

Croydon
Standing Advisory Council
On Religious Education
Annual Report
2024-2025



Croydon SACRE is a member National Association of SACREs

Chairman's Introduction

Welcome by the Chair

Welcome to the 2024-25 Annual Report of the Croydon SACRE.

The SACRE has met three times during the academic year in person. 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. Some opportunities have been taken to engage with governors during training to enhance awareness of RE in schools.

Keeping the place of RE in the school curriculum has been a challenge which the SACRE has sought to rise to. The national emphasis on RE has been in a partial state of flux but 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 has also seen the conclusion and release of a new Agreed Syllabus following the work over 2 years of an 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, Cllrs, 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 all members of SACRE for their work and inputs. 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, twice in the Town Hall in Katharine Street in Croydon; On 14 November 2024, 13 February 2025, and in the Hindu Temple in Coulsdon on 19 June 2025

Membership and Attendance of Croydon SACRE 2024-2025

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

Numbers indicate meetings attended

Grp	Name	Present	Grp	Name	
A	Salvation Army	2	C	Ms Lorna John (Vice Chair)	3
A	Judaism	0	C	Mrs Sara Bonnick	3
A	Muslim	3	C	Mrs Sonia Clarke	2
A	Sikh	0	C	Ms Lauren Camp	1
A	Catholic	0	C	Ms Logini Dyges	1
A	Hindu	3	C	Mr Paul Harvey	1
A	Humanist Representative	0	D	Cllr Richard Chatterjee (Chair)	3
A	Ahmadiyya	1	D	Cllr Patsy Cummings	1
B	Jo Richardson	1	D	Cllr Janet Cambell	1
B	Jessica Hopkins	2	D	Cllr Fatima Zaman	1
B	Gwynn Bassan	2	D	Cllr Sherwan Chowdhury	0
			D	Cllr Nikhil Sherine Thampi	0
	Penny Smith-Orr SACRE Officer	3			
	Judith Bennett (Clerk)	3			

Overview of meetings

There are standing items on the Croydon SACRE Agenda which are the development plan, the WIRE Award, the annual Holocaust memorial event for Croydon and the report from the SACRE Officer and schools' adviser.

During the meetings this year were discussions on the response to the DfE curriculum and Assessment Review which was duly sent in. The question of monitoring schools for religious education and collective worship was discussed, and a monitoring of websites was finished.

Also discussed was the consultation on Interfaith Week and Ofsted and SIAMs reports are noted. The launch of the new Croydon Agreed Syllabus took place in October and this was discussed along with feedback from teacher and the RE network meetings that are held termly online. In the summer term we updated the self-evaluation of Croydon SACRE the results are in Appendix C and are used in the development plans, Appendix D.

Religious Education Statutory Responsibilities

The new Croydon Agreed syllabus was launched in October 2024, this is an online website so can be, and is, updated with resources and dates of events and RE meetings. It can be found at <https://croydonsacre.co.uk> During the year the network meetings have discussed this new syllabus, and the feedback has been totally positive. Two schools who previously had not used the Croydon document have changed to this syllabus.

The network meetings and emails from RE coordinators are a source of monitoring information. The Committee monitored the schools' websites and found information from these. Croydon SACRE runs the WIRE award (widening inclusivity in religious education, originally developed by Bristol and South Gloucestershire SACRE, a free award for schools in Croydon who receive a certificate if they have achieved the award as judged by the Croydon SACRE committee. The SACRE Officer and Chair got the schools to present the award which lasts for three years. This is also a way of monitoring and schools that are visited in this way are keen to show their work. As far as we know no school has applied for the REQM award, due to the cost.

The SACRE officer attended three Head teacher breakfasts during the year to talk about the new syllabus and other actions that SACRE has done. In February there was an online training for Governors on the new syllabus and the implementation of it.

Teacher Training- during the RE network meetings there is always an item of training, often these are suggestions on how to teach a festival or unit of work. In May there was a training course online on *How to be the Best RE coordinator* which was well attended.

There are few withdrawals from RE in Croydon and teachers ask for and receive support from the SACRE officer if one comes up. At the beginning of the school year there was a problem with a KS1 Sikh child whose Patka was being pulled off. Rakha, a Sikh charity, contacted SACRE and the SACRE officer went to a meeting in the school with the parents and the situation was resolved.

Advice to the LA has been that the syllabus is completed and to use a website for it. To update the documents on the council website to reflect the SACRE activities. That is important to keep up the subscription to NASACRE and that members of Croydon SACRE need to be able to go to the AGM.

Collective Worship Statutory Responsibilities

Monitoring of collective worship has been done through the website monitoring undertaken by members. There is a Croydon document in the syllabus resources and on the council website that give guidance on collective worship, including the law, policies, involving children and visitors and resources that are available to schools. The visit to schools achieving the WIRE award is done during collective worship which is a tiny snapshot of how it is done in schools.

There have been no determinations and SACRE have done training on the process and have documents ready should the need arise. In September there was an online course on how to manage the best collective worship.

We rarely get asked for help with withdrawals from collective worship and there have been no complaints.

National and Local Links

From May of 2025 the chair of SACRE has been the Civic Mayor of Croydon, it has been good that he has continued as our chair during his period of office.

The clerk and SACRE Officer work hard to keep Croydon SACREs subscription to NASACRE going. The Officer is involved with the Borough Faiths Forum and the Faith and Belief Forum and is chair of Faiths Together in Croydon all of which help schools and SACRE with links to wider issues and the faith community of Croydon.

Croydon Council mayor's office put on a Holocaust Memorial Day event each year in January. The Chair of SACRE and SACRE officer are on the planning committee and SACRE runs an annual competition for both Primary and Secondary schools on the theme of the year. Schools take part with presentations during the hour-long ceremony. Oasis Coulsdon and Forest Academy were the winners of the 2025 competition and received Jewish artefacts at the event.

The current Vice chair, who is a teacher from Oasis Academy Coulsdon, and the SACRE officer have been involved in the national Heartstone project for the last four years. Schools in Croydon have done the Hate crime project using the Heartstone story and have had an annual exhibition of their work. This was not possible this year but some of the schools who previously took part have carried on using the resources. In May we were invited to take a group of the Oasis pupils to present on the project in Nato in Brussels. This was very exciting for us and although the day was very long the pupils were excellent in their presentations and were lucky to have a talk about working for Nato as well. Of the Ambassadors who were there eighteen have asked to have the photo exhibition in their own country.

Governor training on the new syllabus was put on in February. Advice to schools was sent regarding Ramadan arrangements. RE Coordinators are invited to many of the Faiths Together events so they can meet members of the faith groups.

SACRE statutory responsibilities

Croydon SACRE has an officer who is employed for 50 days per year, there is also a clerk employed on an *ad hoc* basis. The officer is linked with the council Education Advisory Team and attends faith leaders' meeting with the Mayor every three months. FOI requests are sent to the Officer to respond to.

Membership is fairly steady, a Buddhist rep is still needed, and the Jewish rep does not attend meetings but is in touch with the Officer. The Sikh member is also very active but has been unable to attend the meetings due to an accident. Training on determinations and on the Agreed Syllabus conference was given in the previous year. The self-evaluation tool is used every two years. Members are encouraged to take advantage of the NASACRE training events and attend the NASACRE AGM. Finance is tight but with a business case put forward SACRE usually has money for essential items. The website with the syllabus on it is maintained by White Label Creative and money is set aside to pay for this annually. The venues chosen are always free and we are thankful for them.

Appendix A

GCSE Exam Results

Subject pupil level local authority data' for 9 to 1, 9 to 4, 9 to 5, Boys, GCSE and 3 other filters in Croydon for 2024/25

		Total	Boys	Girls
9 to 1	Number of pupils achieving the grade	1,689	853	836
	Percentage of pupils achieving the grade	97%	96%	98%
9 to 4	Number of pupils achieving the grade	1,164	541	623
	Percentage of pupils achieving the grade	67%	61%	73%
9 to 5	Number of pupils achieving the grade	886	383	503
	Percentage of pupils achieving the grade	51%	43%	59%
Total pupil entries		1,745		

Coloma Convent girls and Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise schools did very well with the full course this year and Meridian also did well by entering a large number of pupils into a short course.

Appendix B

CPD provided to schools

Head teachers breakfast meetings three times during the year to update Heads on progress of the syllabus and items of importance regarding RE and CW.

Online course how to be the Best RE Coordinator

Network meetings three times a year always include an element of CPD.

Support given to individual schools both Primary and Secondary throughout the year as requested.

Appendix C
Self-Evaluation of Croydon SACRE – June 2025

Number	Key Area	Requires Improvement (RI)	Developing	Established	Advanced
Section 1 Management of the SACRE and Partnership with the LA and other key Stakeholders					
1a	Funding: professional and financial support				X
1b	SACRE meetings			X	
1c	Membership and training			X	
1d	Improvement/development planning				X
1e	Information and advice			X	
1f	Partnerships with key stakeholders				X
1g	Relations with the Academies Sector			X	
Section 2 Standards and quality of provision of religious education					
2a	RE provision across the LA			X	
2b	Standards of achievement and public examination entries			X	
2c	Quality of learning and teaching			X	
2d	Quality of interaction and communication with leadership and management of RE in schools				X
2e	Relations with academies and other non-LA maintained schools			X	
Section 3 The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus					
3a	The review process				X
3b	The quality of the local agreed syllabus				X
3c	Launching and implementing the Agreed Syllabus			X	
3d	Membership and training of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)				X
3e	Developing the revised agreed syllabus				X
3f	Making best use of National Guidance				X
Section 4 Collective Worship					
4a	Supporting pupil entitlement			X	
4b	Enhancing the quality of provision of collective worship			X	
4c	Responding to requests for determinations				X
Section 5 Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community					

5a	SACRE's membership				X
5b	SACRE's understanding of the local area				X
5c	SACRE's engagement with the community cohesion agenda				X
5d	SACRE's role within wider LA initiatives on community cohesion				X

Appendix D

Development Plan 2024-2025 SACRE Officer time 50 days

Objective	Key Tasks	Who	Success criteria	Monitoring Deadline / Time	Resources	Progress
To prepare agenda, respond to any action from previous meetings and plan an ongoing programme for SACRE committee meetings .	<p>Arrange and attend 3 pre agenda meetings per year</p> <p>Write papers and reports for the meeting to LA timetable</p> <p>Attend 3 SACRE meetings per year</p>	<p>Clerk Chairman RE Adviser</p> <p>RE Adviser</p> <p>All members of committee</p>	<p>3 pre agenda meetings</p> <p>3 Termly meetings</p> <p>Effective meetings with by Members between</p>	6 days Adviser time	<p>Meeting venues</p> <p>Clerk at pre agenda</p> <p>Clerk at Meetings</p>	ongoing
SACRE consider reports and initiatives from NASACRE, the RE Council and AREIAC	<p>Consider relevant material from AREIAC Conference and NASACRE AGM and the Commission on RE</p>	<p>RE Adviser/ Chairman and any other rep</p>	<p>As required and as</p> <p>Follow up to NASACRE AGM business</p> <p>Pay subscription and conference attendance asap</p>	2 days adviser time to attend meetings and write reports	<p>Adviser or member of SACRE</p>	<p>One delegate sent to NASACRE AGM and voted onto the Executive</p> <p>Payment to NASACRE</p>

Launch the new Croydon Agreed Syllabus	<p>Meet White label and check through syllabus.</p> <p>Arrange venue and refreshments. Invite teachers October 7th.</p> <p>Arrange slot at HT breakfast 9th October</p>	<p>Adviser.</p> <p>Some members</p>	<p>Check the REC document to see if compliant.</p> <p>Collect feedback. Meet white label for further corrections from feedback</p>	unknown	<p>Final cost £8000</p> <p>Meeting venue- Town Hall</p> <p>Adviser time</p> <p>Lorna and Chair time</p>	<p>Launched on October 7th. Introduced to Teachers and HT at breakfast on 8th.</p>
Launch new syllabus to Governor's network	<p>Arrange a training for Croydon Governors</p>	<p>adviser</p>	<p>Governors aware of the new syllabus and how schools should be using it</p>	<p>Date to be arranged</p>	<p>venue</p>	<p>Governors forum on 12th February</p>
To work towards being an advanced SACRE	<p>Start to use new evaluation document</p>	<p>Members of all 4 committees plus Adviser</p>	<p>A series of proposals to be put into action to ensure that SACRE moves forward</p> <p>Using information from self-evaluation</p>	<p>2 days adviser time</p> <p>Monitoring of the proposals to be looked at each termly meeting and updated in summer term</p>	<p>Time of members</p> <p>Time at meetings</p>	<p>Summer Term self evaluation discussions</p>
Training for SACRE members on quality RE/	<p>A) Time during Meetings for a short training session if</p>	<p>Adviser to prepare training or invite outside speakers</p>	<p>SACRE committee to understand RE and CW in schools more comprehensively</p>	<p>2 days adviser time</p>	<p>Meeting time</p>	<p>NASACRE training offered</p>

	necessary B) recommend NASA CRE training webinars					to members
Monitor Collective Worship	Ask RE Coordinators what has been happening in their schools. Possibly write to HT in schools	Adviser to write and chair to sign	Help to schools who ask. Direct them to the SACRE Guidance	1 days as required	Adviser to report at meetings	Monitoring websites
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 members to look at evidence at each meeting	ongoing
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 December 2024 RE Adviser time 3 days	Adviser	Exam results sent in January – Report sent to relevant parties

To arrange and lead an RE coordinators meeting each term	Advertise date, plan information (national and local) respond to requests for agenda items Follow up meetings/emails 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	3 coordinator networks done with approx. 20/25 people attending
To run courses for RE coordinators/ 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 confident in using the agreed syllabus. Training on Using the new syllabus TBC HT breakfast presentation to launch new syllabus October 9 2024	As required (3 days)	Adviser time	HT breakfast in October, December, and June How to be the best RE coordinator course Spring Term.
Heartstone project continues with Kosovo exhibition	Keep in touch with Heartstone HQ	Adviser and Lorna	Take pupils on a day out to NATO to present on Kosovo exhibition	One day		Trip taken and a great success. 18 countries want the exhibition
Council Holocaust Memorial Day event schools' involvement	Attend monthly meetings x6 with Mayors office to plan event. Discuss themes with schools and	Adviser Chair of SACRE	Schools' participation in Council event. Schools marking the day within their cw, using resources A successful event	Adviser time 6 days	Adviser/schools members	Completed-Holocaust event praised by audience

	<p>encourage participation.</p> <p>Send out information and reminders.</p> <p>Report to SACRE.</p>		<p>Schools entering the SACRE competition 2025</p> <p>First meeting July 2024</p> <p>Advertise schools competition</p> <p>'For a Better Future' Get prizes from sponsors or sacre budget</p>			<p>2026 first meeting to plan on 2 July 2025</p>
<p>On behalf of SACRE and education department disseminate information to teachers and members of the public and respond to FOI requests</p> <p>To respond to requests for help and advice from teachers</p>	<p>Answering telephone and email requests from public and education dept. Writing reports as necessary. RE Advisor to visit schools, or do virtual meetings, answer requests for help using the Croydon syllabus</p>	<p>Adviser</p>	<p>Information/help on religious education and collective worship queries given as necessary</p> <p>Keep www.reconsultant.co.uk website updated</p> <p>Ensure Croydon Council website SACRE information correct.</p> <p>RE Coordinators confident in delivering the RE curriculum in their school</p>	<p>Approx 4 days</p> <p>As required- approx. 2 hours per school</p>	<p>Telephone/ Broadband</p> <p>Adviser</p>	<p>ongoing</p>

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	ongoing
To meet with line manager as required And Education Team meetings	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	Advisor time Attendance at meetings and making presentations	Advisor time	Meetings every two weeks on average
To support the work of schools holding Resources And Faiths Together in Croydon	Adviser to liaise with St James the Great and Coloma High School Members invited to FTiC events	Adviser All members	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. Members time	

Circulation details

Schools in Croydon

NASACRE

Department of Education

Director of Education in Croydon

SACRE Members