



SACREBrent

Brent Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Annual report 2017-18

March 2019

Queries about this report should be addressed to:

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FOREWORD

By the Chair of SACRE

Brent is the UK's [most diverse borough](#); and our SACRE embraces this fact in its composition, approach and philosophy. We are committed to ensuring that all schools in Brent are supported in terms of curriculum development, collective worship and the teaching of Religious Education.

Brent SACRE has always given advice based on an ethos of inclusion and harmony, with equity and inclusivity at the very heart of our approach. This has been greatly facilitated by the wealth of professional knowledge our representatives have as well as the breadth of their (non)religious affiliations. Ours is the most representative SACRE in the UK, with members hailing from the Jain, Baha'i and Zoroastrian faiths as well as acknowledging diversity within the larger faiths (e.g. Orthodox and reform Judaism, Sunni and Shi'a Islam).

Brent SACRE was of course immensely pleased to be chosen as winners of the 2017 Accord Inclusivity Award; given in recognition of our work over many years to promote inclusion, cohesion and mutual understanding between those of different religions and beliefs and we note with pride the judging panel's commendation of our ["inclusive, proactive and ground-breaking approach to other SACREs"](#).

An Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) was convened in June 2017, charged with reviewing and developing a new curriculum for religious education in Brent. Despite the ever-accelerating rate of academisation, Brent SACRE has risen to the challenge and continues to maintain an excellent active working relationship with all schools throughout the borough; sharing exemplary good practice, providing training, networking and monitoring and our advice on matters related to the provision of RE and collective worship in Brent Schools is frequently sought.

The [Brent Model Approach to collective worship](#) seeks to provide the basis for a period of meaningful reflection for the whole school community. As worship is, by definition, a voluntary act, Brent SACRE considers and grants determinations to schools with the appropriate circumstances in line with our key statutory duties.

As the world around us grows increasingly polarised and lives manipulated by ever more complex algorithms exacerbating this, schools remain one of the safe spaces where young people can openly discuss, explore and question. The critical importance of Religious literacy and empathy to society in general and to the lives of young people in particular cannot be overstated - [dismantling prejudice](#), making [coexistence](#) possible and [underpinning the very fabric of our educational system](#). Enabling the delivery of academically rigorous, relevant, faithful, inclusive and impactful RE is a powerful privilege and an immense responsibility of which members are acutely conscious.

We are blessed to have a plethora of religious places of worship on our doorstep. These are key to any meaningful study of world faiths; and we thank all the centres that have welcomed school trips and young people from all over the borough. Colleagues have

reached out for advice in this regard; and we are in the process of collating a database and resource bank to support schools.

We remain indebted to our excellent RE Consultants, Lesley Prior and Roger Butler, who continue to provide us with their insights and the benefits of their extensive experience of RE at primary and secondary stages.

Lesley has continued to support an active network of RE Coordinators in Brent and we are now exploring how we can better deploy school to school and joint practice development approaches to support leaders and teachers to effectively deliver RE through all phases of education and better embed RE in the school curriculum.

I would also like to offer special thanks to our colleagues in Brent Council for their priceless support and tireless efforts, often going beyond the call of duty - Gail Tolley (Strategic Director), John Frankis, Helen Tulloch, Stephen McMullan and Nikoleta Nikolova.

The sad demise of our late Chair, Josh Kutchinsky, was greatly mourned by all. His memory will be cherished. We are sorry to hear that Marlene Knepler will also be leaving us to make Aliya following the death of her husband and that our excellent vice-chair, Father Laurence Hillel will be retiring mid-way through 2018/19. We will miss them all.

I take great pleasure in recommending this report; and look forward to the privilege of continuing to work with colleagues, both established and new, to honour their legacies and ensure that Brent SACRE's work grows from strength to strength.

Basma Elshayyal
Chair of Brent SACRE

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

ANNUAL REPORT OF BRENT STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2017-2018

1.0 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1.1 Agreed Syllabus

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in the London Borough of Brent was produced in 2002 and has been periodically reviewed and endorsed by the SACRE. The full document, including its appendices, was initially issued to schools in an updateable ring binder and continues to be available to schools at:

http://www.brent.gov.uk/media/946060/agreed_syllabus_for_religious_education.pdf

An Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) was convened in June 2017 tasked with reviewing and redrafting the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The ASC is due to conclude its work during the 2018/19 academic year. Until a new Agreed Syllabus is approved by Brent Council, the current syllabus remains the legally binding document for all local authority maintained schools in the borough.

1.2 Standards in RE

Analysis of Ofsted reports, following inspection, remain an important source of information on the effectiveness of schools in relation to the teaching and delivery of the curriculum for Religious Education and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

A total of fifteen schools in Brent received an Ofsted inspection in the 2017/18 academic year. It is noted that no adverse issues were identified during the inspection of these schools in terms of religious education and/or spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is also noted that four schools received positive comments on their approach to RE and/or its impact.

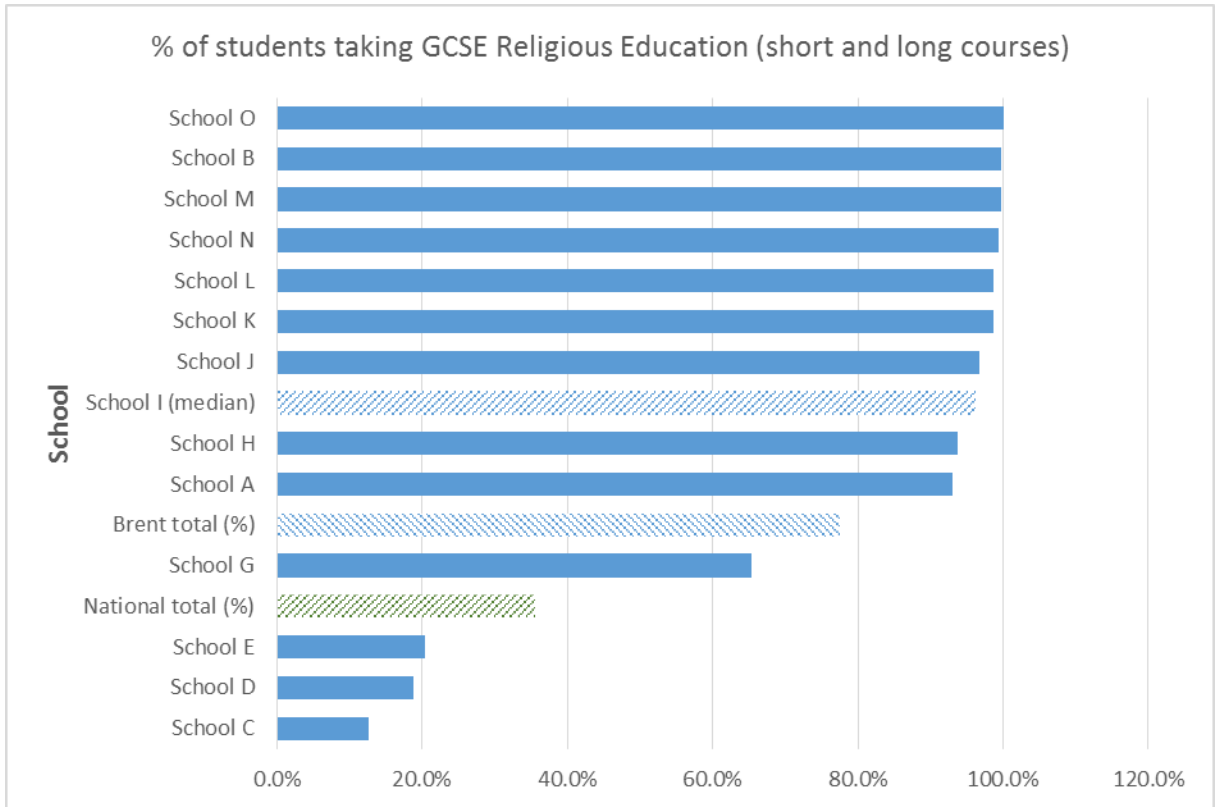
1.3 Religious Studies: GCSE and A Level Participation and Attainment

2017/18 Religious Education GCSE

Religious Education GCSE courses of study were offered in all Brent secondary schools in the 2017/18 academic year. The percentage of Brent pupils sitting Religious Education GCSE exams in 2018 (combining short and long-courses of study) was 77.5 per cent. This is significantly above the national average of 35.5 per cent.

As can be seen from the (anonymised) table below, the median figure for pupils sitting GCSE Religious Education in Brent schools in 2018 was 96 per cent as represented by School I. This high median figure is due to the number of schools where close to 100 per cent of all pupils sat a GCSE exam in 2018. However, some variation is also evident, with two schools having less than 20 per cent of pupils sitting Religious Education GCSE.

Chart 1: Percentage of students sitting GCSE in Religious Education (2018)



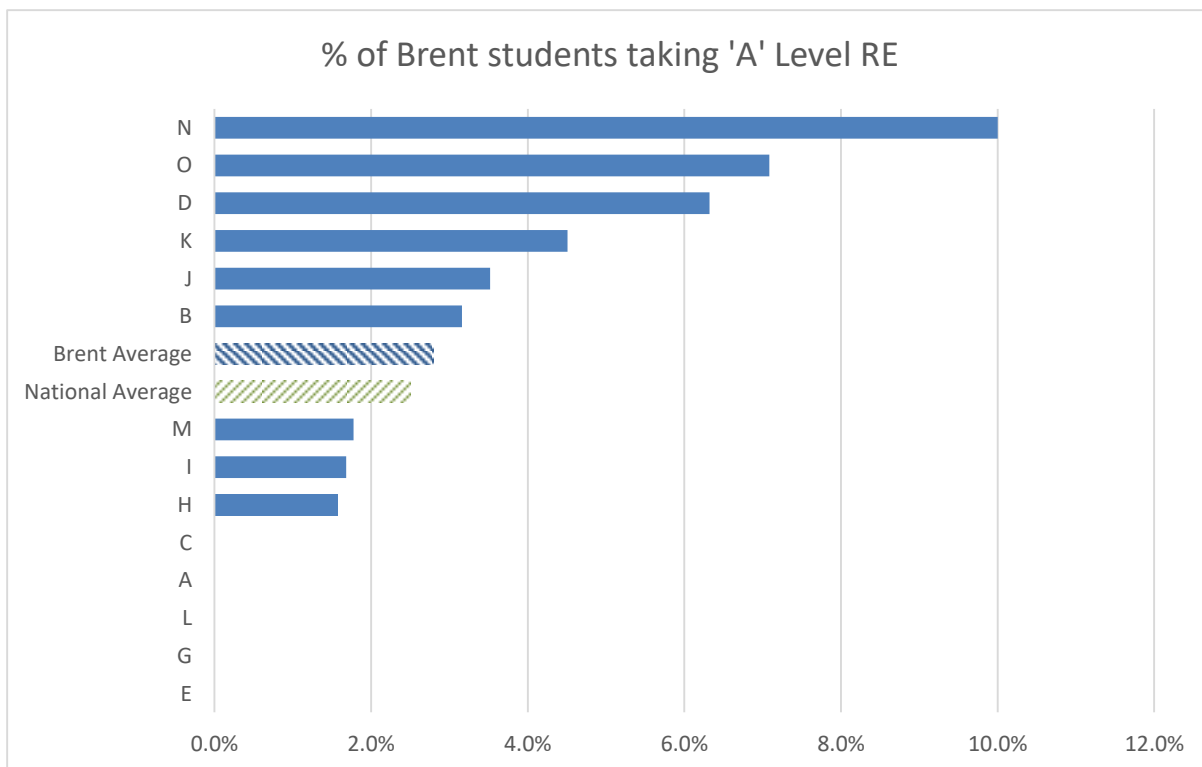
A summary of the 2017/18 GCSE results for Brent schools can be found in Appendix A.

2017/18 Religious Education A Level

The combined total percentage of Brent pupils Religious Education A Level exams in 2018 in was 2.8 per cent. Whilst this represents a reduction compared to the percentage of pupils sitting GCSE RE, this figure is slightly above the national average of 2.5 per cent. The percentage of students sitting RE A Level in Brent voluntary aided schools in 2018 was 3.7 per cent.

At one school (N), one tenth of A Level students sat A Level RE, whilst at five Brent secondary schools no students sat A Level RE.

Chart 2: Percentage of students sitting A Level in Religious Education (2018)



A summary of the 2017/18 A Level results for Brent schools is shown in the table below.

Number of Entrants	Religious Studies A Level outcomes										
	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U	A*-A	A*-B	A*-E	Avg Pts
92	3%	27%	36%	18%	11%	3%	1%	30%	66%	99%	37.9

1.4 Commission on Religious Education

At the SACRE Meetings held in October 2017 and April 2018, members discussed the interim report issued by the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE). The CoRE was established to review the legal, education and policy frameworks for religious education (RE) in schools in England.

<https://www.commissiononre.org.uk/religious-education-for-all-commission-interim-report/>

The interim report, entitled 'Religious Education for All', made a number of recommendations pertinent to the context of RE teaching and learning in Brent, including:

- National Entitlement for Religious Education
- Holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE
- A renewed and expanded role for SACREs
- A national plan for improving teaching and learning in RE.

2.0 TRAINING: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2.1 RE Subject Leaders meetings

SACRE members were pleased to note that there continues to be termly meetings for Subject Leaders for RE in primary and special schools. These meetings are made available to all schools in Brent via Brent Council's School Compliance and Governor Training Programme.

The subject leader meetings are led by Lesley Prior, Religious Education Consultant and LDBS Adviser for RE in community schools. Lesley also supports the Brent SACRE along with Roger Butler. During 2017/18, these meetings took place on the following dates:

Date	Venue
3 rd October 2017	Mount Stewart Junior School
30 th January 2018	Sudbury Primary School
24 th April 2018	Brent Civic Centre

The RE Subject Leaders termly meetings provided participants with opportunities to:

- receive information regarding the latest developments in RE, both locally and nationally
- understand the challenges of these developments for schools
- develop their knowledge and understanding of religions locally, nationally and internationally
- understand how to apply that knowledge and understanding within the current requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for RE
- analyse the appropriateness and effectiveness of their current schemes of learning in light of what they have learned
- evaluate different activities and resources for teaching and learning, including visits and visitors in RE

Feedback from these meetings continues to be very good and is a valuable sounding board for ASC members when examining material for the revised AS as well as evaluating progress.

3.0 COMPLAINTS

No complaints on either Religious Education or Collective Worship were referred to SACRE for investigation in the year 2017/18.

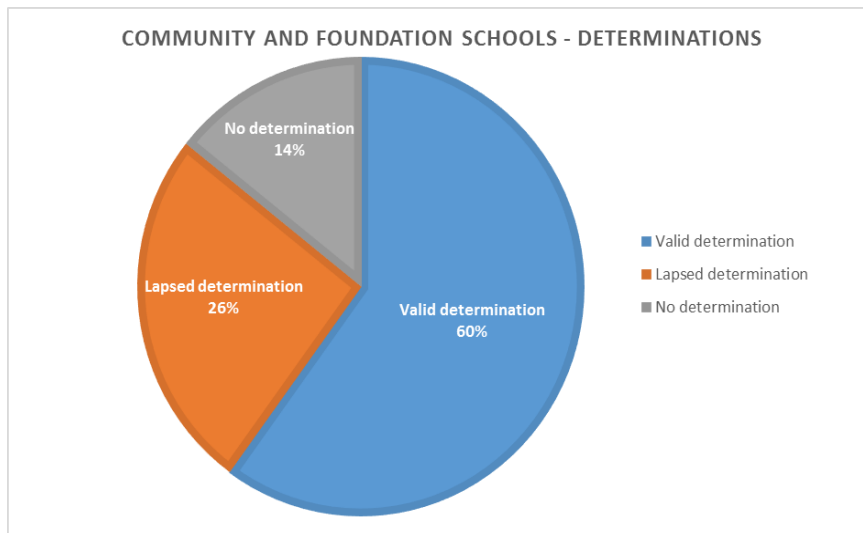
4.0 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

4.1 Determinations

Maintained schools may apply to the SACRE for a determination if they feel that collective worship which is “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” is not appropriate for their pupils.

In 2017/18, twenty-one of Brent’s thirty-five community and foundation schools had a valid determination. In Brent, this means that such schools then have the choice of following a multi-faith approach recommended by Brent SACRE or following an approach devised by the school. Nine schools had a lapsed determination, requiring these schools to apply for a renewal in order for the determination to be valid. These were all contacted and provided with appropriate support and advice to ensure compliance.

Chart 3: Breakdown of Brent Community and Foundation Schools showing determination status.



Whilst voluntary aided, voluntary controlled and academy schools are also required to have a daily act of collective worship, the governing body is responsible for determining its character and content, and do not therefore have to apply to the SACRE for a determination.

4.2 Determination Renewals

The following determination renewals were granted during the academic year 2017-2018:

Date	School
29 March 2017	Chalkhill Primary School
29 March 2017	Phoenix Arch School
29 March 2017	Preston Park Primary School
24 April 2018	Stonebridge Primary School
24 April 2018	Oliver Goldsmith Primary School

5.0 MATTERS REFERRED TO SACRE

No matters were referred to SACRE for consideration in the year 2017/18.

6.0 LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

Brent SACRE is affiliated to The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

Brent SACRE was ably represented at the NASACRE AGM and Conference in York on 16 May 2017 by Lesley Prior and Basma Elshayyal.

7.0 CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

In 2017/18 SACRE bade farewell to/welcomed several members and supporters. Their contributions to the work of SACRE are much appreciated and are formally acknowledged in the foreword to this report. All have played vital roles in promoting the work of SACRE and enhancing the quality of RE and collective worship in schools across Brent.

8.0 SACRE MANAGEMENT and CONTACT OFFICERS 2017/18

SACRE Chair: Basma Elshayyal
SACRE Vice Chair: Laurence Hillel

LA Lead Officer: Helen Tulloch (previously Stephen McMullen)
Clerk to SACRE: Nikoleta Nikolova (Governance Officer)

9.0 MEETINGS

During the 2017/18 academic year SACRE met on the following dates:

- 17 October 2017
- 24 April 2018
- 5 July 2018

The Local Authority Adviser, the Chair, the Clerk and the Consultants also met between meetings where and when necessary.

ANNEX A

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2017/18

MEMBERSHIP

Group A: Christian and other religious denominations reflecting the principal religious traditions in the area.

Baha'i	Mr Abraham Wilson
Buddhism	Mrs Rupa Monerawela
Hinduism (Brent Hindu Samaj)	Mr Deva Samaroo
Humanism	Mr Josh Kutchinsky
Humanism	Mr Alan Henness
Islam (Shi'a)	Mrs Andleeb Naqvi
Islam (Shi'a)	Mrs Aliya Azam
Islam (Sunni)	Mrs Basma El Shayyal (Chair)
Jainism	Mr Manhar Mehta
Judaism (Orthodox)	Mrs Marlene Knepler
Zoroastrianism	Mr Malcolm Deboo
Zoroastrianism	Mr Yazad Bhadha

Group B: Church of England

Mr Graham Marriner
Mr Laurence Hillel **(Vice Chair)**
Mr Graham Noyce
Mr Mark Newton

Group C: Teachers

Ms Lea Murray
Ms Sophie Lynch
Mr Andrew Bate
Ms Helen Mooney

Group D: LA Representatives

Cllr Neil Nerva
Cllr Lia Colacicco
Cllr Aslam Choudry

Officers: Mr Stephen McMullen

Agreed Syllabus Conference Members 2017/18

Mr Abraham Wilson
Mrs Rupa Monerawela
Mr Glen Warner
Mrs Andri Kyriakidis
Mr Deva Samaroo
Mr S Swaminathan
Mr Josh Kutchinsky
Mr Alan Henness
Mrs Andleeb Naqvi
Mrs Aliya Azam
Mrs Basma El Shayyal
Mr Manhar Mehta
Mrs Marlene Knepler
Mrs Valerie Boyd-Hellner
Mr Leroy Lindsay
Mr Yoginder Singh Maini
Mr Malcolm Deboo
Mr Yazad Bhadha
Mr Graham Marriner
Mr Laurence Hillel
Mr Graham Noyce
Mr Mark Newton
Ms Lea Murray
Ms Sophie Lynch
Mr Andrew Bate
Ms Helen Mooney
Cllr Neil Nerva
Cllr Lia Colacicco
Cllr Aslam Choudry

ANNEX A

2017/18 Religious Studies GCSE Results

Subject: Studies (4610) / Exam: GCSE (9-1) Full Course (391)

Est. No.	Centre	NOR	NOE	Grades											U	X	9-5	9-4	9-1	Avg Pts
				9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1								
-	National (All Schools)	584340	100010	7.6	10.3	12.9	16.2	14.4	10.9	13.9	8.0	3.9	1.4	0.3	61.6	72.4	98.3	5.2		
-	National (State Funded)	523760	93770	6.3	9.5	12.6	16.4	14.9	11.4	14.7	8.5	4.1	1.4	0.3	59.7	71.0	98.2	5.0		
-	LA (State Funded)	2859	744	16.8	21.5	21.1	15.5	9.3	5.9	5.6	2.7	1.1	-	0.5	84.1	90.1	99.5	6.6		
-	LA (State Funded)	2859	184	12.5	21.7	15.8	17.4	15.8	4.9	9.8	2.2	-	-	-	83.2	88.0	100.0	6.3		
-	LA (State Funded)	2859	245	6.5	6.5	11.8	14.3	14.7	16.3	11.8	9.4	4.9	3.3	0.4	53.9	70.2	96.3	4.8		
-	LA (State Funded)	2859	523	2.1	5.9	9.0	16.4	19.1	13.6	18.0	11.1	3.8	0.8	0.2	52.6	66.2	99.0	4.6		

Subject: Religious Studies (4610) / Exam: GCSE Full Course (310)

Est. No.	Centre	NOR	NOE	Grades													A*-C	A*-G	Avg Pts
				*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Q	U	X					
-	National (All Schools)	584340	17610	10.2	18.7	22.4	17.6	12.0	8.0	5.1	3.2	-	2.3	0.7	68.8	97.1	4.7		
-	National (State Funded)	523760	15860	8.7	17.8	22.7	18.3	12.6	8.4	5.5	3.3	-	2.3	0.5	67.4	97.2	4.6		
-	LA (State Funded)	2859	315	6.3	21.3	29.5	19.7	8.3	5.1	3.2	2.2	-	2.9	1.6	76.8	95.6	4.9		

Subject: Religious Studies (4610) / Exam: GCSE (9-1) Short Course (394)

Est. No.	Centre	NOR	NOE	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	X	Avg Pts
-	National (All Schools)	584340	3040	3.5	7.0	10.6	13.9	13.6	12.7	16.2	10.9	6.8	4.1	0.8	0.0
-	National (State Funded)	523760	2740	3.2	6.6	10.1	13.4	13.9	13.0	17.0	11.6	6.8	3.8	0.6	0.0
-	LA (State Funded)	2859	186	0.5	1.6	11.8	21.0	15.6	14.0	18.8	10.2	4.8	1.6	-	0.0