

DERBY CITY COUNCIL

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

2024 – 2025



Derby City Council

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Foreword by the Chair of Standing Advisory Council of Religious Education

Derby City Council's Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education has in the last year produced its first Religious Education syllabus. It has therefore been a pathbreaking year in also fulfilling its statutory requirement.

This was achieved by collaborative work with all involved making significant contributions.

The syllabus provides the opportunity for students to engage in critical thinking and to use analytical and reflective skills. The syllabus was launched at a successful event in April 2025.

Over the year the meetings have been productive. They tackled a range of relevant themes and have benefited from the updates on local and national Religious Education debates given by the RE adviser.

The future work of SACRE will focus on areas such as community engagement, collective worship, thematic meetings, developing the newly established RE networks emanating from the adoption of the locally formulated RE syllabus.

The syllabus offers schools a Religious Education that can contribute to fostering community cohesion.

Cllr. Professor Cecile Wright

Overview of the work of SACRE

Since 1988, each Local Authority (LA) has been required by law to have a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

The remit of a SACRE is principally to oversee Religious Education (RE) and collective worship within the authority and to:

- advise Derby City Council on matters connected with Religious Education and Collective Worship in community schools and in foundation schools that do not have a religious character. Religious Education in these schools is to be delivered in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus;
- advise Derby City Council on teaching methods, choice of materials and teacher training in Religious Education and Collective Worship;
- require Derby City Council to review the locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education at least every five years.

The reporting period of the 2024–2025 report starts on 1 September 2024 and runs to 31 August 2025.

During the 2024–2025 academic year, the SACRE convened three times. In accordance with the statutory review process, two further meetings—held as Agreed Syllabus Conferences—were scheduled to review and approve a new Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

- 19 December 2024 – Face-to-face
- 20 March 2025 – Face-to-face
- 25 June 2025 – Face-to-face

All SACRE meetings were livestreamed on the Derby City Council YouTube channel.

Two of the three meetings (those on 19 December 2024 and 25 June 2025) were quorate, and minutes for these meetings are available on Derby City Council's Democracy Portal [Derby City Council's Democracy Portal](#). Although the meeting on 20 March 2025 was inquorate, an informal discussion took place regarding the scheduled items.

Over the year, the SACRE considered the following items:

19 December 2024

- SACRE Annual Report
- National SACRE Update

20 March 2025

- Development Group Self-Evaluation Report
- Syllabus Launch
- RE in Schools
- RE and Social Cohesion
- National SACRE Update

25 June 2025

- SACRE Membership
- RE and Fostering Social/Community Cohesion (moved from 20 March)
- SACRE Development Plan
- Syllabus Launch
- National SACRE Update
- SACRE Skills Audit

Outside of its formal meetings, a sub-committee of SACRE members met to undertake a self-evaluation exercise. The recommendations of the group were discussed at the in-quest meeting in March, and an action plan was formally agreed in June 2025. As part of the action plan, the SACRE agreed plans for the 2025–26 academic year to more systematically cover its terms of reference, particularly using the momentum from the Agreed Syllabus process to improve relationships with Derby’s schools and build capacity to advise on collective worship.

Section 2: Religious Education

The Locally Agreed Syllabus and RE in Schools

Religious Education (RE) does not form part of the National Curriculum, and each Local Authority (LA) is therefore required to develop its own Agreed Syllabus. LAs must initiate a review of their Agreed Syllabus within five years of its implementation. During the period covered by this report, Derby City Council established an Agreed Syllabus Conference to oversee the revision and adoption of a new Agreed Syllabus for RE. The Conference met on two occasions:

- 19 December 2024 (directly after the SACRE meeting)
- 30 January 2025

The launch of the Derby City Council Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education took place at the Council House in Derby, with over one hundred teachers from schools across the authority in attendance, alongside members of the SACRE and the Local Authority.

Councillor Paul Hezelgrave, Derby City Council Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Skills, said:

“RE is such an important subject — it explores big questions about life, what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can make sense of religion and worldviews and reflect on their own ideas and ways of living.

The ambition for RE in the city of Derby is to provide the opportunity for children and young people to acquire knowledge in relation to the lives of people within the local area and the wider world.”

Professor Cecile Wright, Chair of SACRE, said:

“The new Religious Education syllabus produced by the City Council provides a framework for schools in accordance with its statutory duties. It offers a balanced and sensible approach to the curriculum content, with the aim of fostering social and community cohesion.

It also offers scope for children and young people to develop key transferable skills such as critical thinking.

The Derby City Council Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was provided to all maintained schools in the authority, and academies have been able to purchase a copy to form the basis of religious education in their own setting.”

Through its self-assessment and development action plan work, the SACRE highlighted the opportunity presented by the Agreed Syllabus process to build closer relationships with schools and teachers. One of the ways SACRE members achieved this was by attending the syllabus launch.

Standards and Monitoring of RE

During the year covered by this report, Derby City Council received school workforce data from the Department for Education regarding the percentage of time allocated to the teaching of RE in schools.

The SACRE also reviewed the examination data for Summer 2024 as unvalidated data; this is presented below in its validated form. The unvalidated GCSE and A-level data for Summer 2025 is available in Appendix A of the report.

Derby City Council validated GCSE RS data (2024)

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

QAN: 60184000

Est. No.	Centre	NOR	NOE	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	X	9-5	9-4	9-1	Avg Pts
-	National (State Funded)	627930	105850	6.9	10.2	12.0	17.0	14.2	10.4	13.4	8.3	4.8	2.2	0.6	60.3	70.7	97.2	5.0
-	LA (State Funded)	3401	108	12.0	11.1	9.3	11.1	17.6	11.1	12.0	7.4	5.6	2.8	-	61.1	72.2	97.2	5.2
4012	Chellaston Academy	296	14	7.1	21.4	14.3	14.3	21.4	7.1	7.1	-	7.1	-	-	78.6	85.7	100.0	5.9
4008	City of Derby Academy	167	12	8.3	-	8.3	25.0	16.7	16.7	16.7	-	-	8.3	-	58.3	75.0	91.7	4.8
4004	Derby Cathedral School	178	11	-	-	-	9.1	9.1	9.1	36.4	18.2	18.2	-	-	18.2	27.3	100.0	3.0
4182	Littleover Community School	291	44	22.7	18.2	13.6	6.8	13.6	9.1	4.5	4.5	4.5	2.3	-	75.0	84.1	97.7	6.2
5406	Murray Park Community School	218	13	7.7	7.7	7.7	15.4	23.1	15.4	15.4	-	7.7	-	-	61.5	76.9	100.0	5.1
4005	Noel-Baker Academy	137	14	-	-	-	7.1	28.6	14.3	14.3	28.6	-	7.1	-	35.7	50.0	92.9	3.4

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

QAN: 60185946

Est. No.	Centre	NOR	NOE	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	X	9-5	9-4	9-1	Avg Pts
-	National (State Funded)	627930	5020	9.8	12.0	13.8	15.6	12.9	10.8	11.4	7.4	4.4	1.5	0.4	64.2	75.0	98.2	5.4
-	LA (State Funded)	3401	77	6.5	9.1	11.7	20.8	19.5	11.7	10.4	6.5	2.6	1.3	-	67.5	79.2	98.7	5.3
5414	Allestree Woodlands School	239	50	10.0	12.0	14.0	20.0	12.0	10.0	10.0	6.0	4.0	2.0	-	68.0	78.0	98.0	5.5
6905	Landau Forte College	195	27	-	3.7	7.4	22.2	33.3	14.8	11.1	7.4	-	-	-	66.7	81.5	100.0	4.9

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

QAN: 60188790

Est. No.	Centre	NOR	NOE	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	X	9-5	9-4	9-1	Avg Pts
-	National (State Funded)	627930	47940	6.6	9.6	11.4	15.9	14.6	11.5	13.3	8.9	5.7	1.8	0.7	58.1	69.6	97.6	4.9
-	LA (State Funded)	3401	381	3.9	5.8	8.9	15.0	13.1	10.2	14.2	13.4	10.8	4.2	0.5	46.7	57.0	95.3	4.2
4011	Alvaston Moor Academy	162	1	-	-	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	100.0	100.0	7.0
4007	Da Vinci Academy	140	1	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	100.0	100.0	4.0
4607	Saint Benedict, A Catholic Voluntary Academy	242	232	6.5	9.5	11.6	17.7	15.1	9.1	15.1	11.6	3.0	0.9	-	60.3	69.4	99.1	5.0
4177	The Bemrose School	158	147	-	-	4.1	10.9	10.2	11.6	12.9	16.3	23.1	9.5	1.4	25.2	36.7	89.1	2.9

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

QAN: 60300632

Est. No.	Centre	NOR	NOE	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	X	9-5	9-4	9-1	Avg Pts
-	National (State Funded)	627930	23480	8.3	10.6	11.7	16.4	13.3	10.7	13.2	8.3	5.1	1.7	0.6	60.3	71.1	97.7	5.1
-	LA (State Funded)	3401	160	3.8	14.4	15.0	19.4	12.5	10.0	15.6	6.9	1.3	0.6	0.6	65.0	75.0	98.8	5.3
5412	West Park School	293	160	3.8	14.4	15.0	19.4	12.5	10.0	15.6	6.9	1.3	0.6	0.6	65.0	75.0	98.8	5.3

Derby City Council validated A level RS data (2024)

Subject: Religious Studies (4610) / Exam: GCE AS level (121)

Est. No.	School/College	NOE	A	B	C	D	E	Q	U	X	A-B	A-E	Avg Pts
-	National (all entries)	2150	21.3	22.0	20.2	16.0	10.1	-	8.9	-	43.3	89.6	14.9
5414	Allestree Woodlands School	1	-	-	-	-	100.0	-	-	-	-	100.0	5.0

Subject: Religious Studies (4610) / Exam: GCE A level (111)

Est. No.	School/College	NOE	*	A	B	C	D	E	Q	U	X	A*-A	A*-B	A*-E	Avg Pts
-	National (all entries)	14530	6.2	19.8	28.4	23.2	13.9	5.8	0.0	1.9	0.7	26.0	54.5	97.4	35.3
5414	Allestree Woodlands School	9	-	-	55.6	33.3	11.1	-	-	-	-	-	55.6	100.0	34.4
6004	Derby Grammar School	1	-	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	100.0	100.0	50.0
6001	Derby High School	2	50.0	-	50.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	50.0	100.0	100.0	50.0
4178	Derby Moor Spencer Academy	5	-	-	60.0	40.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	60.0	100.0	36.0
4607	Saint Benedict, A Catholic Voluntary Academy	4	-	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	-	-	-	-	25.0	50.0	100.0	35.0

Teacher training materials and advice for schools

There have been two training events supported by Derby City Council SACRE in the academic year 2024/2025. A further training event has taken place in the academic year 2025/2026.

2nd April 2025 – The Launch of the Derby City Council Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

11th June 2025 The Dharmic Faiths – Developing Teaching and Learning – attended by 43 teachers – virtual training – half day

15th October 2025 Ways with Words – Peaceful and Purposeful Discussions – attended by 36 teachers – virtual training – half day

Other information

There were no formal complaints to SACRE about RE during the year.

Advice given to the Local Authority

No advice was given to the Local Authority.

Section 3: Collective worship

Standards and monitoring of Collective Worship

No information was provided to the SACRE on standards and monitoring in Collective Worship in 2024/25, though this was an area identified in the self-assessment exercise as requiring improvement. The SACRE approved plans to undertake a skills audit at the June meeting, with the results showing strong but distributed knowledge on collective worship practice in schools. Work is underway to pool SACRE members' knowledge on collective worship and to feed that back formally to SACRE, with a themed meeting on collective worship planned early in the new academic year.

Determinations

There were no determinations in the year covered by this report.

Teacher training provided

No training was provided on Collective Worship during the period covered by this report.

Other information

There were no formal complaints to SACRE about collective worship during the year.

Advice to the Local Authority

No advice was given to the Local Authority.

Section 4: Links with other bodies

National Bodies

Derby City Council SACRE are pleased to be linked with national bodies and receive national updates from Ian Nicholson, RE adviser.

Derby City Council SACRE has links with NASACRE and has received feedback from the NASACRE annual conference. It regularly utilises NASACRE's self-evaluation toolkit.

Information from NATRE and the REC has been used in meetings and shared with schools where appropriate.

SACRE members have attended NASACRE webinars.

Members of SACRE have attended the regional SACRE representatives meeting coordinated by the RE Hubs.

Local bodies

Derby Diocese provide excellent support to SACRE and we are pleased to have its Deputy Director of Education, Liz Seymour as a member of Committee B.

Local places of worship are well represented on SACRE.

SACRE's member, Imran Arif, has been appointed to Derby City Council's community cohesion strategy working group.

Section 5: SACRE involvement in the Local Area

Governor and head teacher links

The SACRE has improved its links with local schools through new teacher network meetings. SACRE members have also supported better relationship building through the Agreed Syllabus Process.

Advice on community issues

SACRE recognises the role of religious education in community cohesion and, through its self-assessment work, asked that an annual item be scheduled on the local authority's community cohesion agenda. This item was scheduled at the June meeting of the SACRE, where they heard from Pop Gill, Derby City Council's Head of Community Safety, providing an update on community cohesion initiatives run in Derby's schools and other settings. The SACRE also discussed a paper by its Chair, Councillor Cecile Wright, on the same topic. At the end of the item, the SACRE was invited to nominate a representative to sit on the Council's Community Cohesion Strategy working group, informing the Council's work to adopt a new Community Cohesion Strategy.

The RE adviser regularly gives advice on speakers to come into schools. He also visits places of worship locally and guides colleagues to the RE hub for the East Midlands which is managed by Debbie Yeomans. Ms Yeomans also supported the launch of the Derby City Council Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

Section 6: Managing the SACRE and partnership with the Local Authority (LA)

Professional and administrative support

During the reporting period, clerking of SACRE was undertaken by Jack Roberts the Democratic Services Officer.

The Local Authority provided funding to support SACRE activity 2024/2025 by contracting with RE Today Services of an RE Consultant for work as the RE Adviser.

Ian Nicholson from RE Today continued in the role of RE Adviser.

Shaheen Parekh holds responsibility for SACRE support and liaises with the RE consultant.

Membership

Attendance at the SACRE's quorate meetings is shown below:

	19th December 2024	25th June 2025
Committee A	Rev. David Owen Dr. Hardial Singh Dhillon Aqib Ayaz	Rev. David Owen Maryam Djavaid Amanda Greeves
Committee B	Zoe Higgins Viv Lawrence Liz Seymour	Liz Seymour
Committee C	Imran Arif Cheryl Fearn	Imran Arif Cheryl Fearn
Committee D	Councillor Ashby Council Martin Councillor Wright	Councillor Wright Councillor Smale Council Prosser Councillor Morgan- McGeehan
In attendance	Shaheen Parekh Ian Nicholson Jack Roberts	Shaheen Parekh Ian Nicholson Jack Roberts

Training

Training is available to all SACRE members through the partnership with NASACRE, members of the SACRE have also undertaken a skills audit to drive forward a training plan for the academic year 2025/2026.

Finance

The LA allocated provided support to SACRE from the RE Adviser. Finance was allocated for clerking. It should be noted that the Local Authority spent more widely on Religious Education during the reporting period with money being allocated to CPD.

Appendix A:
Unvalidated Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 Exam Data, Summer 2025
GCSE

Unvalidated KS4 RE data	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	U	X
Total	84	103	162	118	142	137	91	67	33	55	9

(Exam year 2025)

School	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	U	X
AWS	5	6	7	11	5	8	5	4	8		
AM		3	5	5	3	3	2			1	
CA		2	1	3	7	3	2				
CODA		2	5		1	2	2	3			
DCS	1	1	6	2	3	4	1	3			
DG			1	2	4	2	1		1		
DH											
LFC	1	2	2	7	5	4	3	2	1		
LB	30	26	40	18	20	7	6	6	1	18	2
L	1	5	4	4	6	16	9	10	7		
MP		2	2		2	0	1	1			
NB			4	1	3	1	3				
SB	14	14	33	34	46	41	21	15	5	4	1
TBS	24	30	26	15	12	16	6	8	2	30	5
WP	8	10	26	16	25	30	29	15	8	2	1
Total	84	103	162	118	142	137	91	67	33	55	9

A level:

Unvalidated results – Religious Studies (2025)

A Levels

A*	7
A	29
B	61
C	48
D	33
E	12
F	0
U	1

A2 Levels

A	
B	
C	
D	
E	1
F	

Appendix B:

Circulation of the Annual Report

The Derby City Council Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Annual Report will be:

- Provided, via e-mail, to all SACRE Members
- Provided, via e-mail, to the Department for Education
- Provided, via e-mail, to NASACRE
- Published on the Local Authority website

Appendix C:

SACRE Development Plan

One of the largest workflows for the SACRE in this reporting period was the development and adoption of a SACRE Development Action Plan, setting out clear actions moving forward to address areas of the SACRE's practice in need of improvement.

The plan is set out below:

#	Recommendation	Action	Target date
1	That SACRE uses its networks, both as a body and as a collection of individuals, to advertise vacancies on the SACRE, for example by advertising vacancies at the syllabus launch event.	SACRE was clearly advertised at the syllabus launch event – specific vacancies to be mentioned at network meetings.	To allow time for networks to establish, update to be provided March 2026, informal updates to be provided at November meeting.
2	That training for SACRE members be provided, either by making use of external consultants such as RE Today or through internal expertise at the Council.	Undertake an annual skills audit to inform training, starting at the meeting in June 2025.	June 2025
3	That an induction pack be created for new members joining the SACRE, with key documents about the	NASACRE offers a 15-page reference handbook for SACRE members. It is proposed	June 2025

	SACRE's purpose as well as links to national guidance and best practice.	that the SACRE reviews this handbook at its meeting in June 2025, consider any "Derby specific information" to be added, and adopt this as the SACRE induction handbook.	
4	That SACRE members be made aware of the Constitution and be given the opportunity to provide feedback on its strengths and weaknesses, with a view to making amendments where necessary.	Paper drafted for the SACRE meeting in March 2025, though the matter was deferred due to the meeting being inquorate. Given the lengthy agenda for the June meeting, this has been scheduled for the November meeting.	November 2025
5	That SACRE develop its understanding of the existing knowledge, experience and networks of the SACRE's members, so that areas of strength can be drawn upon in the SACRE's collective work.	Linked to recommendation 2, the SACRE to undertake a skills audit at its meeting in June.	June 2025
6	That SACRE develop paths for hearing from Derby's academies about their RE provision and collective worship, building on the work of officers to foster networks, and starting by raising the SACREs profile at the syllabus launch event.	After the successful launch of the agreed syllabus, with 95 attendees, a significant number of teachers have signed up to Council-run RE networks. Of the attendees at the syllabus launch, 40 were representatives academies or independent schools. Officers to provide regular updates on feedback through the networks.	To allow time for networks to establish, update to be provided March 2026, informal updates to be provided at November meeting.
7	That SACRE adopt a Development Action Plan, at first on the basis of this report and later as an active document for promoting continuous improvement by the SACRE in its work.	It is proposed that the 2025/26 action plan consists in achieving these recommendations, tracked through a standing update report at each meeting.	Ongoing, with development plan adopted in June 2025 and reviewed in the first meeting of the municipal year 2026/27.

8	That SACRE build an understanding of what information is available to monitor and promote the provision of quality RE and collective worship.	<p>SACRE and officers to draw on expertise of RE Consultant, ensuring that data published by DfE on exam results and time spent on RE is shared as and when it is published.</p> <p>SACRE to build capacity to hear from teachers as the RE teacher networks become more established.</p>	Ongoing, with update on networks expected in March 2026.
9	That SACRE develop with officers a manageable information sharing routine which furnishes SACRE with the information it requires to understand the provision of RE and collective worship in Derby.	<p>It is proposed that the SACRE adopt a work programme annually, facilitating strategic planning. As part of this, it is proposed that the SACRE takes a themed approach to its meetings, covering one of the three key aspects of the SACRE's remit per meeting. The work programme proposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - June 2025: RE and Community Cohesion - November 2025: Collective Worship - March 2026: RE Provision and the Agreed Syllabus 	Ongoing, with work programme adopted in June 2025.
10	That SACRE reflect on how best to use the information it receives to facilitate positive outcomes for the provision of religious education and collective worship in Derby's schools.	<p>SACRE are asked to lead on this recommendation, establishing how it will make effective use of the information it receives.</p> <p>The SACRE lead officer to work with the consultant and RE network attendees to capture pupil voice.</p>	Ongoing.
11	That SACRE pay particular attention to developing its capacity for monitoring collective worship in Derby's schools and promoting best practice.	To be achieved through skills audit, themed meeting, speaking with practitioners.	November 2025.

12	That SACRE ask officers to investigate why SACRE has not received a determination application in recent time.	Following advice from the RE Today Consultant, it is understood that the reason for a lack of determinations is the result of no applications being made by Headteachers.	No further action planned.
13	That SACRE review its meeting times and venues, to ensure that they are accessible for existing and prospective members.	Item scheduled for the June meeting for SACRE to review times and venues for meetings.	June 2025.
14	That SACRE regularly consider community cohesion matters at meetings and learn more about the community cohesion agenda at Derby City Council in order to consider how SACRE can contribute.	To be achieved through annual community cohesion focused meeting, starting with a themed meeting in June 2025.	June 2025.
15	That SACRE engage with the Open Centre and Multi-Faith Centre, exploring options to learn about their activities, attend their premises, and draw on their knowledge and experience to facilitate SACRE member development.	To liaise with co-optees who represent the Open Centre and the Multi-Faith Centre.	November 2025.