



Harrow SACRE Annual Report

2019 - 2020



Harrow
SACRE



Foreword

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. Although statistics from the 2011 National Census are now somewhat out of date they remain helpful in illustrating the diversity of the Local Authority.

Harrow had the highest religious affiliation in England and Wales and was ranked as having the:

- highest percentage of Hindus (25.3%)
- highest percentage of Jains (2.2%)
- second highest percentage of Zoroastrians (0.1%)
- second lowest percentage of residents declaring No Religion (9.6%).

The Census data also revealed that 37.3%% of residents identified themselves as Christian, 12.5% as Muslim, 4.4% as Jewish, 1.1% as Buddhist and 1.2% as Sikh.

Harrow was also defined by its ethnic profile, having the:

- second highest percentage of residents of Indian origin (26.4%) and the highest percentage of residents who have described themselves using the category of 'Other Asian' (11.3%)
- highest ranking of residents identifying their country of birth as South and Eastern Africa (9.9%), Kenya (4.9%), Sri Lanka (4.3%) and Romania (2.2%)
- highest percentage of residents who identified themselves as British only (41.6%), indicating a high degree of integration
- a significant relocation of Eastern European families into Harrow since 2011.

The 2011 National Census revealed that Harrow's population was estimated to have increased to 239,100; this figure is 15.6% higher than the 2001 Census showed, and the Office for National Statistics 2014 Mid-Year Estimates showed a further increase to 246,011.

Harrow's population is now at the highest recorded level, based on records going back to 1901. The 0-4 age group increased by 5,418 between mid-2001 (12,058) and mid 2014 (17,476), which represents a 45% increase. There were also increases across all the statutory school age groups.

The 2011 Census showed that Harrow's residents were born in approximately 200 different countries and the percentage of Harrow's residents born in the UK is the 6th lowest ranking nationally. Harrow is ranked 7th nationally (and in London) for ethnic diversity and 2nd for religious diversity in London.

There are 61 state funded schools in Harrow which include LA maintained schools, Academy schools and Free schools (these are academy schools that have not converted from a maintained school).

Type of School	Number of LA Maintained Schools (including VA)	Number of Academy and Free Schools,	Total by Type
Primary	28	13	41
Secondary	1	11	12
Primary/Secondary (5-18)	0	1	1
Primary Special	1	1	2
Secondary Special	2	0	2
Alternative Provision	1	1	2
Total (All)	34	27	61

There are 14 faith schools in Harrow: (eight Catholic, one Jewish, two Church of England, three Hindu schools). Since the period covered in this report a Muslim faith primary school has opened in Harrow.

Five primary schools and two secondary mainstream schools are additionally resourced to meet the specific needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEN/D).

The LA maintained alternative provision incorporates the Pupil Referral Unit which makes provision for permanently excluded pupils and other pupils who are not able to attend school. In addition there is one academy alternative provision provider. In accordance with the Council's School Amalgamation Policy, several infant and junior schools have amalgamated to become all-through primary schools over the past few years.

Chair's Foreword

The academic year 2019-20 was a completely different year to anything I have experienced in education. The year had begun well and we met in our Civic Centre as usual not realising how by March 2020 everything would change. In March schools in Harrow were all open for the children of key workers and staff juggled working in school with working on-line and skills were quickly developed to ensure that the RE curriculum was covered. The national curriculum was taught and RE was still the entitlement of every child in school in Harrow Local Authority.

Even in these difficult times I would like to praise the dedicated and hard-working SACRE members. Attendance at meetings was high, even on zoom, and without exception members arrived with insight into the items for discussion. Furthermore, each member spent time looking at community school websites and acquainting themselves with coverage of the Agreed Syllabus. As one example, prior to lockdown we had worked with Marlborough School to help them prepare their

determination and at the December meeting were able to discuss the determination with the teacher in charge. This was a very constructive meeting and I commend the SACRE members for spending time reflecting on the paperwork and then asking pertinent questions. A chair's group then met again to finalise the feedback to the school. This was an extra meeting and shows a dedicated team.

I was able to visit Vaughan School in February and discuss with the HT and RE subject leader their application for their determination. They began the process of speaking with governors and parents before lockdown began. SACRE will continue to monitor this work this academic year.

Throughout lockdown the RE subject leaders have continued to develop stimulating lessons for our Agreed Syllabus. RE leaders taught both remotely, in school (to key workers) and then from June to YR, Y1, Y6 and prepared appropriate lessons in difficult times. RE is still a subject that must be taught even in a pandemic. And from the information I have, the syllabus was taught. We have an active WhatsApp group of RE subject leaders, aided by Lesley Prior, who continued to support each other with ideas. SACRE is indebted to them and the work they do.

Many schools actively worked to develop Collective Worship remotely and produced some sensitive examples of worship that was appropriate. This is something as a SACRE we will consider when we look at Collective Worship in the coming year and will help us when we support determinations. The RE subject leaders still met in June on zoom where Collective Worship was a focus. Although Collective Worship is not the remit of the RE leaders many of our leaders are heavily involved in preparing Collective Worship in school.

We are fortunate that Harrow Local Authority is very supportive of RE in schools and ensures that there is a termly meeting for subject leaders which is extremely well attended, but not all subject leaders can attend as their time out of class cannot be afforded by the school. Time out of class to attend professional development has a cost for the schools and budgets are tight. Ofsted are putting greater focus on subjects like RE and until RE CPD can be fully resourced by schools it is inevitable that there will be teachers not having the skills they need.

The Local Authority Adviser role is crucial to a SACRE and it should not be underestimated how necessary this role is to maintain standards of RE teaching. Lesley Prior has developed a good relationship with schools in the LA and this means that the Agreed Syllabus planning is of a high standard.

I would like to thank SACRE members for working so hard during what has been a difficult year and in particular our clerk who has supported us, even taking the minutes on zoom calls. I think the role of Chair to SACRE would be almost impossible without the clerk and ours is extraordinarily efficient.

Alison Stowe
Chair Harrow SACRE

Matters considered by SACRE in 2019-2020

a) Monitoring of the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus

In 2019-20, SACRE continued to seek ways to fulfil its statutory obligation to monitor RE in general and the implementation of the locally agreed syllabus in particular.

Members therefore continued to comment on references to RE on websites of schools under local authority control, whilst appreciating and understanding that these may not give a wholly accurate picture of provision.

SACRE also made a fresh invitation to all schools within its remit to post links to the locally agreed syllabus on their websites to reinforce the relationship between the statutory requirements and what is actually planned and taught.

Although the pandemic posed serious challenges this year to ensuring appropriate provision for RE (both within schools and through online teaching and remote learning), SACRE members noted that many Subject Leaders had been able to use this period to:

- prepare teaching and learning
- review and revise RE documentation such as schemes of learning and policy statements
- organise existing resources and/or select new ones
- develop their own subject knowledge.

It was hoped that this would strengthen provision for RE when schools could reopen fully.

b) RE Commission: Interim Report on RE

This year, SACRE members focused on OfSTED reports and how OfSTED is inspecting RE in the light of the requirement for a broad and balanced curriculum. The following questions were discussed:

- Is RE the subject of the “deep dives” advocated by OfSTED and what are the findings?
- Are there as many “deep dives” for RE as there are for other humanities subjects?

Findings show that there are more deep dives in the primary than the secondary sector. Members noted that research has not yet been concluded as to whether there are as many deep dives for RE as for the other humanities subjects.

Members expressed concerns that although OfSTED may have a renewed focus on RE, it is not known whether inspectors have sufficient knowledge to do this adequately. It was therefore agreed that SACRE should produce a two-side briefing

to give guidance to inspectors on their locally agreed syllabus. This will be prepared and considered by members in 2020-21.

c) Guidance for Schools (available on Harrow SACRE website):

During the year, SACRE revisited, reviewed and updated where necessary its guidance for schools on:

- Ramadan
- Days of Religious Observance

d) Determinations

The Adviser to SACRE reminded members about the role, nature and purpose of determinations in relation to Collective Worship.

- Marlborough Primary School was granted a determination at the SACRE Meeting on 25th June 2020.

At the same meeting, the Chair of SACRE informed members that Vaughan Primary School will also be seeking a determination. She had visited the school and originally suggested that they submit their application during this calendar year. This was not possible due to the coronavirus crisis but it will be coming up for consideration at a future meeting in 2020-21.

e) RE Subject Leader Meetings

The RE Subject Leaders have met three times this year.

- 13th November at the Civic Centre, focusing on:
 - Planning and Assessment Frameworks, including a presentation by Giorgio Mori, RE Subject Leader at Glebe Primary School
 - Humanism, including a presentation by David Cryer, Group A, Humanist Representative
- 14th January at Aylward Primary School
 - OfSTED and RE
 - Knowledge Organisers in RE
- 30th June online
 - Collective Worship, including a presentation by Alison Stowe, Chair of Harrow SACRE

The group is growing in size and members continue to maintain contact with one another between sessions using a WhatsApp Group. The meetings are very interactive and extremely well received. During the lockdown period, the WhatsApp Group was particularly useful, with members sharing resources and giving and receiving support.

The Adviser to SACRE offered extensive telephone and online consultations to Subject Leaders who were using their time away from face to face teaching to develop schemes of learning and review and revise policy documents for RE. She also issued several newsletters during this period for distribution to Subject Leaders to share new materials and offering guidance on how to meet the challenges of this very difficult period.

SACRE Monitoring and Evaluation of Attainment in R.E.

Public examination entries and results in RS GCSE and GCE AS and A level in 2020

Data for 2019-20 is not provided as public examinations did not take place.

MANAGING THE SACRE AND PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY, SCHOOLS AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- **Membership and Meetings**
- **Partnership with Harrow Council**
- **Partnership with Schools**
- **Partnership with NASACRE and the RE Council of England and Wales**

a) Membership and Meetings

The SACRE usually meets four times a year, twice in the autumn term in order to devote time to the Annual Report and to respond to the additional requests from schools for advice in that period and once in the spring and in the summer terms.

In 2019-20, these meetings took place on:

- 15th October 2019
- 10th December 2019
- 25th June 2020 (as a video conference)

The meeting scheduled for the 24th March was cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

SACRE has continued its efforts to recruit teachers to the SACRE via their professional associations, including one to represent the academy schools. The constitution allows for up to six teachers.

Harrow SACRE Membership 2019-2020

Chair: Alison Stowe (Group C)

Vice Chair: Cllr Camilla Bath (Group D)

Group A - Religious Traditions and Christian Churches

- Ms Mercedes Afnan: Baha'i
- Ven Sumaner Sramaner: Buddhist
- Bob Dawson: Christian (Free Church Federal Council)
- Carolyn O'Brien: Christian (Catholic) *until 15 October 2019*
- Diana Ohene *from 10 December 2019*
- Ciara O'Flaherty: Christian (Catholic)
- Vijay Hirani: Hindu (Swaminarayan)
- David Cryer: Humanist (Harrow Humanists)
- Varsha Dodhia: Jain
- Gill Ross: Jewish
- Doreen Samuels: Jewish
- Zafar Khalid: Muslim (representing Harrow Muslim Council)
- Tahir Hashmi: Muslim (representing Harrow Central Mosque)

- Mohammed Amar: Muslim (representing Harrow Central Mosque)
- Asad Omar: Muslim
- Vacancy: Rastafarian
- Paramjit Singh-Kohli: Sikh
- Phiroza Gan-Kotwal: Zoroastrian

Group B - Church of England

- Mary Abbott
- Reverend Kate Blake
- Reverend James Power

Group C - Teachers' Associations

- Fatema Rahemani (NAS/UWT)
- Alison Stowe (NEU)
- Teri-Louise O'Brien

Group D - Local Authority

- Cllr Camilla Bath, Conservative
- Cllr Ghazanfar Ali, Labour
- Cllr Angella Murphy-Strachan, Labour
- Cllr Simon Brown, Labour (Reserve)
- Vacancy, Labour (Reserve)
- Cllr Dr Lesline Lewinson, Conservative (Reserve)

Lesley Prior (LDBS) is Adviser to the Harrow SACRE on behalf of the Corporate Director People Services.

Members have served throughout 2019-20 except where otherwise indicated.

In Attendance:

- Vivian Wright, Clerk to the Harrow SACRE

The Harrow SACRE Website

The SACRE website is accessible from the Council's website. It is updated with the agendas and minutes of SACRE meetings and the SACRE Annual Report (see [Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education – Harrow Council](#))

The website raises the profile of Harrow SACRE.

It includes easier access to the calendar of meetings and to Harrow SACRE briefing documents, such as the guidance on:

- **Days of Religious Observance:**
[Harrow Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education \(SACRE\)](#)
- **Fasting During Ramadan**
[fasting-during-the-month-of-ramadan \(harrow.gov.uk\)](#)

- **Faith Matters in PE**
[faith-matters-in-physical-education \(harrow.gov.uk\)](http://faith-matters-in-physical-education(harrow.gov.uk))

b) Partnership with Harrow Council (and the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) 2019-20

The Agreed Syllabus was adopted by Harrow Council it became a statutory requirement for maintained schools in 2016. Voluntary aided schools with a religious character are not required to deliver the Agreed Syllabus, nor are Free Schools and Academies. However, Free Schools and Academies have to provide RE and fulfil the statutory requirements and many choose to do so by voluntarily following the locally agreed syllabus. Non-denominational academies and free schools must meet statutory requirements although not necessarily through the locally agreed syllabus.

The current syllabus was agreed in **2016** and is available via this link:
[religious syllabus 07.indd \(harrow.gov.uk\)](http://religious_syllabus_07.indd(harrow.gov.uk))

c) The Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants

The Adviser to SACRE is a member of AREIAC for 2019-20 and shares information from this and other professional bodies with SACRE Members (www.areiac.org.uk).

d) Partnership with Local Faith Communities

- **Guidance on Days of Religious Observance and Pupil Absence:** This annual guidance and list of days of religious observance is one of the most valued services that Harrow SACRE provides to schools. It helps headteachers to decide how much leave may be allowed to pupils (and staff) for religious observance. SACRE members work on this guidance over the summer ready to send out in the autumn. With so much relying on school attendance, SACRE recognises how vital it is for schools to have this guidance that comes with the authority of the faith communities.

It can be found here:

[Harrow Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education \(SACRE\)](http://Harrow Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE))

It is updated every year, using dates supplied by the Shap Working Party on World Religions in Education. See www.shapworkingparty.org.uk/ for details.

- **Fasting During Ramadan:** Schools have found this publication to be very useful and it has also been well received more widely. The Guidance is balanced and helps schools to manage over this period. See this link for access: [fasting-during-the-month-of-ramadan \(harrow.gov.uk\)](http://fasting-during-the-month-of-ramadan(harrow.gov.uk))

e) Partnership with NASACRE

Harrow SACRE is affiliated to The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

The Adviser to SACRE is a former Chair of NASACRE (2013-15) and now Assistant to and member of the NASACRE Executive Group.