Croydon Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education Annual Report 2023-2024



Croydon SACRE is a member National Association of SACREs

Annual report for Croydon SACRE 2023-2024

Welcome by the Chair

The SACRE has met three times during the academic year in person at the Town Hall. Where possible, we prefer to hold SACRE meetings at a place of worship or a school. SACRE has worked towards the priorities outlined in the current Development Plan and contributed to the national discussions on direction and health of Religious Education in the future.

Croydon is a richly diverse community and the need for strengthening every means of increasing tolerance and understanding of each other especially in the realm of religion has never been greater, in every decade of life.

SACRE is grateful to St James the Great Primary School and Coloma Covent Girls' School for their willingness to accept and enable access to RE materials for primary and secondary schools, respectively. The SACRE has also sought to strengthen its representation of faith groups.

A high proportion of schools in Croydon have converted to Academies and the SACRE has made ongoing efforts to engage with schools to ensure their continued compliance with requirements to provide high quality Religious Education and opportunities for Collective Worship.

Keeping the place of RE in the school curriculum has been a challenge which the SACRE has sought to rise to. This, combined with the impact of the absence of RE from the English Baccalaureate in secondary schools, causes the SACRE great concern that Religious Education might not be apportioned the same importance as other subjects in the school curriculum. However, a renewed appetite in many schools for an improved RE profile has been detected, which is very welcome to SACRE.

This year produced winners in the primary school and secondary school categories of the SACRE short essay competition for Holocaust Memorial Day, and presentations of the WIRE (Widening Inclusivity in RE) award for schools (developed by Bristol and South Gloucestershire RE) to three schools at their times of collective worship.

This year, 2023-24 has also seen the continuation of work on a new Agreed Syllabus with input from the Agreed Syllabus Conference, with representation largely overlapping with SACRE membership.

As Chairman, I would like to thank all those who serve on Croydon SACRE, teachers, Church of England representative, faith group representatives, ClIrs, and the vice chairman, Lt Col Morag Rowlanes, and especially grateful to Mrs Penny Smith-Orr, SACRE Officer for Croydon, as professional support in her capacity as our Consultant and Adviser and for driving our work forward and keeping us abreast of developments in Religious Education nationally and locally, and Mrs Judy Bennett, committee Clerk. The help of the Education Department is also gratefully acknowledged.

Many thanks to Rev Alan Bayes and Mr Shaun Burns for their long service, significant inputs, knowledge and wisdom at SACRE and a welcome to Mr Gwyn Bassan as in-coming Church of England representative.

Croydon SACRE is able to face the challenges ahead as we continue to ensure that Religious Education and Collective Worship retain their rightful place at the heart of our schools.

Cllr Richard Chatterjee

Croydon SACRE has met three times in the year, each time in the Town Hall in Katherine Street in Croydon; On 16 November 2023, 5 March 2024, 18 June 2024

The Agreed Syllabus Conference continued to sit during this year, see below for details.

Membership and Attendance of Croydon SACRE 2023-2024

A-Other Faiths B-Church of England C- Teachers D -Councillors.

Numbers indicate meetings attended

Grp	Name	Present	Grp	Name	
Α	Salvation Army (vice chair)	3	С	Ms Lorna John	3
Α	Judaism	0	С	Mrs Sara Bonnick	1
Α	Muslim	3	С	Mrs Sonia Clarke	2
Α	Ahmadiyya	2			
Α	Sikh	1	С	Ms Lauren Camp	1
Α	Catholic	0	С	Ms Logini Dyges	1
Α	Hindu	0	С	Mr Paul Harvey	1
Α	Humanist Representative	1	D	Cllr Richard Chatterjee (Chair)	3
В	Cheryl Hudson	1	D	Cllr Patsy Cummings	2
В	Rev Alan Bayes	1	D	Cllr Janet Cambell (From May)	0
В	Shaun Burns (to June)	1	D	Cllr Fatima Zaman	1
В	Jessica Hopkins (from December)	2	D	Cllr Sherwan Chowdhury	0
В	Gwynn Bassan (from June)	1	D	Cllr Nikhil Sherine Thampi (from May)	2
	Penny Smith-Orr SACRE Officer	3			
	Judith Bennett (Clerk)	3			

Overview

Standing items for Croydon SACRE are the development plan which is updated through the year, the RE consultant's report on actions and the network meetings or courses run in Croydon. The SACRE WIRE award for widening inclusivity in RE is discussed each meeting and judging is done of entries received in that term. Arrangements for giving the certificate to schools are made. At the meetings during the year some time was spent on reporting on progress of the ASC and the writing group. The SACRE WIRE award (for widening inclusivity in RE) is discussed each meeting and judging is done of entries received in that term. Arrangements for giving the certificate to schools are made. Schools the each meeting and judging is done of entries received in that term. Arrangements for giving the certificate to schools are made. The Holocaust Memorial event is also a standing item, schools take part each year and SACRE runs a competition with a prize for the winning Primary and Secondary schools, members of SACRE judge the entries online. The NASACRE AGM is reported on in the summer term and any actions taken as a result. The clerk to SACRE monitors the OFSTED reports for Croydon schools and produces the results at each meeting. Also, at meetings this year were reports on the ASC and the writing group.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference

The Agreed Syllabus conference sat 3 times during the year on 19 September 2023, 5 March 2024 and July 9, 2024. There were also several zoom meetings with individual members during 2024. Members of the Agreed syllabus conference were Members of the Croydon SACRE plus ClIr Campbell and ClIr Bonello, a Buddhist representative, a second Hindu representative and the Jewish Representative, who has withdrawn from the actual SACRE meetings for the time being. There was also a teacher writing group of 3 Primary teachers, a SEND specialist and a Secondary head of RE.

We initially hoped to purchase an Agreed Syllabus from elsewhere and adapt it for Croydon schools, but this proved impractical. Having decided to write our own syllabus the teachers writing group met several times and worked both together and independently. The Big Questions and the units of work were checked with the members of committee A and rewritten according to their suggestions.

At the beginning of the process of revising the Agreed syllabus a questionnaire was sent to schools asking what they liked and wanted to keep and what they had found less valuable in the current syllabus. In the working team, two teachers looked at early Years and KS1, one teacher and the RE consultant looked at KS2, one worked on KS3, the special needs teacher produced a set of key stage guidance; all were supported by the Adviser who has written section one and put it all together.

The previous syllabus was over 300 pages including resources and it had been suggested that this one would be a smaller document, in the end it is 444 pages long which includes many resources, assessment suggestions for each year group and a resource section with many photographs of the inside and outside of many places of worship in Croydon as well as some photographs of places of worship across the world. The census details for Croydon are included and the whole syllabus has the aim to be very Croydon-specific. There is also an appendix, kindly provided by Merton Council from their syllabus, with specific information about the Ahmadiyya community.

The Spring term was spent editing the units and completing the main section of the Syllabus. Schools were sent draft units of work at Easter and requested to trial some of it. The RE coordinators also sent back feedback of all sorts and further suggestions for resources and activities. The final Agreed Syllabus Conference was in July and all 4 groups agreed that the document was completed.

The whole document was sent to White Label a web design company in July 2024 and finally the website was completed at the beginning of October. The new Croydon Agreed Syllabus was launched to teachers on October 7th and received very favourably. It was also launched to the Headteachers breakfast meeting on October 9th. The web site is <u>www.croydonsacre.co.uk</u>. As it is a website additions can be made, to the resources particularly, at any time. There is also an events section which will be updated as necessary.

Religious Education (statutory responsibilities)

Many of the Primary schools and most of the Secondary schools in Croydon are Academies now but most continue to use the Croydon Agreed Syllabus. Teachers from Academies are also on the teacher group of SACRE. Some of the private independent schools in Croydon also use the Croydon Agreed Syllabus. Teachers can email the RE consultant for advice and guidance and any FOI on religious education are answered for the Council. A network meeting is held every term online with 20-25 people attending. A course was also held for new RE coordinators.

The Heartstone Project (an anti-hate crime, anti-racism project funded by MOPAC)

We were lucky to get funding in Croydon for a third year. This year, four Primary schools took part, along with a school which carried on with a new Year 5 having done the project last year. This is another way of keeping contact with the schools and discussing religious education. The teachers have support from the National organisation and half-termly support group meetings with the Croydon Adviser. At the end of the project, we were able to hold a big exhibition in the Town Hall. Pupils brought their artwork and did presentations to the visitors. The Mayor of Croydon and the Deputy Civic Mayor, the Police as well as several Councillors, parents, teachers and members of SACRE came to the exhibition and were all impressed by the children's enthusiasm for the project. The national leader came on screen and led some interactive discussions and Indian dancing. All the schools were given certificates by the Chair of SACRE.

In January the secondary pupils who had done the project in Year 7 at Oasis Coulsdon, the RE Consultant and the Director of Rakha, a Sikh organisation monitoring hate crime, were invited to the Tower of London for a presentation of a new part of the project on Kosovo 25 years on.

Standards and monitoring of RE

Standards are monitored through the RE Network and from emails received from teachers and Headteachers. The RE consultant also goes to at least one Head teachers' breakfast per year and updates them on religious education and collective worship and answers any questions posed. SACRE looks at the OFSTED reports and are pleased if they mention RE. The exam results for GCSE have not been available for a few years, however this year they have arrived and it is pleasing to see that 7 of our 20 schools have continued to put more than 90% of the cohort into an RE GCSE, Coloma convent school and Harris Academy Purley achieving more that 80% pass rates with Norbury manor Business and Enterprise College getting a pass rate of 79.1%. Appendix A shows the results for all schools.

The WIRE Award- During the year three schools achieved the WIRE award, which is designed to encourage schools to widen the impact of RE, St Peter's Primary, Broadmead Primary and Monks Orchard Primary. The RE consultant and the Chair of SACRE went to these schools during collective worship to present the certificates. Other schools have applied to collect the evidence.





Teacher Training, materials, and advice

There is a termly RE Coordinators meeting which has an average attendance of twenty teachers. News is shared plus some CPD training and usually an RE activity is shown. There is time for teachers to network and to discuss their views. A news sheet is sent at the beginning of term to all schools with useful dates of meetings and festivals and other information about RE in Croydon. During the year teachers also email or call with questions or for advice on various RE matters. As we have been writing a new syllabus, we have not done any type of guidance documents this year.

Withdrawals and Complaints

On withdrawals from RE lessons, there have been a few enquiries for assistance, but these are getting fewer and fewer each year. There are very few children withdrawn from RE in Croydon; this might be because it is a very diverse borough with many religious groups within it and the leaders of the faiths are supportive of the work of SACRE.

Advice to the Local Authority (LA)

Our advice to the LA was that we needed to write a new syllabus. An extra amount of budget had been set aside for this and this paid White Label for the web design. We also advised them that Croydon SACRE needs to be affiliated to NASACRE.

Collective Worship (Statutory requirements)

We discussed Collective worship and decided to do a website search on all schools. A template was sent to members with a list of schools to look at for information/policy etc and the results will be looked at in the coming year.

There have been no determinations referred to SACRE and no complaints. The SACRE committee have had training in how to deal with a Determination but have not yet had to put this into practice.

There is a comprehensive guidance on CW available on the Council website and now on the Agreed syllabus website.

Links with other bodies

Croydon SACRE is a member of NASACRE and recommends the new London Hub to teachers.

The SACRE Officer, the Chair of SACRE and Jewish representatives are responsible with the Civic Mayor's office for producing the Council's Holocaust Memorial Day event.

A representative from the Southwark Board of Education staff is on the SACRE committee which is also a very useful link with the church schools. The SACRE officer is also the Chair of Faiths Together in Croydon which is the Interfaith group and therefore SACRE members are invited to all the events. The Bishop of Croydon's Interfaith officer is also a member of SACRE.

SACRE involvement locally

In the Spring the chair of SACRE was voted by the Council to be the deputy Civic Mayor.

As is usual a Ramadan guidance document was sent to schools.

SACRE members came to the final exhibition of the Heartstone project (see above) and talked with the pupils about their work.

The SACRE officer has a quarterly meeting with the Executive Mayor and leaders of the many faith communities in Croydon.

Croydon SACRE (statutory responsibilities)

Croydon SACRE has a clerk provided and paid for by the Council and a SACRE officer/ RE Adviser is also provided and works for one day a week for Croydon. The SACRE officer has close links in the Council, being part of the Education Team, and is aware of Council initiatives which could impact the work of SACRE.

Membership of the committee is reasonably representative of the local faith community and includes Academy schools and community schools' representation. The faith communities are represented reasonably well and include an Imam from Norbury Mosque and a representative from the Ahmadiyya Mosque, we also have a Humanist representative on Group A, currently the Buddhist representative is missing despite trying to find someone. The Jewish representative has withdrawn from many meetings and activities during this year but keeps in touch with SACRE through the minutes and talks to the RE consultant. Councillors on the committee are also very helpful and willing to support activities.

Finance for SACRE is there to pay for the Officer and the Clerk. A meeting venue in the Town Hall is provided free to council officers. The NASACRE subscription was paid this year. There was money specifically for the Agreed Syllabus to be turned into a website.

school	%Full course	Results	%Short Course	Results
	entries	% 9-4	entries	%9-4
Woodcote High	6.7	71.4		
Archbishop Tenison's	94.2	61.1		
St Mary's	98.1	50.5		
Riddlesdown collegiate	97.8	73.7	0.3	0
St Joseph's college	98.8	72.2		
Thomas More	93	47.2		
Coloma Convent Girls	95.4	81.4		
Norbury Manor	41.4	79.1	5.9	23.1
Business				
Shirley High	10.9	68.4		
Harris South Norwood	32.7	68.2		
Harris City Crystal	16.9	80		
palace				
Oasis Coulsdon	74.6	37.8		
Harris Purley	15.5	88.9		
Oasis Shirley Park	1.2	0		
Oasis Arena	0.9	0		
Harris Invictus	5.5	66.7	0.6	0
Archbishop Lanfranc	96.1	61.7	0.6	0
Meridian High	11.1	50		
Harris Beulah Hill	35	68.8		
Arts Blake				

Appendix A. KS4 % Exam Entries and Results

Appendix B- SACRE Development Plan September 2023- September 2024 Adviser time 50 days.

Priorities for 2023-24 in RED due to work on the new Croydon Syllabus

Objective	Key Tasks	Who	Success criteria Mon Deadline / Time	itoring	Resour ces	Progress
To prepare agenda, respond to any action from previous meetings and plan an ongoing programme for SACRE committee meetings.	Arrange and attend 3 pre agenda meetings per year Write papers and reports for the meeting to LA timetable Attend 3 SACRE meetings per year	Clerk Chairman RE Adviser RE Adviser All members of committee	3 pre agenda meetings 3 Termly meetings Effective meetings with Action points carried out by Members between meetings.	6 days Adviser time	Meeting venues Clerk at pre agenda Clerk at Meeting s	Done for each meeting
SACRE consider reports and initiatives from NASACRE, the RE Council and AREIAC	Consider relevant material from AREIAC Conference and NASACRE AGM and the Commissio n on RE	RE Adviser/ Chairman and any other rep	As required and as Follow up to NASACRE AGM business Pay subscription and conference attendance asap	2 days adviser time to attend meetings and write reports	Adviser or member of SACRE	Subscriptio n paid
Renew the Croydon	Hold a further Agreed	All members	Check the Religious Education Council document to see if	unknown	Meeting venue-	ASC held in Autumn Term.

Agreed Syllabus	Syllabus Conference in the Autumn Term 2023 To sign off Possible ASC in summer term to agree to send out syllabus		compliant. Complete the writing of the new syllabus and send draft to be turned into an online document		Town Hall	Continuing progress on making a website for all the documents. Several meetings held and final ASC held in July and agreed. Draft sent to schools to feedback by 1 July
Units of work for schools to use with the new syllabus	Complete the editing of the units. Send to line manager and Chair and then send completed draft to schools for feedback	Lorna John, teacher group and Adviser Adviser	A religion and worldviews syllabus completed. A set of units of work for schools to use to enhance their teaching and learning	Unknown number of days	Zoom, face to face venues Teacher s Adviser	Adviser edited teachers documents and used comments from SACRE committee SEND adaptations pages made.
Launch of new RE syllabus for Croydon	Arrange a launch and training event	Adviser Lorna John	New syllabus in place and training on its use delivered	2 days	Venue. New syllabus	To be arranged once syllabus is finished Launched October 7 th 2024
To work towards being an advanced SACRE	Start to use new evaluation document	Members of all 4 committees plus Adviser	A series of proposals to be put into action to ensure that SACRE moves forward Using information from self-evaluation	2 days adviser time Monitorin g of the proposals to be looked at each	Time of member s Time at meeting s	

				termly meeting and updated in summer term		
Training for SACRE members on quality RE	Time during Meetings for a short training session Recommen d NASACRE training webinars	Adviser to prepare training or invite outside speakers.	SACRE committee to understand RE and CW in schools more comprehensively	2 days adviser time	Meeting time	Discussions held during the ASC have enhanced general understand ing
Monitor Collective Worship	Ask RE Coordinato rs what has been happening in their schools. Possibly write to HT in schools	Adviser to write and chair to sign	Help schools who ask. Direct them to the SACRE Guidance	1 day as required	Adviser to report at meeting s	New round of website monitoring started in summer term
To continue to promote The WIRE award for schools.	Coordinate entries and give advice to teachers	RE Adviser SACRE members at end of process	Schools entering into the award and widening inclusivity in RE Celebrate achieving schools at Network meetings Go to schools to present certificate	Any 12 month period	Adviser and SACRE member s to look at evidenc e at each meeting	3 Schools applied Monks Orchard, St Peters, Broadmead , certificates all given to schools at Collective Worship

To report annually on the work of SACRE.	Collect information on exam data (if available) and SACRE work RE Adviser to write an annual report by December on the previous academic year.	RE Adviser to write, Chairman to read, Clerk to circulate.	Completed on time and copies provided for SACRE members, Directors, libraries, schools etc	Deadline end Decembe r 2023 RE Adviser time 3 days	Adviser	Completed and sent out
To arrange and lead an RE coordinator s meeting each term	Advertise date, plan informatio n (national and local) respond to requests for agenda items Follow up meetings/e mails etc.	Adviser	RE Coordinators kept up to date with local and national information and advised on excellent teaching and learning for RE.	4 days adviser time	Adviser time	Meetings held each term with approx. 25 people attending
To run courses for RE coordinator s/ teachers on aspects of the teaching and learning in RE Go to head teachers breakfast 1x annually	Advertise dates Plan courses and deliver. Follow up	Adviser Governor services officer	All schools are confident in using the agreed syllabus. Training on Using the new syllabus either summer 2024 or September 2024 HT breakfast presentation done in Autumn 2023 Possibly return in Summer 2024	As required (3 days)	Adviser time	New Coordinato r course held in spring 2024 Head teachers breakfast presentatio n done in Autumn term and summer term

Croydon schools to take part in the third year of the National Heart stone Project	Support schools with the project on anti-hate funded by MOPAC	Adviser	Meetings held twice a term and support given to contact other relevant parties. Exhibition to be held in the summer term	5/6 days Adviser time and other input as necessary	Howard primary, St Peters primary and Norbury Manor Juniors, Broadm ead	Meetings held with schools. Exhibition booked for June 18 th .Group attended Tower of London launch. Final meeting held 23 may
Council Holocaust Memorial Day event schools' involvemen t	Attend monthly meetings x6 with Equalities dept of Council to plan event. Discuss themes with schools and encourage participatio n. Send out information and reminders. Report to SACRE.	Adviser Chair of SACRE	Schools' participation in Council event. Schools marking the day within their CW, using resources A successful event Schools entering the SACRE competition 2023 First meeting July 2023 Advertise schools' competition On Fragility of Freedom Get prizes from sponsors or SACRE budget	Adviser time 6 days	Adviser/ schools member s	Event held in January. Well received. Prizes and refreshmen ts paid for by SACRE budget. Visit to Minster Juniors and St Giles to give prizes.
On behalf of SACRE and education departmen t disseminat e	Answering telephone and email requests from public and education	Adviser	Information/help on religious education and collective worship queries given as necessary. Keep <u>www.reconsultant.c</u>	Approx 4 days	Telepho ne/ Broadba nd	Continuing

informatio n to teachers and members of the public and respond to FOI requests To respond to requests for help and advice from teachers	dept. Writing reports as necessary. Keep website relevant for schools RE Advisor to visit schools, or do virtual meetings, which request help using the Croydon syllabus		o.uk website updated. Ensure Croydon Council website SACRE information correct. RE Coordinators confident in delivering the RE curriculum in their school	As required- approx. 2 hours per school	Adviser	Broadmead staff meeting autumn.
Continue to contact Academy chains in Croydon and inform them of SACRE and support available	To contact RE teachers in Academies and the leaders of Teaching Alliances and offer support	Adviser	Support given to Academies and teaching Alliances. These schools knowledgeable on Croydon Syllabus and resources available	2 days	Adviser	Many Primary academies attend the RE network
To meet with line manager as required	Report on work of SACRE and arrange ways to highlight the work to relevant parties	Advisor	Investigate and undertake means of highlighting SACRE to schools and Governors in Croydon	Adviser time Attendan ce at meetings and making presentati ons	Advisor time	Regular meetings held. Help with syllabus given Attendance at Education team meetings

Adviser t liaise wit St James the work of schools holding Resources And Faiths Together in Croydon Adviser t St James the Grea Member invited to FTiC events.	th s it Adviser	Adviser to work with schools to ensure quality resources and efficient loan system and liaise between education dept and schools. Adviser to attend and represent SACRE. Report on the various events	3 days adviser time Reports to SACRE if applicable	Adviser time Adviser to write reports. 1 day. Membe rs time	Information put into the new syllabus Teachers using the resources
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Appendix C

Self-Evaluation of Croydon SACRE – June 2023

Key Area Number	Key Area	Requires Improve ment (RI)	Developing	Established	Advanced
Section 1 N	lanagement of the SACRE and				
Partnership	with the LA and other key				
Stakeholde	rs				
1a	Funding: professional and financial support				X
1b	SACRE meetings				Х
1c	Membership and training			Х	
1d	Improvement/development planning			Х	
1e	Information and advice			Х	
1f	Partnerships with key stakeholders				X
1g	Relations with the Academies Sector			Х	
Section 2 Standards and quality of provision of religious education					

2a	RE provision across the LA		Х	
2b	Standards of achievement	Х		
	and public examination			
	entries			
2c	Quality of learning and		Х	
	teaching			
2d	Quality of interaction and		Х	
	communication with			
	leadership and management			
	of RE in schools			
2e	Relations with academies		Х	
	and other non-LA			
	maintained schools			
	3 The effectiveness of the locally			
agreed s				
3a	The review process		Х	
3b	The quality of the local			x
2	agreed syllabus		,	
3c	Launching and implementing		n/a	
2.1	the Agreed Syllabus			
3d	Membership and training of		Х	
	the Agreed Syllabus			
20	Conference (ASC)			V
3e	Developing the revised agreed syllabus			Х
3f	Making best use of National			x
51	Guidance			^
Section	4 Collective Worship		Х	
4a	Supporting pupil entitlement			
4b	Enhancing the quality of	Х		
	provision of collective			
	worship			
4c	Responding to requests for			Х
	determinations			
Section !	5 Contribution of SACRE to			
-	ng cohesion across the			
commun	-			
5a	SACRE's membership			Х
5b	SACRE's understanding of			х
	the local area			ļ
5c	SACRE's engagement with		Х	
	the community cohesion			
	agenda			
5d	SACRE's role within wider LA			х
	initiatives on community			
	cohesion			