



Harrow SACRE Annual Report

2022 - 2023

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

January 2024



**Harrow
SACRE**



**LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW**

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Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Words from the Chair of SACRE 2022-23

The teaching profession has yet again proved that they are prepared to work with rigour to ensure that children have the best outcomes and have deeper knowledge of the religions in the local authority of Harrow. RE teaching has flourished in Harrow schools and the subject leaders have collaborated with their planning and with each other. RE leaders have continued to talk regularly via WhatsApp and share their expertise. SACRE meetings continued to be well attended and hybrid meetings were trialled. One of our members attended the NASACRE annual meeting and we were able to discuss improving teaching and learning in religious education.

Education had many challenges but where there is a spirit of co-operation most difficulties can be overcome. Through the RE subject leaders' meetings, we were able to address these difficulties and plan ways to move forward. Since we now have up-to-date census data we are able to respond to the changes in our community.

Visits to places of worship have returned with children enjoying the experience of seeing inside a building and not just learning about places of worship in class. Speakers from various religious communities have visited schools to explain about their faith and answer questions. We are very grateful for this input with our children.

We are always glad to hear of the good work in our schools. Our teaching union representatives have been very helpful in putting context into religious education and structuring lessons and assessments.

Collective worship continues to be important in Harrow local authority and since the pandemic, children and teachers are keen to ensure that the "collective" aspect of worship is enjoyed.

We are lucky that despite some much-respected members of the SACRE moving off the committee we have had new members joining so we continue to be a dynamic group. We are very grateful to Lisa Kassapian for stepping into the role of adviser to the Harrow SACRE and supporting us in the meetings and working with teachers and committee members on the Agreed Syllabus. This was a huge piece of work which she carried out with great expertise and skill.

Harrow SACRE is a vibrant and hard-working group, and we learn from each other and move forward together. We are lucky to have an excellent clerk in Vivian Wright and our councillors from the Council take an active interest in what we do. We are exceptionally lucky to have Patrick O'Dwyer, Director of Education, as a LA senior representative who supports us in all we have done. Lesley Prior (our SACRE adviser) has been a great source of knowledge on the subjects of RE and collective worship and worked tirelessly to support the teachers in the authority to February 2023.

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	Sanatana 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:

20 October 2022 at Harrow Civic Centre (last meeting at the Civic Centre)

6 December 2022 at Harrow Council Hub (first meeting at Harrow Council Hub. Lesley Prior's last meeting before taking extended sick leave).

1 March 2023 via Zoom (Lisa Kassapian joins Harrow SACRE as temporary adviser)

27 June 2023 at Harrow Council Hub

All meetings were quorate: for membership and attendance see 6.2. and appendix 7.2.

Harrow Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)

The AS was due for its five-year review: the LA convened the ASC with the same membership as SACRE with the consent of the nominating bodies concerned.

The meeting on the 20 October 2022 was a combined meeting of the SACRE and ASC, on the subsequent dates the ASC met after the SACRE with a separate agenda. SACRE meetings were kept brief to allow time for ASC business.

1.4. Content of meetings: summary

SACRE

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

ASC; the AS is due for review and this work will be the main focus for SACRE members this year. Agreed to maintain the current syllabus, updated to reflect changes in education since 2016.

DRO (Dates of religious observance) 2022-23 reviewed.
Harrow workforce data
Role of SACREs: the national picture – developments in education affecting SACREs and RE
RE report card
Membership, recruitment and representation: 2021 Census data
RE Teachers' WhatsApp group and meetings
National updates: NASACRE briefings and conference.
Local updates
News from faith groups relating to schools

ASC

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
Time frame
Updating the ASC with focus on EYFS, attainment targets and assessment.
Hounslow syllabus
Input from RE teachers
Final draft review
Terminology for the Dharmic religions
Aims section of the AS
Religions and world views section of the AS

2. Religious Education (Statutory Responsibilities)

2.1. Locally Agreed Syllabus and RE

In the autumn of 2022, the nominating bodies for the SACRE representatives were approached by the clerk seeking agreement for them to form part of the Agreed Syllabus Committee (ASC) and when this was granted, the Local Authority convened the ASC to carry out the five yearly review of the AS. Having elected Alison Stowe and David Cryer as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively, the committee agreed a time frame with publication of the new AS in the autumn of 2023; at the time of writing, this has just taken place. The Committee worked in close consultation with the Good Practice Network for Subject Leaders in RE in Primary Schools and with their support it was decided not to carry out a major revision but to update where necessary to reflect changes in education that have occurred over the last five years. In practice, so many changes have taken place in this time, that the revision turned into a major rewrite.

The committee took on the recommendations of the Good Practice Network and also made a comparison with the AS used by LB Hounslow. It was agreed to “borrow” from the Hounslow syllabus for the assessment section, with proper acknowledgement being made. The committee worked hard, and special mention must be made of our new adviser Lisa Kassapian who worked far above her scheduled hours to complete the AS on time. Alison Stowe and David Cryer were also very generous with their time and expertise. Only one secondary school in Harrow is under Local Authority control: the Head of RE is also the representative of Buddha Dhamma on SACRE and a member of the ASC. The remaining secondary schools are all academies and to our knowledge, are not using the AS, though some teachers request notes from the CPD sessions.

2.2. Standards and Monitoring of RE

As described in 2.1. above, the main focus for Harrow SACRE this year has been the revision of the AS. Monitoring will follow the implementation of this. No Harrow schools have applied for the REQM award in this period.

2.3. Teacher training and materials and advice for schools

The clerk, with input from the committee updated the Guidance on Days of religious observance that require time off from school.

The committee agreed to compile a list of local places of worship that welcome school visits. It would also include contact details and extend to museums holding artefacts of interest. This is a work in progress.

Lesley Prior continued to run the Good Practice Network for Subject Leaders in RE in community primary schools until December 2022. The RE Subject Leaders have continued their termly meetings and communicate between meetings via WhatsApp.

Alison Stowe attended the meeting in the autumn term and, while Lesley Prior was on sick leave, Alison led the spring meeting and Lisa Kassapian led the summer meetings. Both Lisa and Alison play a key role in building effective links between SACRE and the members of this group.

This year, the group focused on the AS with special reference to EYFS, attainment targets and assessment all of which have undergone major changes in the last five years. There have been discussions about what good assessment should look like and planning formats.

Newsletter: Lesley Prior produced a newsletter every half term before she went on sick leave.

Support and online consultations: Lesley Prior has supported schools in the LA with advice and Alison Stowe has supported schools with collective worship advice.

SACRE has continued to support collective worship in school by pointing teachers in the direction of good resources.

2.4 Other information

Complaints: There have been no complaints to SACRE in 2022-23 in relation to Religious Education. There was a difficulty with the dates of the Shia festival in the DRO but this was dealt with by the Director of Education, Patrick O'Dwyer who informed the Chair of SACRE.

Withdrawals: SACRE has received no reports of pupils being withdrawn from Religious Education

3. Collective Worship (Statutory Responsibilities)

3.1. Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship

There has been some discussion about appropriate collective worship on the RE leaders WhatsApp for particular festivals. Some teachers are happy to share resources.

Collective Worship been discussed in subject leader meetings with Lesley Prior giving advice. Harrow's Guidance on Collective Worship for Schools is available on the website (*see also 5. below*)

SACRE members were asked to continue viewing collective worship from school websites.

3.2 Determinations

Four schools currently have a determination. No academy schools have asked the DfE for a determination.

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.

3.3. Teacher training

There have been three training sessions for staff (one per term) and Lesley Prior has offered support through visits and telephone conversations.

3.4. Advice to the LA

The religious observance guidance supports Head Teachers in reaching decisions about applications for pupil leave of absence for days of religious observance.

4. SACRE 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 2023 NASACRE Conference and AGM was held on 22 May 2023 at the Fishmongers' Hall in London. Mary Abbott and Lisa Kassapian attended and reported back to the committee at its summer meeting.

4.2 Local

The Committee includes a representative from Harrow Interfaith and receives regular updates on its initiatives and activities. The Baha'i, Jain and Church of England representatives have visited local schools.

Faith representatives give regular updates on activities relating to schools and places open to school visits. These places include recently opened Mosaic Jewish Community Building in Stanmore where the community development rabbi is forging links locally, St Mary's Church on Harrow on the Hill, the Zoroastrian Centre as well as local synagogues, churches, mosques and temples.

5. SACRE Involvement Locally

Alison Stowe led on a visit from Marlborough School to Holy Trinity in Wealdstone and James Power regularly hosts school visits at St Mary's, Harrow-on-the-Hill. Belmont, Whitchurch, Earlsmead, Elmgrove, Roxbourne, Stanburn, Longfield and Heathland Primary schools have all made at least one visit during the year to local places of worship and teachers report that these continue to be a source of stimulation and enjoyment.

5.1. Governor training

Members have been offered on-line support via NASACRE.

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

Secretarial assistance and a budget for the discharge of the SACRE's duties is provided by the Harrow LA. 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

Given the high number of Hindus in Harrow, SACRE is seeking more representatives from the Hindu communities in the borough. The Muslim population of Harrow has also increased, and following the resignation of two Muslim members, replacements are being sought. Karen Collier joined the committee as Christian representative for the Free Church Federal Council. Two Catholic representatives left the committee and have so far been replaced by Camilla Bath who had previously served as a Group D representative and continued as an observer until a suitable vacancy came up.

Alison Stowe continues to serve as Chair; Cllr Camilla Bath was Vice-Chair up to and including the March 2022 meeting. She was re-elected as Vice-Chair in March 2023.

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

6.3. Attendance

See appendix 7.2.

6.4. Training for SACRE and ASC members

SACRE members are encouraged to attend training provided by NASACRE. School based SACRE members or those with other links to education also attend local and national RE training including Diocesan training.

Alison Stowe plans to attend a NASACRE course for chairs. New members will be attending courses in the coming year.

6.5. Finance given to SACRE for its work

£4,969 was allocated to the SACRE by Harrow Council in 2022/23 and the funding contributes toward the running costs of the SACRE, the work of the adviser to SACRE, and other costs such as clerking, membership of NASACRE, and attendance at the NASACRE Conference.

7. Appendices

7.1. 2022-23 Exam Results

GCSE

Religious Studies: GCSE (9-1) Full Course

2022/23	% 9-1 (A*-G)	% 9-4 (A*-C)	% 9-7 (A*-A)	% 9-5	% 9	% 8	% 7	% 6	% 5	% 4	% 3	% 2	% 1
England	97.7	72.2	31	61.4	8.1	10.8	12.1	16.5	13.9	10.8	13.3	7.9	4.3
Harrow	89.3	71.8	39.3	52.7	12.4	14	12.9	15.5	12.3	8.9	13.3	6.6	2.2

Source: England: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-4-performance>
Harrow: Revised NPD data in NCER Nexus

A Level

Religious Studies: GCE A level

2022/23	% A*	% A	% B	% C	% D	% E	% A* - A	% A* - B	% A* - E
England	6	19.5	29.6	23.4	13.1	5.7	25.5	55.1	97.3
Harrow	9.9	19.8	30.6	19	15.7	5	29.8	60.3	100

Source: England & Harrow: Revised NPD data in NCER Nexus

7.2. SACRE Membership and Attendance 2022-23

Chair: Alison Stowe (Group B)

Vice Chair: Cllr Camilla Bath (Group A) from March 2023, previously vacant

Clerk: Vivian Wright

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 (2/4)

Karen Collier Christian (Free Church Federal Council) from October 2022 (3/4)

Diana Ohene: Christian (Catholic) until January 2022 (1/2)

Ciara O'Flaherty: Christian (Catholic) from March 2023 (2/3)

Camilla Bath Christian (Catholic) from March 2023 (2/2)

Vijay Hirani: Sanatana Dharma (Hindu religion) (Swaminarayan) (4/4)

David Cryer: Humanist (Harrow Humanists) (4/4)

Varsha Dodhia: Jain Dharma ((2/4)

Gill Ross: Jewish (1/4)

Doreen Samuels: Jewish (1/4}

Zafar Khalid: Muslim (representing Harrow Central Mosque) until December 2022 (0/2)

Mohammed Amar: Muslim (representing Harrow Central Mosque) until December 2022 (0/2)

Asad Omar: Muslim (0 meetings attended with apologies accepted)

Vacancy: Rastafarian

Paramjit Singh-Kohli: Sikh Dharm (3/4)

Phiroza Gan-Kotwal: Zoroastrian (3/4)

Group B - Church of England

Mary Abbott (4/4)

Alison Stowe (4/4)

Reverend James Power (3/4)

Group C - Teachers' Associations

Fatema Rahemani (NAS/UWT Union) (1/4)

Heena Mistry (NAHT) (2/4)

Elizabeth Boulter (NEU) (2/4)

Sayyeda Maryam Jessa (NEU) from June 2023 (1/1)

Group D - Local Authority

Councillor Janet Mote, Conservative (0/4)

Councillor June Baxter, Conservative from 18 May 2023 (0/1)

Councillor Salim Chowdhury, Conservative until 18 May 2023 (0/3)

Cllr Sasi Suresh, Labour (3/4)

Councillor David Ashton, Conservative (Reserve)

Councillor Hitesh Karia, Conservative (Reserve)

Councillor Antonio Weiss, Labour (Reserve) until 20 October 2022

Councillor Ghazanfar Ali, Labour (Reserve) from 20 October 2022 (1 meeting attended as a reserve).

Advisers

Lesley Prior (LDBS) was Adviser to the Harrow SACRE until December 2022 when she went on long term leave. Lisa Kassapian from Breathe RE took over the role of adviser from February 2023.

Members have served from September 2022 to August 2023 except where otherwise indicated.

In Attendance:

Vivian Wright, Clerk to the Harrow SACRE

Observers

Camilla Bath until March 2023.

Arvind Halai from the Swaminarayan Temple has been regular observer at SACRE meetings since June 2022.

7.3. Details of CPD provided to schools

There is a termly RE subject leaders meeting organised by the LA. These were largely focussing on refreshing the Agreed Syllabus. Assessment was a key theme and how RE is reported to parents and other staff.

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

SACRE members are aware of the continued need for increased DFE support for PGCE/SCITT training.

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 NASACRE and to schools. 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>