

City of Doncaster Council

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Annual Report 2022-2023



City of
Doncaster
Council

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SECTION 1: Introduction

1.1 Words from the Chair of SACRE

The year 2022-23 has seen significant progress in the work of the SACRE. We have been delighted to welcome Stephanie Douglas and Jane Reed, both Heads of Service within the Children, Young People and Families Directorate of Doncaster City Council whose enthusiasm and help is key to our development. The resignation of Joel Ward (Baptist, Gp A) has been a considerable loss, but we have been delighted to welcome Vanessa Gregory (CoE, Gp B), Amy Roddam (Methodist, Gp A), Jugtinder Singh (NEU, Gp C) and Cllrs Yetunde Elebuibon and Steve Cox. Also delighted that Sally Faulkner has stayed with us, moving from a teacher representative on Gp C to Evangelical Christianity, Gp A. We continue to look for new members particularly those who would like to get involved directly in furthering the work of the SACRE.

We have had some notable successes this year - the REsources project has been published and, after some delay, will very soon be advertised directly to schools. The initiative has been welcomed by the schools that have interacted with it. I have great hopes that it will prove a valuable resource for schools and a boost to the quality of teaching and learning in the city.

Another great success has been the award of a Westhill grant - a substantial sum of money to run a day of workshops by different religions and worldviews for primary school pupils and their teachers with provision for many schools to benefit. Many congratulations to Jugtinder and the team for the success so far.

The SACRE has provided a lot of very high quality CPD for primary school teachers during the year. Efforts to involve secondary schools have been less successful but we have hopes that, as communication systems develop and the REsource project reaches more teachers directly, this will change. A one-off SEND cpd occasion with other local SACREs has attracted a lot of interest and will take place in July 2023.

A visit by teachers and SACRE members to a Gurdwara and a Mosque attracted a lot of attendees and was judged to be very helpful.

The Doncaster SACRE has had a busy year. Advertising, developing, and embedding the REsources project, the development of the Westhill grant project, continuing CPD and an agreed syllabus conference for 2025-2030 are all high on the agenda for the coming year.

Finally, I should say how very grateful and admiring I am of the members of both the SACRE and the City Council in the work they have done during the year. RE is a vital subject for children and for society. Members can rightly be proud of what they are doing.

Bob Kiddle, SACRE Chair

1.2 SACRE Overview

The Doncaster SACRE has met once each term to progress its work, structuring this through an agreed action plan. All meetings for this year were hybrid and took place in person and online via Microsoft Teams. These meetings were livestreamed in accordance with Covid-19 protocols for public meetings.

Brief overview of meetings, showing main items discussed.

Standing items for our meetings usually include:

- Welcome and apologies
- Approval of minutes of previous meeting
- Matters arising
- Update on Doncaster schools
- Development plan and budget
 - Feedback from teacher networks and training opportunities
 - National updates relating to education and RE
 - NASACRE updates
 - SACRE projects
 - AOB
 - Dates of future meetings.

June 30th, 2022

As well as standing items, the following agenda items were discussed:

- The Chair reported on his attendance online at the NASACRE annual conference. This led on to a wide-ranging discussion including children's understanding of different faiths, a possible application for a Westhill grant and SACRE membership
- The proposal for a directory of people for schools to approach about visits to places of worship and visits to schools by members of communities.
- Membership of NASACRE
- Communication systems within SACRE and with schools and MATs
- CPD for secondary schools and a SEND CPD occasion for primary schools
- A possible walking tour of places of worship in the city.

November 10th, 2022

As well as standing items, the following agenda items were discussed:

- NASACRE membership

- The inter local authority SEND event
- Primary and secondary CPD
- The REsources project
- Planning for the development of the work of the SACRE.

February 23rd, 2023

This meeting was inquorate because of the absence of anyone from Group B (CoE). As well as standing items, the following agenda item was discussed:

- The membership of SACRE in the light of new census data
- Progress with the REsources project
- Possible attendance in person at the NASACRE annual conference
- Application for a Westhill grant
- Various possibilities for future development.

1.3 Working Group Overview

During this year, we worked from SACRE in a small group to:

- a. Create a local database of contacts for RE
- b. Plan visits to a mosque and gurdwara for SACRE members and teachers
- c. Develop proposals for a funds bid to the Westhill Trust
- d. Create a regional and local opportunity for SEND RE training at a day conference.

SECTION 2: RE (statutory responsibilities)

2.1 The locally agreed syllabus and RE in schools

Our SACRE Locally Agreed Syllabus was published late in 2018 to provide for RE from 2019-2024. This syllabus, a collaboration with RE Today Services, provides a thorough, plural, and rigorous basis for RE 4-19 in our schools and is warmly commended to - and widely used by - many of our Academy schools. The detailed schemes of work that go with the syllabus are available to schools for purchase at reasonable prices and many of our schools use these. The syllabus is regularly discussed at primary teachers' network meetings, with the training elements of these meetings often focussing on aspects of the syllabus.

Review of the locally agreed syllabus will fall due in 2024.

2.2 Standards and monitoring of RE

SACRE intends to improve its use of data in relation to its monitoring role for RE.

GCSE and A Level Religious Studies outcomes data have not been available to the LA for the last two years.

SACRE has discussed the issue of low entries to the GCSE Religious Studies examination in some schools. More information is needed from schools to address these concerns. Requests to schools for such information, to enable SACRE to provide appropriate support, will be made at an appropriate time and responses will be brought to SACRE.

As part of the SACRE's development plan, members are encouraged to visit schools.

Primary and secondary teachers work collaboratively with the SACRE and its RE Consultant on our projects.

Monitoring of Ofsted Inspection Reports.

We monitor Ofsted reports for any comments about collective worship and RE. Comments identifying RE practice are shared at SACRE.

2.3 Teacher training and materials and advice for schools

Training and networking opportunities for teachers provided by Doncaster SACRE.

Teacher network meetings:

Primary teachers have continued to attend termly network meetings. These are usually for half a day, on the same day as SACRE, and delivered by our RE consultant Lat Blaylock of RE Today.

June 2022

- **Planning and delivering RE with attention to cross curricular contexts: rich knowledge, varied learning methods, promoting deeper thinking**
- This session examined connections between RE and art, music, drama, science, history, literacy, and other subject areas with a focus on how the RE syllabus can enable excellence in cross curricular learning
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November 2022

- Title: **Muslim and Sikh worship and community in Doncaster** (primary and secondary teachers and SACRE members were welcomed: attendance of over 30 was a 'record' for our network.
- Outline This half day course involved supported visits to the Sikh Gurdwara and Muslim Mosque in Central Doncaster for teachers with a view to your arranging visits with your own pupils.
- Description: Delegates met at the Guru Kalgidhar Gurdwara on Catherine Street at 1pm on 10th November, where they received a tour and participated in a learning experience about Sikhs in Doncaster. The group walked – it takes about 5 minutes – to the Jamia

Mosque on Bentick Close, where an encounter with Doncaster's Muslim community and a guided tour took place. The afternoon finished at 4.15pm.

- Outcomes
 - Teachers benefit from first hand encounters with two of our local places of worship
 - Extensive support materials usable with pupils aged 5-14 provided
 - Teachers had the chance to assess how to use these places of worship in their own teaching of RE and consider bringing pupils to the two holy buildings.
- Audience: all who teach RE in Doncaster, including primary and secondary teachers, ECTs, those new to RE. SACRE members and interested governors were also welcomed.

March 2023

- Title: **Focus on 4-7 RE: What makes dynamic learning?**
- Outline This professional development course provided teachers with excellent resources, ideas and learning activities for 4-7 year olds in RE, based upon the Agreed Syllabus, and reflecting Muslim, Christian and Jewish learning.
- Description. The course showed how pupils aged 4-7 benefit from RE applying the OFSTED criteria for RE to the Reception and Infant years in creative and carefully progressed ways.
- Outcomes
 - Teachers benefit from seeing 10 ideas for 4-7 RE in action, and the exemplification of good practice with this age group.
 - OFSTED's interests in cultural capital, progressed learning and rich knowledge of three religions addressed in imaginative ways
 - Teachers had the chance to plan and deliver vibrant fresh RE lessons using story, festival, belief, music, and artistic learning methods
- Audience: All primary RE teachers and TAs with RE responsibilities
- Time: 1-4pm

Proposed July 2023

- Title **Progress, assessment, achievement in RE 5-11**
- Outline: This professional development course will address the needs of schools to assess RE simply and effectively, enabling all pupils to show good progress in their learning. Reflecting current OFSTED concerns for sequencing and building knowledge the course will give teachers practical solutions to the major assessment issues in RE for 5-11s
- Description: The course will show how pupils aged 5-11 can demonstrate a range of achievements in RE regarding the religions the agreed syllabus requires – Hindus, Muslims, Jewish people, and Christians. Task setting and monitoring of pupil progress will be exemplified.
- Outcomes
 - Teachers will benefit from seeing policy, practice, and exemplars of good assessment practice in RE
 - OFSTED priorities to enable pupils to learn more, remember more and apply their rich knowledge will be addressed in practical ways
 - Teachers will take away lots of policy ideas, practical tools for RE assessment and examples of work from pupils that shows RE achievement in action.
- Audience: all who teach RE 5-11, including TAs where relevant
- Time 1pm – 4pm

The training focus for each meeting continues to be decided democratically by the teachers attending the previous network meeting. Teachers attending the network

meetings are always enthusiastic. They openly share good practice with one another as well as exchanging ideas and discussing concerns. Teachers of varying experience continue to participate at network meetings, which provide a constructive and supportive forum for teachers to develop their practice in the teaching of RE and engagement with collective worship.

2.4 Other information

The SACRE is not aware of any complaints regarding RE in the Local Authority's schools.

2.5 Advice to the Local Authority

SACRE has not provided specific advice to schools in the local authority this academic year.

SECTION 3: Collective Worship (statutory responsibilities)

3.1 Standards and monitoring of CW

Ofsted have not raised any concerns with regards to the compliance with the law or standards in relation to collective worship in Doncaster's schools.

3.2 Determinations

Doncaster SACRE has not received any applications for determinations.

3.3 Teacher training provided (locally, or national training circulated to schools)

Doncaster SACRE provides extensive training and networking opportunities its schools. Training requirements are determined by teacher requests at network meetings. As teachers have indicated that their training needs relate to RE, no specific training has been provided this year relating to collective worship.

3.4 Materials and advice for schools

The SACRE has distributed all relevant information relating to supporting collective worship in schools via termly network meetings and updates in the Local Authority's newsletter.

3.5 Other information

The SACRE is not aware of any complaints regarding collective worship in the Local Authority's schools.

3.6 Advice to the LA

The SACRE has not given any specific advice to the Local Authority this academic year.

SECTION 4: Links with other bodies

4.1 National bodies

Doncaster SACRE is an active member of NASACRE. SACRE members are given the opportunity each year, paid for by SACRE, to attend the NASACRE Conference and AGM, as well as NASACRE's programme of online training events.

Our representatives at NASACRE conference report

A large gathering representing a wide range of religions and world views in a superb London setting. An address by Dr Kathryn Wright, CEO of Culham St Gabriel's Trust outlined the work of the trust in strengthening voices, supporting innovation, representing, and celebrating the work of the RE teaching community. The trust supports a religion and world views approach to the subject, provides and signposts opportunities for professional development. Dr Wright set out the case for SACREs to work more closely with schools and MATs in the drive for teacher recruitment.

Charles Clarke, a former Education Secretary and Home Secretary outlined his belief that SACREs need to be active in addressing life's problems. He put forward his concerns that the damage to politics in the last eight years, Brexit, and the drive to academisation had weakened local authorities. Whilst some MATs are strong and effective, many are not and there is a need for a more coherent system for taking the system forward. SACREs, he said, have massive potential power. They occupy the moral high ground, are well placed to contribute to society and can be a force for social cohesion - a commitment like no other. They have the potential to influence society in the longer term. On the other hand, many are short of money and resources and are not taken sufficiently seriously by LAs. He urged SACREs to identify and use best practice.

Dr David Hampshire's analysis of annual reports threw up a mass of statistics. Nearly all SACREs had some professional support and at least some funding. Attendance was improved by hybrid meetings. The effectiveness of SACREs was greater wherever the LA was positively involved. Very few were called upon to advise about collective worship in schools.

As ever, a massive benefit of attendance at the conference was the informal relationships formed with other attendees and, for us travelling together was an opportunity to get to know each other better too.

Doncaster SACRE has worked closely with RE Today to provide a varied and extensive programme of training to teachers. It actively encourages teachers and schools to become members of NATRE (National Association for Teachers of RE).

4.2 Local bodies

The Doncaster SACRE has established and active links with local communities and seeks to enhance these links via the REsources directory as this is developed.

SECTION 5: Other areas of SACRE involvement locally

A SEND cpd day organised by Doncaster SACRE is involving delegates from several other SACREs and schools in the region.

We have had contacts with our RE Hub.

Our REsources directory is gradually building links with more and more religions and world views in the city and beyond.

Our project for the coming year, supported by a Westhill grant, will bring together people from a range of religions and world views.

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SECTION 6: SACRE's own arrangements (statutory responsibilities)

6.1 Professional and administrative support and how the LA supports the SACRE

The LA provides the SACRE with an annual budget to fund its work, enabling it to fulfil its statutory duties as well as deliver training and network meetings to teachers.

The LA provides a clerk to the SACRE and runs SACRE meetings through its democratic services unit.

Elected councillors and senior Education staff are proactive members of the SACRE, and whole-heartedly support the SACRE's work.

6.2 Membership, representation & recruitment

The SACRE is active in recruiting members to represent all groups. It also considers co-opting those with skills, knowledge and experience who can help to develop its work.

Membership vacancies are discussed at meetings alongside the SACRE development plan and recruitment of new members keen to get involved is ongoing.

SACRE meetings are mostly quorate.

6.3 Training for SACRE (and ASC) members

All new SACRE members receive a guide to SACRE and the responsibilities associated with SACRE membership. The SACRE Clerk, LA Officer and RE Advisor are on hand to advise SACRE members.

Members are invited to attend training provided for schools.

They are also offered a place at the NASACRE Conference and AGM, paid for by the SACRE, and are also encouraged to attend the online training events provided by NASACRE throughout the academic year. In addition, SACRE meetings sometimes incorporate presentations from the SACRE advisor on key topics.

6.4 Finance given to SACRE for its work

The LA is moving from an 'ad hoc' model towards a budget matched to a future facing development plan informed by comparison with the recommended 2% of the LA's central schools services budget.

SECTION 7: Appendices

7.1 Results of External Religious Studies examinations: short and full GCSE, A/S & A Level RS

A small number of schools in Doncaster offer Religious Studies as a formal qualification. Examination results are published by the DfE in the late Autumn Term and once available will be shared with SACRE.

7.3 LA/SACRE policy statements on Religious Education or Collective Worship

The Local Authority does not have a policy statement on Religious Education or Collective Worship.

7.5 Circulation details for this Annual Report

Copies will be sent electronically to the relevant bodies. This report will be available on the Doncaster Local Authority and NASACRE websites for interested parties to download.

- Director of Children, Young People and Families, Doncaster City Council
- Portfolio Lead for Education, Skills & Young People, Doncaster City Council
- The Department for Education (Central Government)
- NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education)
- Headteachers and Governing Bodies of all Doncaster Schools
- All members of Doncaster SACRE





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