



Harrow SACRE Annual Report

2023-2024

**LB HARROW STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

January 2025



**Harrow
SACRE**



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This LB Harrow SACRE Annual Report is presented in the new format developed by NASACRE in conjunction with the DfE for use from September 2021.

Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Words from the Chair of SACRE 2023-24

The academic year 2023-24 has been a busy and successful year tinged with great sadness. After the successful launch in October 2023 of the agreed syllabus we have all focussed on providing time and resources to improve the quality of teaching and learning of Religious Education in Harrow. Schools have been offered regular meetings and support from Lisa Kassapian, our new adviser. Teachers have regular up-dates of resources and any new advice that comes from government or organisations supporting RE. Primary teachers have had input on continuity and changes in the new syllabus, revised aims, assessment and inspiring classroom practice to support aspects focussing on Christian and Sanatana Dharma worldview traditions.

There have been many visits from schools to our various places of worship in Harrow and Harrow SACRE is grateful for the volunteers who welcome schools onto their premises. Visiting places of worship enhances a child's education and helps them to experience another culture or spiritual way.

Harrow SACRE has looked in depth at the NASACRE SEF and have added to our development plan any aspects that need further details. This will be on-going for the coming year.

Harrow is a strong multi-faith local authority and SACRE members work collaboratively to produce dates of religious observance so that schools are aware of important festivals. It is entirely in the gift of the head teacher to grant a school absence but having dates in advance ensures that governing bodies are kept informed. I thank the members for their work on this and a huge thank you to our excellent clerk, Vivian Wright, who collates this information. We couldn't do without her.

Our sadness came when we heard the news of the death of our adviser and friend Lesley Prior in April. Lesley was a powerhouse in the RE world and her passing is felt across the country and further. She was always supportive and wise when teachers and Harrow SACRE needed advice. We miss her but her legacy lives on.

Through many, many years Harrow SACRE has been supported by Paddy O'Dwyer. He has offered practical support and great wisdom. In June, he announced his retirement in as Director of Education and will be missed. We wish him a peaceful and long retirement.

Alison Stowe



Chair of the Harrow SACRE

1.2. Overview: religions and worldviews in Harrow

The London Borough of Harrow is among the most religiously diverse boroughs in the country and the Harrow Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) has a special and well-established relationship with Harrow Council and the communities it serves. The statistics from the 2021 Census are now available and they confirm that:

- Harrow has the highest number and percentage of Hindus of any local authority in the country;
- the highest number of Jains (6,246) in the country;
- the lowest percentage of ‘No religion’ in the country
- the percentage of Muslims in the population has increased from 12.5% to 15.9%.

The census data for each religion is set out in the table below; figures from the 2011 Census are included in brackets:

	Christian	Sanatan Dharma (Hindu Religion)	Muslim	No religion	Jewish	Jain Dharma	Buddha Dhamma	Sikh Dharm	Other religion
number	88,602 (89,181)	67,392 (60,407)	41,503 (29,881)	27,748 (22,871)	7,304 (10,538)	6,246 (5,259)	2,812 (2,700)	2,734 (2752)	7,695 (5,945)
percentage	33.9 (37.3)	25.8 (25.3)	15.9 (12.5)	10.6 (9.6)	2.8 (4.4)	2.4 (2.2)	1.1 (1.1)	1.1 (1.2)	2.9 (2.5)
Harrow Population 261,203 (239,056)									

Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021
Religion, 2021, local authorities in England and Wales;
(In brackets – Census 2011, Religion, 2011, local authorities in England and Wales)

1.3. Meetings

Harrow SACRE met four times over the course of the academic year:

26 September 2023 at Harrow Council Hub

6 December 2023 via Zoom

6 March 2024 at Harrow Council Hub

25 June 2024 at All Saints Church, Harrow Weald

All meetings were quorate, apart from the meeting on 25 June when no members of group C were present. For membership and attendance see 6.2. and appendix 7.2.

Development Planning Group

24 April 2024 via Zoom

Harrow ASC

26 September 2023: the Final meeting of the ASC was held after the SACRE meeting.

19 October 2023; Agreed Syllabus launch at Cannon Lane Primary School.

1.4. Content of meetings: summary

SACRE

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

DRO (Dates of religious observance) 2023-24 reviewed.

AR reviewed.

Self-evaluation and planning: as part of the self-evaluation process, SACRE considered meeting in different venues, resulting in the summer term meeting taking place at All Saints Church in Harrow Weald and a future meeting planned for the Mosaic Jewish Community Centre in Stanmore.

Development Plan 2023-24: as part of the Development plan, members reviewed a selection of school websites to monitor RE and CW provision.

Membership, recruitment and representation in the light of the 2021 Census data.

RE Teachers' WhatsApp group and meetings

Determination renewal process

National updates:

NASACRE briefings and conference.

Religious Education Council's Religion and Worldviews approach

Deep and Meaningful? The Ofsted religion education subject report

Local updates

News from faith groups relating to schools

Harrow ASC

Final revisions and ratification of the Agreed syllabus 2023-28.

Religious Education

2. Religious Education (Statutory Responsibilities)

2.1. Locally Agreed Syllabus and RE

The Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) The Agreed Syllabus Conference was expertly Chaired by Alison Stowe. SACRE members and RE subject leaders agreed the principles and aims for the Agreed Syllabus. Harrow RE adviser, Lesley Prior began work and Lisa Kassapian, Breathe RE continued the development of the syllabus on behalf of the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

Local primary schools took part in the front cover competition and the following winners were celebrated:-



Serene Naidu, Year 2
Grymsdyke Primary School



Lavinia Buliga, Year 6
Glebe Primary School

The ASC met and the new AS was ratified on 26 September 2023. The following points were noted:

- Although the ASC in consultation with the Teachers' Group had agreed that a refresh rather than a revision would be required, in fact, so much has changed since 2016, that the refresh became a greater overhaul.
- The revised syllabus has taken into account the non-statutory guidance published by the DfE in 2010, the Curriculum Framework published by the Religious Education Council in 2013 and the National Entitlement statement published by the RE Council in 2018.

- The AS does not include schemes of work: these will be developed later from the AS which is a statutory document.
- The title of the AS is “Widening Diversity”, reflecting the rich variety of cultures and faith traditions in Harrow.
- Decision that Pupils in Harrow schools should be introduced to the correct terms used within religious communities to identify themselves. For research purposes, the syllabus also references the names used by many current resources as schools make the transition to new terminology. For example, Buddha Dhamma (the Buddhist religion), Sanatana Dharma (the Hindu religion), and Sikh Dharm (the Sikh religion).



- Purpose of study and aims revised with feedback from Harrow RE Subject Leaders.
- The information on statutory requirements moved to the start of the document for ease of access and reference.
- An agreement was made to retain the learning outcomes from 2016 in an appendix, so they are available for reference.
- Retained 2016 planning grid
- Levels of assessment have been removed and learning outcomes developed. Previous outcomes have been retained in Appendix C.
- The document was professionally proofread and the Harrow Council logo updated.
- The AS uses terminology used within the religious communities.
- Changes have been made to the time allocation offering greater flexibility at EYFS and clarifying the time allocation at KS4.
- Addition of ‘Indicators of good practice’
- Replace Harrow ATs with assessment guidance – in collaboration with Hounslow SACRE
- Move Religions and Worldviews in Harrow to Appendix
- The launch event is planned for 19 October at Canon Lane Primary School.

A highly successful launch of the ASC was held at Cannons Lane Primary School on 19 October 2023. Alastair Phillips, Headteacher, welcomed colleagues and Alison Stowe, Chair of the ASC shared the context. Lisa Kassapian, RE Adviser, introduced the new ‘refreshed’ Harrow Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2023 -2028. Paddy O’Dwyer, Director of Education, provided closing words.

The launch highlighted continuity and changes from the previous Agreed Syllabus 2016. It provided an opportunity to consider the implications of the changes to the Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education for individual schools.

The event was well attended by over 40 colleagues from primary and secondary schools including academies and SACRE members.

2.2. Standards and monitoring of RE

At the meeting of 6 December 2023, the committee reviewed a report from Cannons Lane Primary School where the Ofsted inspection had included a “Deep Dive” into RE. Heena Mistry reported that, “the lead HMI ... commented on the RE plans being ‘ambitious’ which allowed children to respectfully question faith. He also shared that the children were able to make links from previous learning to help make sense of their learning.

Overall, this was a very positive experience and confirmed the teaching of RE at Cannon Lane to be good.”

At the meeting on 6 March 2024, the committee monitored the Harrow GCSE and A level results which show that Harrow schools perform above the national averages in students achieving top grades: this applies to both GCSE and A level results.

The Chair also reported back on the exercise of monitoring a selection of school websites undertaken by some members of the committee. The majority of the schools surveyed have adopted the Agreed Syllabus. The Chair has written a report for the RE Newsletter.

The Development Planning Group in their report to SACRE on 26 June, identified a need to compile a questionnaire to monitor RE in all Harrow Schools this could include pupil feedback. This will be taken forward.

At its summer term meeting, the committee considered “Deep and Meaningful: the Ofsted Religious Education Subject Report” and the RE Council’s Religion and Worldviews approach. The reports will shape Harrow SACRE’s development plan going forward.

In 2023-2024 no Harrow schools applied for the REQM award.

2.3. Teacher training and materials and advice for schools

See also Appendix 7.3.

The Teachers’ Network is working on a list of places of worship in Harrow and its environs which can be visited and also a list of speakers from different religions and world views who will visit schools. Members will contribute to this list. In an address to the Deanery Synod, the Chair has encouraged churches to host visits from schools.

Understanding Christianity: a subsidy of £150 has reduced the cost of this RE educational package from £210 to £60. The LA is unable to provide funding at this time but Patrick O’Dwyer will bring this to the attention of Harrow schools forum and details will also be published in the RE Newsletter. RE subject leaders have also been informed and will raise this in their schools.

2.4 Other information

Complaints: There have been no complaints to SACRE in 2023-24 in relation to Religious Education.

Withdrawals: SACRE has received no reports of pupils being withdrawn from Religious Education in 2023-24.

Collective Worship

3. Collective Worship (Statutory Responsibilities)

3.1. Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship:

SACRE members have been viewing collective worship from school websites but have found there is less information available than what can be found about RE.

3.2 Determinations

Norbury and Glebe Schools have determinations that are due for renewal. Visits by the Chair and Adviser to the schools are scheduled.

Guidance on applying for a determination (or a renewal of the same) can be found with the relevant application forms in the LB Harrow SACRE document 'The A to Z of School Collective Worship' via this link: <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/schools-learning/standing-advisory-council-religious-education>

SACRE can offer support with this process on request.

No academies have applied for a determination.

4. Links to other bodies

4.1 National

Harrow SACRE is affiliated to The National Association of SACREs (<https://nasacre.org.uk/>) login details for the NASACRE website can be obtained from the SACRE Clerk. SACRE notes and discusses key points from its regular briefings.

Through its faith representatives, Harrow SACRE is kept updated on the activities of the Board of Deputies of British Jews (<https://bod.org.uk/>) and Humanists UK (<https://humanists.uk/>).

The 2024 NASACRE Conference and AGM was held on 20 May 2024 at the York Hilton. Mary Abbott attended and reported back. She had attended a workshop called "Making your SACRE work for you" and members were pleased to see that Harrow SACRE is already implementing several of the ideas recommended.

4.2 Local:

David Cryer, the Humanist representative gave a very full report on the activities held during Interfaith Week 12-19 November 2023. Gopal Bhachu, Chair of Harrow Interfaith, attended the March SACRE meeting and expressed hopes of making even closer links between Harrow Interfaith and Harrow SACRE. He also delivered a report of the events which took place on Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January 2024.

Faith representatives give regular updates on activities relating to schools and places open to school visits.

Alison Stowe has written to the MP for Harrow urging the new government to offer greater support for RE, especially the recruitment and training of specialist teachers. She received a very positive reply from her MP, Gareth Thomas and a meeting was offered.

5. SACRE Involvement Locally

Several members visited the Brent Sikh Centre on the 4 February 2024 where they received a warm welcome and lavish hospitality. This visit was arranged by Harrow SACRE's Sikh Dharm representative, Paramjit Singh-Kohli.

5.1. Governor training

Harrow SACRE supports school governors through updates in the schools newsletter and through the determination application process. See 3.2.

5.2. Advice on issues within the community. Harrow SACRE's publications are available on the Harrow Council website.

- [Religious Observance Absence Guidance 2023-24](#)
- [Faith matters in physical education](#)
- [Fasting during the month of Ramadan - guidance for school leaders](#)
- [The A to Z of School Collective Worship Revised 2021](#)

6. SACRE's own arrangements

6.1 Professional and Administrative Support and how the LA supports the SACRE (Clerking, adviser, links to council initiatives).

Secretarial assistance and a budget for the discharge of the SACRE's duties is provided by the LB Harrow. The key areas of this support include the following:

Provision of a Clerk

Support of a Local Authority Adviser

Commissioning of an RE Consultant and Adviser to the SACRE

Funding of the NASACRE annual membership

Funding for at least one SACRE member to attend NASACRE's annual Conference and AGM

Costs relating to establishing and reviewing a Locally Agreed Syllabus (when appropriate)

The SACRE is grateful to the LB Harrow for making this support available.

6.2. Membership representation and recruitment: quoracy, issues and successes with recruitment.

Two very sad bereavements happened this year, Asad Omar, one of our long-serving Muslim members, died in October 2023. He had been unable to attend meetings for some time.

Lesley Prior, adviser to Harrow SACRE since 1 April 2016, died on 20 April 2024. Her last meeting with Harrow SACRE was 6 December 2022 before she went on sick leave. At the June meeting in 2024, members reflected on her life and achievements.

Lisa Kassapian had been Acting Adviser to Harrow SACRE since March 2023 and took over as permanent advisor in May 2024.

Arvind Halai became a full member of SACRE in June 2024 representing Sanatana Dharma. He had previously been an observer. This goes some way towards adjusting the representation of Sanatana Dharma to reflect the growth of this group shown in the 2021 Census. The committee has lost both its Muslim members, one has been replaced by Muhammad Dato. Islam is also represented by one of our teacher representatives, Sayyeda Maryam Jessa. Another teacher representative, Elizabeth Boulter is a member of the Orthodox church. There are a significant number of Orthodox Christians in Harrow particularly among the Romanian community.

Alison Stowe continued to serve as Chair and Cllr Camilla Bath as Vice-Chair. The Chair and Vice-Chair are normally elected at the June meeting, but as this meeting was not quorate, the election was postponed until the first meeting of the autumn term.

A full list of SACRE members is included in Appendix 7.2.

6.3. Attendance see appendix 7.2.

6.4. Training for SACRE members

Harrow SACRE has taken out a subscription which allows members to attend NASACRE courses at a reduced cost.

The Chair and Lisa Kassapian, adviser to Harrow SACRE have attended a NASACRE course on "How may SACREs effectively monitor schools?" plans to attend a NASACRE course for chairs.

Alison Stowe and Heena Mistry have attended a NASACRE online webinar on Collective Worship.

Mercedes Afnan has also attended a training session run by RE Hubs on hosting and making visits to and from schools.

Alison Stowe attends all Harrow RE subject leadership courses, these are also attended by Mary Abbott, Heena Mistry and Elizabeth Boulter, wherever practicable.

New members will be attending the NASACRE webinar "So you've joined your local SACRE?" in the coming year.

6.5. Finance given to SACRE for its work

£4,969 is allocated to SACRE by Harrow Council and the funding contributes toward the running costs of the SACRE, the work of the RE Consultant, and other costs such as membership of NASACRE and attendance at the NASACRE Conference etc. Refreshments, printing and postage for all SACRE meetings. A separate budget was allocated for the revision and launch of the Agreed Syllabus.

7. Appendices

7.1. Exam Results 2023/2024

GCSE

2023/24	% 9-1	% 9-4	% 9-5	% 9-7	% 9	% 8	% 7	% 6	% 5	% 4	% 3	% 2	% 1
England (All Schools)	97.5	72	61.5	31	8.1	10.8	12.1	16.5	14	10.5	12.6	8	4.8
Harrow	98	76	66	33	10	12	11	18	15	10	11	7	5

Source: England: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-4-performance>
Harrow : KS4 Pupil Level Data

A Level

2023/24	% A*	% A*-A	% A*-B	% A*-C	% A*-D	% A*-E	Entry Count
England	6.1	25.8	54.5	77.9	91.8	97.6	14477
Harrow	5	18%	45%	71%	83%	97%	76

Source: England: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/a-level-and-other-16-to-18-results>
Harrow: KS5 pupil level data

7.2. SACRE Membership and Attendance 2023-24

Chair: Alison Stowe (Group B)
Vice Chair: Cllr Camilla Bath (Group A)
Clerk: Vivian Wright
LA: Patrick O'Dwyer

Attendance: the number of meetings attended out of the possible number that could be attended is shown in brackets.

Group A - Religious Traditions and Christian Churches

Ms Mercedes Afnan: Baha'i (3/4)
Ven Sumaner Sramaner: Buddha Dhamma until June 2024 (1/4)
Karen Collier Christian (Free Church Federal Council) (3/4)
Laura Thornton Christian (Catholic) from October 2023 (3/4)
Camilla Bath Christian (Catholic) (0/4 due to illness)
Vijay Hirani: Sanatana Dharma (Hindu religion) (Swaminarayan) (2/4)
Arvind Halai Sanatana Dharma (Hindu Religion) from June 2024, previously an observer (3/4)
David Cryer: Humanist (Harrow Humanists) (4/4)

Varsha Dodhia: Jain Dharma ((1/4)
Gill Ross: Jewish (2/4)
Doreen Samuels: Jewish (2/4)
Muhammad Datoo: Muslim from December 2023 (1/3)
Vacancy: Rastafarian
Paramjit Singh-Kohli: Sikh Dharm (1/4)
Phiroza Gan-Kotwal: Zoroastrian (4/4)

Group B - Church of England

Mary Abbott (3/4)
Alison Stowe (4/4)
Reverend James Power until June 2024 (3/4)
Reverend Mike Still from June 2024 (1/1)

Group C - Teachers' Associations

Fatema Rahemani (NAS/UWT Union) (0/4)
Heena Mistry (NAHT) (0/4)
Elizabeth Boulter (NEU) (2/4)
Sayyeda Maryam Jessa (NEU) from June 2023 (1/4)

Group D - Local Authority

Councillor Janet Mote, Conservative (3/4)
Councillor June Baxter, Conservative from 18 May 2023 (4/4)
Cllr Sasi Suresh, Labour (3/4)
Councillor David Ashton, Conservative (Reserve) until May 2024
Councillor Ramji Chauhan Conservative (Reserve) from May 2024
Councillor Hitesh Karia, Conservative (Reserve)
Councillor Ghazanfar Ali, Labour (Reserve) from 20 October 2022 (1 meeting attended as a reserve)

Adviser

Lisa Kassapian from Breathe RE is adviser to Harrow SACRE.

Members have served from September 2023 to August 2024 except where otherwise indicated.

In Attendance:

Vivian Wright, Clerk to the Harrow SACRE.

Observers

Arvind Halai from the Swaminarayan Temple, was a regular observer at SACRE meetings until June 2024 when he became a member of SACRE.

Gopal Bhachu, Chair of Harrow Interfaith, attended the March meeting as an observer.

7.3. Details of CPD provided to schools

19 October 2023: at the launch of the ASC on 19 October, provided training activities designed to remind teachers of the Statutory requirements and to help them move forward in planning and assessing RE. Feedback was very positive.

28 November 2023: Lisa Kassapian ran 'Sat Nav RE' hosted by St John's Church of England Primary School. Designed to support RE subject leaders in implementing the new AS.

21 February 2024: sixteen subject leaders discussed new syllabus implementation, terminology, theory, practice and age-related expectations by year group. They also considered Teaching, Learning and Assessment to raise attainment and expressed a need for further guidance on assessment. Teachers shared examples of pupil work, knowledge organisers, learning objectives, summary of religions and resources linked to the new agreed syllabus. These were disseminated to the professional learning network.

Heena reported some very positive feedback from a parent who expressed her delight at the use of terminology Sanatana Dharma. One school has summarised *Appendix E: Religions and worldviews in Harrow* to circulate to all teachers in their school.

19 June 2024: Training on Assessing Primary RE, lead by Lisa Kassapian. Subject leaders discussed age-related expectations, moderated and shared work and considered Assessment to raise attainment.

7.4. Any LA/SACRE policy statements on RE or CW

These have not been changed in the year 2023/24.

7.5. Circulation details for the Annual report

This Annual Report is shared with the Director of Education for LB Harrow and sent to the Department for Education, NASACRE and Harrow schools, including governors. The report will be available for anyone to view on the SACRE section of the LB Harrow website: <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/schools-learning/standing-advisory-council-religious-education>