



**Coventry Standing Advisory
Council for Religious Education
Annual report 2024-2025**

This is the annual report of the Coventry Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) for 2024/25 and is published in accordance with the requirements of section 391 (6) of the Education Act 1996. It provides an account of SACRE activities during this period.

Circulation of this report

This report will be circulated electronically to:

Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of Coventry schools
Coventry City Councillors
Department for Education
Diocesan Board of Education (Coventry Church of England Diocese)
Diocesan Education Service (Roman Catholic Archdiocese Birmingham)
The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)
SACREs in neighbouring authorities
Faith groups

It will also be available to download at: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/sacre

Information on administrative and organisational matters is available from Lucy Lambert: Education Improvement and Standards, Coventry City Council, PO Box 7097, Coventry, CV6 9SL – telephone 024 7697 6979 or email lucy.lambert@coventry.gov.uk.

Message from the Co-Chairs of SACRE

This has been the year when the need for widespread understanding of faiths and worldviews among the population became more abundantly clear - an uncomfortable and tense year in events both at home and abroad. In a year when community cohesion was needed more than ever, the risk of the Inter Faith Network being dismantled was a concern, but it has been pleasing to see it re-constructed this spring as a charitable company. Fortunately, it was also the year in which our Coventry and Warwickshire joint Agreed Syllabus began to be implemented in classrooms - a groundbreaking piece of work which challenges every pupil, religious or not, to consider his/her own personal worldview. Our new RE Facilitator has spent much of her year helping teachers to introduce this deeper approach to the subject - along with a group of local RE specialists convened to devise extra lesson plans to achieve this.

One inspirational event of the year was the visit to Coventry in November (2024) of Lord Khan, the Government's 'Minister of Faith' [until the re-shuffle in September 2025]. Speaking at the Midlands Interfaith Conference as part of Inter Faith Week, he said that Coventry's contributions to Britain's post-war commitment to peace, reconciliation, and embracing diversity were impossible to overlook. He added that religious education and faith literacy were vital to building strong, peaceful relationships, as was empowering young people to help address today's and tomorrow's challenges. Such words are encouragement indeed for our SACRE to pursue its tasks diligently in the year to come.

Manjit Kaur and Roderick Clark

Co-Chairs of Coventry SACRE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main priorities for Coventry SACRE in 2024/2025 were:

Item	Actions	Person Responsible /Overview
1a – RE provision across the LA	New RE Agreed Syllabus for Coventry and Warwickshire is successfully implemented	RE Facilitator LA officers SACRE members Teacher writing group
1b – Standards of achievement and public examination entries	Monitoring of GCSE and A-Level results Ofsted outcomes & follow-up	RE Facilitator LA officers SACRE clerks
1c – Quality of learning and teaching	Refining and reviewing the new RE Agreed syllabus and accompanying resources using feedback, monitoring and evaluation	RE Facilitator LA officers SACRE members Teacher writing group
1d – Quality of leadership and management, including the provision and management of resources	INSET for RE subject leaders. Development of hub/consortiums within MATs and locality groups	RE Facilitator
1e – Recruitment and retention of skilled specialist RE staff	Training of RE subject leaders and RE teachers Developing relationships with ITT Providers	RE Facilitator

CPD in 2024-2025 included:

- RE clinic – 14th October 24
- RE clinic – 3rd December 24
- RE clinic – 30th April 25

In person sessions were also held in 2024-2025 in response to the demands of the new locally agreed syllabus and the shift to a religion and worldviews approach:

SACRE members offered in-person visits to schools during 2024-2025, visiting primary and secondary schools.

Resources for schools were developed in line with local needs and national developments in RE and national events (e.g. the release of the 2021 Census data on religion). A working party was set up in collaboration with the Local Authority to support the simplifying and accessibility of the new syllabus for primary colleagues. Led by the RE facilitator, the working party spent two days developing resources to

aid with the implementation of the new syllabus. We would like to thank Jane Sault, the Humanist representative that worked extensively on the new locally agreed syllabus to ensure that non-religious worldviews were represented purposefully across all key stages.

Westhill grant funding has allowed for the development of a digital photo pack of local communal worldviews, places of worship and faith communities developed with the support of a local photographer. *Images That Speak* is a resource that complements the new locally agreed syllabus.

SACRE continued to support local community projects, such as Coventry Sacred Space, the Lord Mayor's Peace Committee Coventry Peace Award, the annual peace poetry competition and events taking place to celebrate Interfaith Week.

SACRE Meetings 2024-2025

Coventry SACRE met in person on three occasions during the 2024/25 academic year. SACRE met in Local Authority premises and schools.

- 7th October 24 (Council House)
- 3rd February 25 (Meadow Park)
- 30th June 25 (Council House)

Exam Data:

In 2024, 1777 Coventry year 11 students were entered for Religious Studies qualifications, this is approximately 41% of the year 11 cohort compared to 42% in 2023. There were 1751 entries for the full GCSE, and 26 for the short course GCSE.

As in 2023 18 of the 22 Coventry schools offered the full GCSE course with the following schools entering the vast majority of their students for Religious Studies:

Bishop Ullathorne, Blue Coat, Cardinal Newman, Cardinal Wiseman, Eden Girls School, Finham Park, Lyng Hall, Meadow Park and Seva.

The numbers taking short course Religious Studies GCSE are low, which reflects the national situation. However there has been an increase in entries from 11 in 2023, to 26 in 2024 across 4 schools.

It was students at Eden Girls School again who performed particularly well in 2024 compared to other schools with a high number of entries. Attainment was also high at Blue Coat compared to other schools where almost all students were entered.

	Full GCSE Coventry
Number of entries	1751
9-1 passes	97.2%
9-5 passes	59.8%

Support for RE

SACRE continues to support the Local Authority in seconding a RE specialist in the form of a RE Facilitator to provide support to Coventry schools and Coventry SACRE.

Coventry SACRE also continued joint-working with Warwickshire through the merging of the two Chairs Groups and one joint full SACRE meeting annually.

The RE Facilitator updated SACRE on national developments in RE, including the Religion and Worldviews Approach and Multi-Disciplinary RE and the underpinning principles from the Religion & Education Council's Worldviews Project that has fed into our syllabus development.

Uptake of Agreed Syllabus (including academies)

Currently 93 schools use the Coventry & Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus, of which 41 are Academies

SACRE monitoring visits

6 monitoring visits to individual schools took place and the RE facilitator also attended a consortium meeting that had a network of many schools.

OFSTED visits to Coventry schools in 2024-2025

Ofsted inspections 24/25

Nursery – 0

Primary – 24

Secondary – 4

Special – 1

Alternative Provision – 0

Some comments made in Coventry schools' Ofsted reports regarding RE were:

- The school is providing pupils with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and awareness of spiritual and cultural diversity.
- Pupils enjoy learning about other faiths and visiting places of worship.
- The school provides a nurturing environment where pupils are encouraged to be 'one community, many cultures, achieving together.' Visits to different places of worship enable them to consider the views of others. They value diversity and are incredibly well informed about the differences between people.
- Through the choice of texts for study and subjects such as religious education, the school has taken important steps to widen pupils' social and cultural knowledge. Pupils recognise difference as being something to celebrate.

Where RE was specifically mentioned or implied, email contact was made with the school of the following nature:

- To congratulate them on the RE provision
- To offer support with regard to a particular finding or comment in the report.

One response from a headteacher:

'Thank you so much for this email of recognition. We have always worked to achieve this but in the last 3 years, having gone through a transformation and working towards becoming an 'Thinking School' accredited by Exeter University, we have certainly seen a significant change in the way staff teach with a clear understanding of the science of learning and pupils growth in thinking about their thinking. Let's be honest, I think many of us have seen a dip in morality and care in the last few years amongst human beings. It is our intention to develop good human beings who value themselves and others alongside academia. Thank you once again for taking time out of your busy day to write to us, it was certainly appreciated'

Highlights of the year

SACRE members attended the 10 Year Anniversary at Eden Girls School



RE Facilitator attended the West Midlands Commonwealth celebration with several faith leaders from across the area.



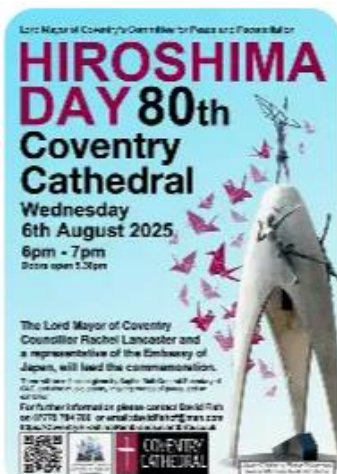
Image of Coventry and Warwickshire Joint SACRE meeting



Teachers from Coventry alongside the DBE spiritual advisor and the RE facilitator at the NATRE Strictly RE event in January



SACRE members and various schools participated in the below event:



Manjit Kaur Chair of SACRE attended a Vaisakhi event at 10 Downing Street



10 DOWNING STREET

14 May 2025

Thank you for accepting my invitation to celebrate Vaisakhi in No10 Downing Street. I greatly appreciated the opportunity to celebrate this important festival, which marks both the birth of the Khalsa and the traditional wheat harvest.

It was also a fantastic opportunity to reflect on the enduring contribution of British Sikhs to our nation over many decades. I was pleased to be joined by so many of you who work across our society; from leading charities and businesses, to serving in our Armed Forces. I am humbled by the generosity and service of Gurdwaras across Britain. These are beacons of light in our communities and reflect the important values of Sikhism: compassion, courage and *sewa*.

Thank you, once again, for accepting my invitation and I hope you enjoyed celebrating Vaisakhi.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rishi Sunak'.

Prime Minister

We collaborated with the URI this academic year and the faith minister to visit him in parliament to discuss our work in community cohesion and the role of faith in young people's lives. This visit included several schools and colleges from across Coventry and Warwickshire



Some of the working party of teachers that worked on the development of the syllabus resources this year:



SACRE member Ghulam Vohra attending Lyng Hall to present them with a UNESCO award

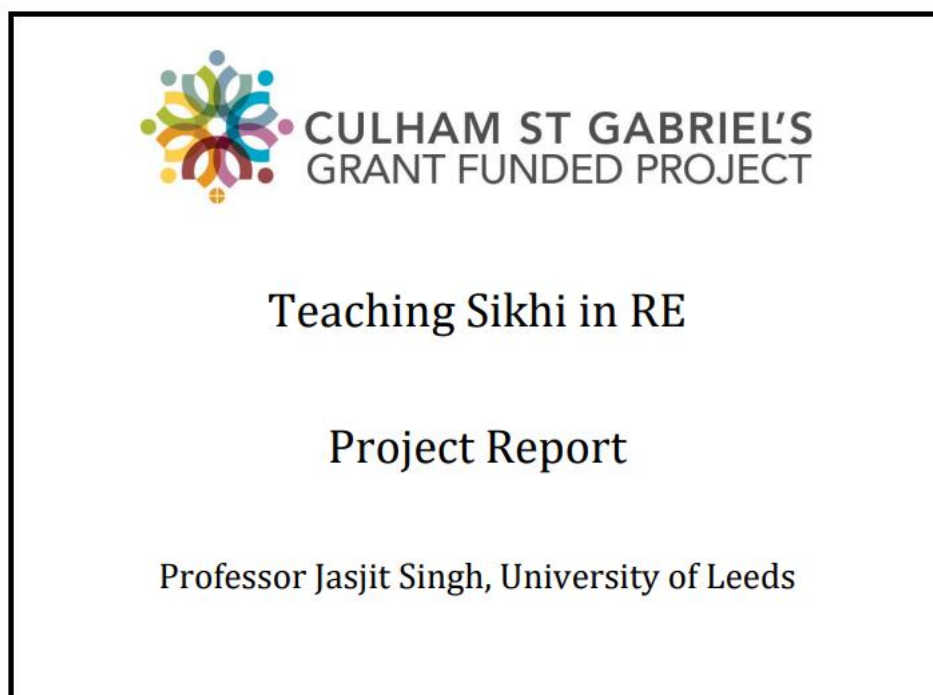


Links with order bodies (local and national)



Our Jewish SACRE representative Ros Johnson was published in an edition of the RE TODAY magazine providing a real voice insight into her Jewish faith and practice. The edition also featured several RE teachers from schools in the local area that also attend SACRE meetings.

Coventry and Warwickshire SACRE have also been mentioned positively in a recent report funded by Culham's St Gabriel:



SACRE Resources for Schools

The following resources were provided for schools during 2024-2025:

- Autumn/Spring/Summer RE Bulletins
- New syllabus updates
- SACRE worldview youtube page dedicated to supporting the new Locally Agreed syllabus
- Simplified lesson plans and suggestions developed collaboratively with the working party of teachers from across both Local Authorities
- A document to support with managing conversations with parents/carers on the role and purpose of RE
- A student voice resource to use with pupils to collate evidence of impact with reference to RE
- Full range of RE Subject Enhancement materials available to schools via the Coventry SACRE syllabus website

SACRE Visits to Schools

SACRE representatives continued to offer visits to local schools as requested. Schools can access SACRE members and request visits using our SACRE suggested lists of visits and visitors available on the Warwickshire SACRE website.

School visits to places of worship

Local schools continue to visit a variety of local places of worship. We have a set of guidance for this on the Warwickshire SACRE website. This document is proving to be incredibly useful as schools implement the new locally agreed syllabus.

Withdrawals from RE

Coventry SACRE has not been made aware of withdrawals from RE although these are encountered at times during SACRE or RE Facilitator monitoring visits. Appropriate advice and documentation is signposted.

Complaints

SACRE received no complaints during 2024-2025.

Advice to the LA

The RE facilitator provided advice to the LA regarding national updates around the Religion and Worldviews approach, as well as ongoing feedback from the REC and NATRE. This has been used to support the development and implementation of the new locally agreed syllabus. SACRE provided advice to Coventry LA regarding Collective Worship and withdrawal protocols.

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Collective Worship - standards and monitoring

During this period of reporting, Coventry did not actively monitor collective worship, although members of SACRE offered advice and guidance to schools and academies that sought it, especially regarding the right of parents/guardians to withdraw their children from collective worship. No training on collective worship was provided by Coventry SACRE.

Determinations

Holbrooks Primary School determination in place until 2027

Advice to LA

The guidance document on collective worship was positively received by Coventry LA and distributed to schools. It is housed on the Warwickshire SACRE website alongside other SACRE resources.

SACRE work with the community

- SACRE continues to support the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative
- SACRE chair supported a number of community celebrations including interfaith week, peace walks, Hiroshima Day at Coventry Cathedral, Community Iftar events and school based projects
- SACRE continues to support the Annual Peace Poetry event in Coventry Methodist Central Hall
- SACRE chairs supported the Religion & Media Council events

SACRE Arrangements and Working

SACRE has a statutory duty:

- To advise the Local Authority on collective worship and Religious Education in community schools and foundation schools which do not have a religious character. Religious Education in these schools must be delivered in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus.
- To advise the Local Authority on collective worship and methods of teaching, choice of materials and teacher training in Religious Education and collective worship.
- To provide an annual report.
- To require Coventry City Council to periodically review the locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (at least every 5 years).

In addition, the SACRE can:

Consider applications made by a Headteacher to release some or all the pupils in a particular school from the requirement for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character (a Determination).

Membership of SACRE:

Coventry SACRE comprises four statutory groups:

- Group A – such Christian Denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area. Currently Coventry SACRE has provision for representatives from the following faiths – Baha’i, Buddhism, Christianity (Free churches, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholicism, Society of Friends), Islam, Judaism.
- Group B – Church of England (Christianity)
- Group C – Teacher Associations
- Group D – Local Authority

Additional members including people with expertise in areas of religious education or who represent perspectives not included in the statutory groups are co-opted by SACRE. Membership details are shown in Appendix A.

Training

- Members of Coventry SACRE attended the online NASACRE Conference in 2024- 2025.
- NASACRE webinars were also attended.
- SACRE members received training on the Religion & Worldviews approach and multidisciplinary RE courtesy of the RE Facilitator.

Professional and Financial Support

A budget is provided to SACRE by the City Council to cover the priorities identified. The SACRE Chairs’ Group has advised the local authority on priorities and how this funding should be spent. In 2024-25, this was used to fund the following:

- Supporting the writing and development of the Agreed Syllabus
- Monitoring RE provision via Ofsted report scrutiny and exam entry/results data Training for local RE teachers

- Salary for RE Facilitator one day a week during term time, plus expenses (mileage and resources)
- Servicing of SACRE meetings – venues, refreshments
- NASACRE annual subscription / attendance at AGM
- NATRE annual subscription
- Chartered College annual subscription
- CPD for RE Facilitator

The local authority has continued to provide annual support to SACRE with LA Officer time, a clerk and other administrative staff to enable SACRE to fulfil its duties.

Appendix A

SACRE MEMBERSHIP

Name	Group	Representing
Helen Maoudis	A	Greek Orthodox
Ghulam Vohra	A	Islam
Anne-Marie Taylor	A	Black Churches
Brian Goredema-Braid	A	Humanists
Ros Johnson	A	Judaism
Bill Rattigan	A	Baha'i
Pavanjeet Sandhu	A	Sikhi
Alka Gandhi	A	Dharmic Traditions
Roderick Clark	B	Church of England
Joanne Evans	B	Church of England
Jo Brake	B	Church of England
Slax Heer	C	Teacher (NASUWT)
Michelle Cuskelly	C	Teacher (Primary)
Alice Thomas	C	Teacher (Secondary)
Mahima Yasmin	C	Teacher (Secondary)
Manjit Kaur	D	Coventry City Council
Gemma Hathaway	D	Coventry City Council
Cllr Lynette Kelly	D	Coventry City Council
Cllr Kindy Sandhu	D	Coventry City Council
Rachel Cooper	Co-opted	University of Warwick ITE
Martin Ledgard	Education Improvement and Standards	Coventry City Council
Lucy Lambert	Clerk	Coventry City Council

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AREIAC	Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants
ASC	Agreed Syllabus Conference
C of E	Church of England
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DfE	Department for Education
EBacc	English Baccalaureate
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
INSET	In-Service Training Day
KS	Key Stage
LA	Local Authority
LOtC	Learning Outside the Classroom
NASACRE	National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education
NATRE	National Association of Teachers of Religious Education
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PEBBLE	Public Body Liaison Committee for British Paganism
RE	Religious Education
REC	Religious Education Council
RS	Religious Studies
SACRE	Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
SIAMS	Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools
SMSCD	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development