



## Hounslow Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Every Local Authority is required to have a SACRE, which is made up of four groups: (A) Faith representatives, (B) The Church of England, (C) Teachers, and (D) Councillors. The committee should reflect the faiths within the community.

SACREs have the responsibility for advising a Local Authority (LA) on Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship in its schools. SACREs have a duty to publish an annual report, the main purpose of which is to hold the LA to account by informing the Secretary of State and key partners what advice SACRE gave the LA during the year and how that was responded to; this includes advice on RE and Collective Worship in those schools for which the LA has responsibility.

This report covers the academic year 2024-2025. Hounslow SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). A copy of this report covering the academic year 2024-2025 will be sent to NASACRE.

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### Annual Report for the Academic Year 2024-25

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## 1 Introduction

### **1a. Chair's Introduction**

We have had a busy but productive year, and I offer thanks to the members who have regularly turned up to work alongside each other to support SACRE. Together we supported five schools to gain a determination and reintroduce a termly newsletter which we sent to all Hounslow schools.

Members have embraced the NASACRE online training and once again were able to offer some teacher training. We continue to seek new members that represent the diverse population of the London Borough of Hounslow.

As a retired teacher I have very much enjoyed being able to visit schools to support their determination applications. I have visited the schools, seen acts of Collective Worship and discussed them with the Head or RE/CW lead. We were also able to discuss classroom Collective Worship.

Once again it has been a year of change in membership, and I am proud of the group for its consistency. I send my thanks to all who work tirelessly to keep the SACRE efficient. Thanks to our interim advisors Claire Clinton and Lisa Kassapian and to our Local Authority support from Tim Hallett, Damila Izza and Sarah Pearce. Also to our Clerk Jane Joseph who not only takes the minutes and keeps us informed but has been guiding us to become paperless with all notices etc being made available on Gov Hub.

We welcome Stacey Burman as our new Advisor and look forward to our work in reviewing our Agreed Syllabus and continuing to work with schools and teachers.

*Eileen Crabtree*

*Hounslow SACRE Chair*

### **1b. Introduction to Hounslow**

Hounslow is an incredibly diverse Borough to the west of London, with English as a first language for less than half our schools' population. We also have a large range of religions and worldviews being reflected in our community, with 38% identifying as Christian and 17% as Muslim, with just under 10% as Hindu, as well as 9% as Sikh. In comparison to other London boroughs, we have a higher proportion of the community identifying as Buddhist (1.4%), as well as a large number not identifying with any religious faith at all (18.6%).

As such, our aim is to promote, support and encourage good practice in the teaching of Religious Education and collective worship in the London Borough of Hounslow schools, as we seek to ensure that all pupils are educated to develop spiritually, academically, emotionally and morally in a way that enables them to understand themselves and others and to cope with the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of living in a rapidly changing, multicultural world.

### **1c. Overview of academic year 2024-25**

Hounslow SACRE met five times during the academic year 2024-25. Only 3 of which were quorate:

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 18/11/24 | Not quorate   |
| 20/1/25  | Not quorate   |
| 13/2/25  | Ratification of Determination Requests x2   |
| 2/6/25   | First meeting with new permanent advisor, ratification of Determination Requests x3 |
| 7/7/25   | Held following first face-to-face session with new teacher network                  |

After several months of changes and temporary support, Hounslow SACRE acquired the services of a permanent RE Advisor from March 2025, and SACRE now also has a new dedicated clerk this academic year. Following the departure of our long term LA Link in December 2024 there was also a temporary link officer from the LA provided from March 2025. We have also been able to build links with the Hounslow Education Partnership (HEP) who were previously running all teacher CPD support in RE for primary schools. We are delighted that this year, with the support of the LA, we are now in a position to be able to deliver this support and ensure its alignment with all other SACRE guidance and materials for schools.

Despite these changes, SACRE has continued to function with the commitment and continued support of its chair and dedicated members. All agendas and approved minutes of these meetings are saved regularly, and the clerk makes full use of the Governor Hubs (GH) platform. Members are now being supported by the clerk to use GH more effectively, including through messages via the noticeboard function.

Whilst some meetings have been necessarily dedicated to the changing arrangements and support of the SACRE, there has been a strong commitment to ensuring the continuation of its work and enacting of its responsibilities, including some meetings being dedicated to responding to requests for Determinations for schools. In addition, discussions around membership and attendance have continued this year, as well as some focus on our Constitution year thanks to the volunteering of additional time by some members. In addition, we have ensured consistent communication with schools through bespoke newsletters as well as attendance to some regional and national events with NASACRE.

Since March, regular meetings have taken place with the Clerk, Chair, LA link officer and the Advisor to support the smooth transition in roles and the planning and preparation of meetings, including agreeing agendas and lines of communication.

Agenda items for our meetings included (in no particular order):

- Acquisition of a permanent RE Advisor
- Training of primary teachers through local networks
- Accommodation and support for SACRE meetings
- Budget and advisory support for SACRE from the LA
- Determinations and Collective Worship Guidance
- Feedback from NASACRE 'In Conversation with other London SACREs' events and Annual Conference
- Ofsted updates and other developments in subject pedagogy through national research projects
- Use of national data and projects, e.g., RE Hubs and local and national faith-led activities/events
- Membership and training of SACRE and Constitution revisions

SACRE continues to be supported with an RE Advisor who is able to bring awareness of national developments, and any future actions can now also be derived from feedback received from teachers in schools, including those shared through the Teachers' Network Groups (please see Section 2 of the Report). All actions are continually logged and shared with Members, and from next academic year, via a detailed action plan.

## **2. Standards and Quality of RE Provision**

### **2a The Agreed Syllabus**

The Locally Agreed [Syllabus](#) is currently made available to schools via the Hounslow Education Partnership (HEP). However, some schools have already commented (via the teacher network, as per the above) this is not easy to access, and not all schools in Hounslow are members of this organisation. In addition, some of the other guidance documents on this website have not necessarily been approved or checked they align with the Syllabus.

Therefore, with CPD support now being delivered with the support of the LA via the permanent RE Advisor, it may perhaps be an opportunity for all guidance, including any revised Syllabus, to be made available to teachers via a LA supported webpage in the future.

The Syllabus itself, entitled 'Widening Horizons', was launched in 2022 and shared with all schools. Though initial and informal conversations may have started, a more rigorous review of this is now due, and will begin in earnest next academic year.

This review will include an investigation into whether subject leaders are:

- able to clarify from the Syllabus what high quality RE could look like
- clear about expectations of what RE should look like in their schools
- able to define whether these expectations for RE learning are in line with recent developments in the subject
- aware and confident the RE curriculum in their school is complicit with the requirements in the Syllabus
- able to plan/discern an appropriate RE curriculum from this Syllabus.

### **Secondary Schools**

RE (or RS) remains statutory for all pupils in every key stage, whether or not sitting a GCSE or equivalent qualification in the subject. The current Agreed Syllabus recommends that 5% of curriculum time is dedicated to RE. This should equate to approximately: 36 hours per year for KS1, 45 hours for KS2, 45 hours for KS3, and 40-48 hours for KS4. This excludes time allocated for collective worship. Religious education remains statutory for all students. Hounslow expects schools to provide all students with their entitlement to study the subject, including at KS4, when they should preferably be entered for GCSE Religious Studies (RS). While requirements for some academies may differ, their funding arrangements require that they make provision for all pupils in RE.

However, in the recent [Ofsted](#) Report, it is clear that nationally "Fewer than 1/5 schools ... included any discernible RE content at KS4 and in sixth form for those who had not chosen to study the subject at GCSE or A Level." This number falls to 1/2 with no KS4 RE at all for academies, and disappointingly, 1/3 of schools did not even teach RE at KS3.

At the time of writing this report, verified data was unavailable. Next year, information collected by DfE using the Teaching Hours for RE from the **School Workforce Census** can be used by SACRE to help build a picture of RE provision in the borough. This will also include an analysis of examination data at GCSE.

### **Primary Schools**

Having conducted some initial and informal conversations with some primary schools via the teacher network (see section 2b), the majority do seem to provide an RE curriculum via distinct timetabled RE lessons, rather than via drop down days, which is criticised by Ofsted as not being supportive for pupils' longer-term learning. However, for many, this curriculum is derived from an externally purchased provider but more evidence is required to determine whether these are aligned to/fulfil the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. Therefore, this support will need to be factored in when conducting the Syllabus review in due course.

Though initial and informal conversations may have started, a more rigorous review of the current 'Widening Horizons' Syllabus is now due and will begin in earnest next academic year.

### **2b School Support**

Recognising that the teachers' group in SACRE needed strengthening, it was agreed that one of the main priorities for SACRE was to establish stronger links with schools. The Chair of SACRE has worked effortlessly to ensure consistent communication with schools by devising a bespoke newsletter to be sent to schools regularly. This has included national updates and resources gleaned from the RE Hubs, as well as information about SACRE's role.

When the permanent RE Adviser took over the role, efforts were made to establish a teacher network as a conduit to SACRE. This would also open lines of communication in order to better ascertain the provision and standards of RE in schools beyond the findings gleaned from the Chair during her visits to some schools in support of their applications for determination requests.

Following the establishment of the first teacher network meeting held in July, some conversations with subject leads in schools have already been initiated and will continue throughout the next academic year. All future newsletters will now be sent through direct communication, increasing the numbers of relevant teachers receiving these updates. In addition, it is felt that now these relationships have been formed, these teachers will be more likely to engage with any more formal surveys or questionnaires from SACRE in the future.

Furthermore, by running these sessions in person and in schools preceding the SACRE meetings themselves, will likely increase the likelihood of these teachers in engaging more with SACRE members. This appears to have been successful, as there has already been one expressing their interest in joining the SACRE membership.

### **3. Collective Worship and Determinations**

Last year, one of the interim RE Advisors delivered a training session (June 2024) for headteachers on the subject of Determinations and provided a template for schools to complete when submitting an application request. Despite changes and disruptions to support, there has been a strong commitment to ensuring the continuation of SACRE's enacting of its responsibilities.

This included some SACRE meeting time being dedicated to responding to requests for Determinations for schools and the Chair conducting in person visits in support of their applications, as well as communicating separately to provide further advice. As a result, a total of six schools were granted their Determination requests, including Orchard Primary (November), Hounslow Heath Primary (January) and Alexandra Primary (February), with Cranford Primary, Spring Grove Primary and Norwood Green Infants' being agreed in the June 2025 meeting of SACRE.

However, there remains some confusion about the requirements for collective worship and conditions for Determinations, as evidenced in the reviewing of some school applications. It was therefore agreed by SACRE that supporting guidance could be devised for schools to clarify the circumstances of when applications should be made.

An updated spreadsheet has been devised, indicating all schools who have previously been granted a Determination. All these schools have now also been informed via written communication that any further submissions or continuances would be reviewed, only after SACRE has agreed and shared their new guidance.

### **4. SACRE Work with Other Agencies**

Hounslow SACRE supports RE that meets the needs of all students with or without religious beliefs, and promotes inclusion and religious, non-religious and racial harmony. We believe that RE fosters understanding and respect for all communities. It is even more vital now that we continue to do this, with the rise of fundamentalism and extremism in the UK and worldwide and examples of conflict within our local community. Through the teaching of RE, negative stereotypes and prejudices can and should be tackled, and we should generate understanding, overcome barriers, and promote community cohesion.

Hounslow SACRE is a member of NASACRE and was present at one of the 'In Conversation with NASACRE for London SACREs' events this year. Several of the training materials are included on Governors Hubs, and some members have

previously attended some of their online virtual training sessions, to which we are subscribed. In addition, the RE Advisor and a SACRE member attended the annual conference.

This year, the Chair has also become acquainted with the RE Hubs who has shared with SACRE membership. It is intended that further use and links with this national programme will continue, so that both members and schools might benefit from the resources, training and opportunities it can provide. Whilst we are aware that our current Jewish representative has previously been active in visiting schools, we might now also encourage some of our faith group members (groups A and B) to register for their kitemark training also.

## **5. Management of SACRE**

The Chair of Hounslow SACRE remains Eileen Crabtree from Group D at present, who has worked tirelessly to ensure the work of SACRE continued amid many changes and disruptions to support in the recent years.

SACRE will continue to monitor attendance and representation, not only to ensure quoracy, but to consistently promote community cohesion with a committee which reflects the diversity of our community and beyond.

The LA continues to support the work of our SACRE by providing a dedicated Clerk and an RE Specialist/Advisor, Stacey Burman, to advise SACRE, and to now also deliver teacher training and support. This year, SACRE was also supported with a new officer, Sarah Pearce, the Lead for Governance at the LA, who helped broker relationships with schools and support the finances of SACRE.

Regular update and planning meetings are held with a link officer, the RE Advisor, the Chair and Clerk of SACRE, and all actions requiring LA support have been delivered. From next year, SACRE will be supported by another officer of the LA to act as a conduit between SACRE and the various LA departments.

The LA provides all the SACRE funding, and in 2024-25, used this to provide/support:

- The provision of a SACRE / RE Advisor
- Administrative Clerking support for the SACRE from Democratic Services
- Administrative support for the delivery of teachers' termly CPD/networks (the first held in July 2025)
- Subscription, networking and training opportunities for SACRE members (NASACRE)

## **6. Summary**

Hounslow SACRE continues to deliver its statutory duties with thanks to those members who offer additional time, the ongoing support of the LA, and our enthusiastic and proactive Chair. We have a dedicated Clerk supporting us in strengthening our systems of communication and organisation, and we are determined to use these and the expertise of the Advisor to expand our opportunities and relationships with schools, including working together to review our syllabus in the coming year.

With a stronger sense of identity with our logo and revised constitution, we are keen to continue building our membership and capacity to work collaboratively with others in the future.