and-assemblies/zmgwkmn> There are daily acts of collective worship for schools as part of the BBC charter (mainly used by schools abroad and in the Hebrides).

<https://classroom.thenational.academy/assemblies> Oak Academy has a number of assemblies created via videos that can be played. Assemblies for All Humanist UK's website for FREE access to hundreds of high-quality, inclusive assemblies for both primary and secondary schools.

<https://www.brf.org.uk/resources/> Bible Reading Fellowship website, has Christian based collective worship resources.

### **Music**

Do remember that schools must have a licence to sing or perform music, but most resources come with this. Soundtracks to films often provide uplifting and inspirational music. Charles Timberlake composes music which is calming and reflective. Contact at [www.charlestimberlake.co.uk](http://www.charlestimberlake.co.uk)

Out of the Ark: provides well known and highly regarded support with singing assemblies, and songs that are meaningful.

A good example is Songs for every assembly ISBN 9780951911631 by Mark and Helen Johnson. They produce resources to support singing in schools around assemblies. See their website for a full range of resources [www.outoftheark.co.uk](http://www.outoftheark.co.uk)

Brian Beresford was a primary headteacher who now writes and produces reflective music to be used in collective worship, as well as a whole lot more! <http://www.onemoretime.biz/index.htm> is his website and there you can find his CDs – wanderweg and others.

Fishy Music – [www.fishymusic.co.uk](http://www.fishymusic.co.uk) produces CDs and supports for classroom-based mediations with God each day – has a Christian focus.

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Lat Blaylock – RE Adviser, reference to Wigan Collective Worship

**Welcoming visitors to school**

Thank you for agreeing to speak to our students in an act of collective worship. You agreed to come in on ..... to address Year.....pupils. The theme for the collective worship is .....

The acts of collective worship leading up to your visit will be covering the following themes .....

Equipment: If you need any particular equipment for your talk, please let ..... know by.....

Arriving in school:

When you arrive at school, please follow signs for reception and visitor parking. Please sign in at Reception by .....

You will be met there by two students who will show you to the hall you will be using so that you can set up as necessary, and then take you to meet the member of staff responsible for the day's assembly: .....

Times of assemblies Assembly begins at ..... and finishes at .....

Students will enter in silence, with music playing as they do so and sit in rows in their tutor groups. Tutors accompany their groups. If you would like particular music to be played, please let ..... know by..... and bring it with you.

Notices will be given at the beginning of the assembly, but there is a clear demarcation between such school business and the collective worship you will be leading. You will have a full fifteen minutes. Students are accustomed to ending collective worship with a moment of reflection, with a prayer, perhaps, to which they may respond as individuals. They are not accustomed to singing hymns. You may like to challenge this tradition, but if you do you are a braver person than most!

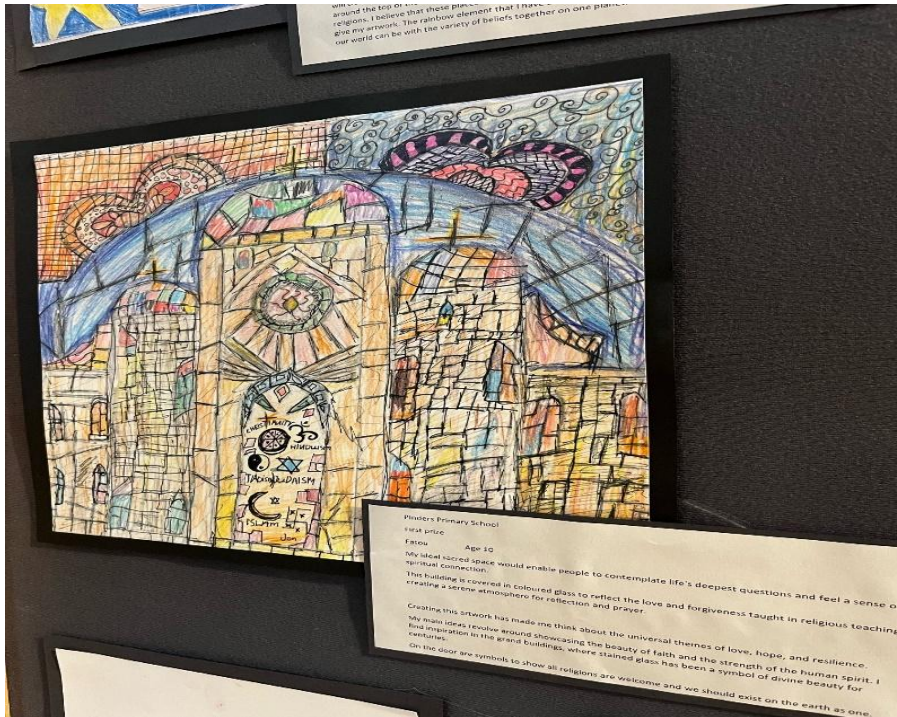
We look forward to seeing you

Your contact for this assembly is.....

Last minute or urgent contacts please speak to the office staff (tel:..... email:.....  
.....)

SACRE art competition display 2024





This report will be circulated to all Wakefield schools, the DFE and NASACRE.