
ISLINGTON

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

2024 - 2025



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Foreword

Religious Education encompasses religious literacy and the knowledge of the values and insights of religious and non-religious world views. But we recognise that it also provides the endorsement of diversity and the encouragement of tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding within our neighbourhood, our nation, and the wider world. Since RE is the only strand of the Curriculum which can be moulded by local perspectives, SACRE is in a unique position to listen to, and take account of, local needs and circumstances, and to undergird social cohesion and mutual comprehension in a strongly multicultural borough. To this end Islington SACRE seeks to provide the encouragement, support and subject knowledge that local schools need as they seek to provide teaching of the highest quality.

In implementing the current Islington Agreed Syllabus, we have sought to provide a framework for the teaching of Religious Education based on current thinking on religious education which is attentive to local circumstances and needs of Islington schools. With the invaluable support and expertise of both the School Improvement Team and our RE Today Advisor, Islington SACRE's website publishes a range of valuable resources and guidance for schools.

We are always conscious that school leaders are working extremely hard to provide the safe and productive teaching and learning environments, maintaining teaching best practice whilst keeping teachers, students, and their families safe. Confident that the work of the past year has continued to provide solid foundations on which to build, SACRE seeks to strengthen and consolidate its work with schools through continuing its support in delivery of the syllabus and associated resources. Identifying and developing new ways to engage with local schools continues to be a key priority for SACRE

We also continue to seek to broaden and renew the membership of Islington SACRE, recruiting faith and belief representatives from a number of traditions, as well as local teachers, young people, and others. The essential value of SACRE to local schools is that all voices are heard and every perspective is included and valued.

Overview of the work of SACRE

Since 1988, each Local Authority (LA) has been required by law to have a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

The remit of a SACRE is principally to oversee the Religious Education (RE) and collective worship within the authority principally to:

- advise Islington Council upon matters connected with Religious Education and Collective Worship in community schools and in foundation schools which do not have a religious character. Religious Education in these schools is to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus;
- advise Islington Council on teaching methods, choice of materials and teacher training in Religious Education and Collective Worship;
- require Islington Council to review the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at least every five years.

The reporting period of the 2024 - 2025 report starts from September 1st 2024 and runs to August 31st 2025.

SACRE met on three occasions during the academic year 2024 – 2025.

11th November 2024 – Virtual

23rd April 2025 – Virtual

21st July 2025 – Virtual

Standing items in meetings:

Apologies for absence

New or substitute members

Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Additional items in meetings:

11th November 2024

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Terms of Reference

Development Plan

Code of Conduct

Annual Report

School Outcomes

SACRE Update

Training for members of the Islington SACRE

23rd April 2025

Annual Report

School Data

School Outcomes

Training

21st July 2025

Annual Report

SACRE Development Plan

Ofsted Update

Agreed Syllabus

Network Meetings

Section 2: Religious Education

The Locally Agreed Syllabus and RE in schools

RE is not part of the national curriculum. Each LA is required to produce an Agreed Syllabus for RE. Each LA is required to begin reviewing the current Agreed Syllabus within five years of its production. The Islington Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was approved and adopted for use in the schools for which it is a legal requirement in 2022. In line with the 1996 Education Act this is due to be reviewed within the five year cycle for 2027.

Standards and monitoring of RE

Islington SACRE has received the school workforce data from the Department for Education in line with its statutory responsibility to monitor the standards in schools throughout the Borough. The SACRE has also received GCSE and A Level data for the pupils within the Borough who sat these examinations in Summer 2024. This data can be found within the report.

Unvalidated data for Summer 2025 is included in Appendix A of this report.

School name	% year 7 hours - RE	% year 8 hours - RE	% year 9 hours - RE	% year 10 hours - RE	% year 11 hours - RE	% year 12 hours - RE	% year 13 hours - RE	% hours - RE
Beacon High	3.23	3.23	3.3	3.94	3.04			3.35
Highbury Fields School	2.62	2.75	2.64	3.25	3.32	0	0	2.5
Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School								
St Aloysius RC College	10.34	9.83	9.83	9.09	9.45	2.03	2.32	7.43
Arts and Media School Islington	4.49	4.2	4	2	2.1			3.19
City of London Academy Islington	4.17	4.47	8.63	11.32	0	0	0	4.97
City of London Academy, Highgate Hill	1.89	3.72	7.61	2.19	1.83	0	0	2.95

City of London Academy Highbury Grove	0	0	0	0.92	1.25	0	0	0.43
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School Workforce Data provided by the DfE for the academic year 2024 – 2025 – schools are not legally required to provide data which will account for no entries for some schools.

Islington validated GCSE RS data 2024

	9-7	9-5	9-4
LA24	26.2	57.3	71.0
LA25	22.6	52.8	66.8
National*	31	62.3	72.6
Disadv	18.9	46.4	60.1
Non-disadv	27.2	60.7	74.9

Teacher training materials and advice for schools

The partnership with RE Today provides network meetings for primary school teachers in Islington on a termly basis. This is provided remotely to enable as many teachers to attend to ensure their professional learning in RE. These were held on

14th November 2024 from 4.00 pm to 5.30 pm

27th February 2025 from 4.00 pm to 5.30 pm

26th June 2025 from 4.00 pm to 5.30 pm

All of the materials used in the professional learning sessions are made available to participants after the event.

Other information

There were no formal complaints to SACRE about RE during the year.

Advice given to the Local Authority

Advice was given to the local authority around outcomes in Religious Education as part of the work of the Scrutiny Panel of the local authority.

Section 3: Collective worship

Standards and monitoring of Collective Worship

There was no reference to collective worship within the SACRE during the period covered by this report.

Determinations

No determinations were requested by schools during the year covered by this report.

Teacher training provided

There was no teacher training provided during the period covered by this report.

Other information

There were no formal complaints to SACRE about collective worship during the year.

Advice to the Local Authority

No advice was given to local authority in the period covered by this report.

Section 4: Links with other bodies

National Bodies

Islington SACRE are pleased to be linked with national bodies and receive national updates from Ian Nicholson our RE adviser.

Islington SACRE has links with NASACRE and has received feedback from the NASACRE annual conference. It regularly utilises NASACRE's self-evaluation toolkit.

Information from NATRE and the REC has been used in meetings and shared with schools where appropriate.

SACRE members regularly attend NASACRE webinars.

Local bodies

Local places of worship are well represented on SACRE.

Section 5: SACRE involvement in the Local Area

Governor and head teacher links

All materials relating to RE and the SACRE are shared with governing bodies and headteachers as appropriate.

Advice on community issues

The RE adviser regularly gives advice on speakers coming into schools and visits to places of worship locally.

Section 6: Managing the SACRE and partnership with the Local Authority (LA)

Professional and administrative support

During the reporting period, clerking of SACRE was undertaken by Maria Bennett.

The Local Authority provided funding to support SACRE activity 2024 - 2025 by contracting with RE Today Services of an RE Consultant for professional advice to the SACRE and for network professional learning for primary schools.

Ian Nicholson from RE Today continued in the role of RE consultant.

Ben Dunne held responsibility for SACRE support and liaises with the RE consultant during the period covered by this report.

Membership

The table provided below demonstrates the composition of Islington SACRE.

Committee A	Naomi Ter-Berg Nathan Stilwell Mariano Marcigaglia Manisha Wickramaratne Vinay Shah Tracey Peters Saiqa Pandor
Committee B	David Allen (Chair) Mary Thorne
Committee C	Cllr Michelline Ngongo Cllr Troy Gallagher Cllr Heather Staff Sam Webber
Committee D	Imelda Meehan Omar Wallen
In attendance	Debbie Yeomans RE Today Advisor Maria Bennett Clerk to SACRE

Finance

The LA allocated central funding for support to SACRE from the RE Consultant and for clerking. It should be noted that the Local Authority spent more widely on Religious Education during the reporting period with money being allocated to primary Subject Leaders' Network meetings.

Appendix A:

Unvalidated Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 Exam Data, Summer 2025

GCSE

School name	KS4FCEntriesPerc	KS4AllEntriesPerc	NoEntriesPerc	Percentage9-4FC
Beacon High	33.3	33.3	66.7	36
Highbury Fields School	29.1	29.1	70.9	70.3
Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School	13.3	13.3	86.7	90.9
St Aloysius RC College	88.2	88.2	11.8	76.8
Arts and Media School Islington	25.8	25.8	74.2	87.5
City of London Academy Islington	91.6	91.6	8.4	66.9
City of London Academy, Highgate Hill	7.1	7.1	92.9	87.5
City of London Academy Highbury Grove	11.2	11.2	88.8	38.1

A level

Appendix B:

Circulation of the Annual Report

Appendix C:

Annual Development Plan

. Supporting and monitoring Teaching and Learning in RE

Action	Timescale	Lead responsibility	Progress and evaluation
Supporting improvement			
a. RE Today to provide half-day online training sessions, for primary and secondary teachers, in an agreed format. Focus on implementation of agreed syllabus. This would normally take the form of a conference for primary schools (split over two afternoons) and twilight seminars for secondary.	Within school year	RE adviser / SACRE teachers	Two primary and two secondary sessions per year. Increasing participation of teachers; evaluations giving satisfaction rates of over 95%
b. To enable a programme of RE teacher network meetings for primary teachers, set up and run via BEST training in cluster groups drawing on content from adviser training sessions. Focus on implementation of agreed syllabus.	Termly	SACRE members to facilitate cluster groups	At least three network meetings, twice a year; with increasing numbers of participants, evaluations giving satisfaction rates of over 95%
c. To create and promote the AWARE award (Award for Widening Achievement in RE) throughout the schools of ISLINGTON, to encourage a basic level of provision and to celebrate good practice in RE.	Autumn 2024 (planning) Spring 2025 (launch)	SACRE/ RE adviser	First year: 20% of primary (10 schools) and 20% of secondary schools (2 schools) to register interest. 15% of primary and 15% of secondary schools to achieve the award.

<p>d. To develop engagement of schools of all types with SACRE, through the promotion of AWARE, via in-person visits to award successful schools with their certificate. To use this opportunity to promote RE further, and report back to SACRE on the quality of provision in RE.</p>	<p>Spring, summer 2025</p>	<p>SACRE members with availability</p>	<p>90% of successful schools to have an in-person visit. Schools to support the process through offering availability of the RE lead and senior leadership for a short discussion.</p>
<p>Monitoring standards</p>			
<p>e. To receive reports from RE teacher network meetings</p>	<p>SACRE meetings</p>	<p>RE Adviser / SLE / Diocesan advisers</p>	<p>Reports demonstrate a coherent and effective programme of support, with increasingly active involvement from teachers.</p>
<p>f. Analysis of evaluation/feedback from courses, network meetings and annual SACRE conference</p>	<p>As appropriate</p>	<p>RE adviser / SACRE</p>	<p>Record advice from teachers and report to SACRE. Provision of support to show that account has been taken of this feedback.</p>
<p>g. Analysis of school inspection reports from SIAMS and any relevant feedback in Ofsted reports</p>	<p>Primary – autumn mtg Secondary – summer mtg</p>	<p>RE adviser / Diocesan officer</p>	<p>Reports give a clear analysis of the achievements, trends and areas to address.</p>
<p>h. To receive a report from CE and RC Dioceses outlining developments relating to RE in church schools across Islington.</p>	<p>Summer annually</p>	<p>Chair of CE committee/ Diocesan officers</p>	<p>Report presented; informs SACRE members of the activities planned and completed.</p>

<p>i. To utilise other means of monitoring RE in schools, including online survey; School Workforce data; exam results (not pandemic years).</p>	<p>From Summer 2023</p>	<p>LA / SACRE members / RE adviser</p>	<p>Additional means of monitoring RE available to complement inspection findings.</p>
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2. Monitoring and review of Islington agreed syllabus

Action	Timescale	Lead responsibility	Progress and evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support schools in the implementation of the revised agreed syllabus through a programme of training, network meetings and annual conferences (see items 1a-b above). 	<p>On-going</p>	<p>SACRE / RE adviser</p>	<p>Evaluations giving satisfaction rates of over 95%.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To monitor the implementation of the 2021 agreed syllabus using an online survey; use monitoring to inform provision of CPD 	<p>Summer 2021 onward</p>	<p>SACRE / RE adviser</p>	<p>Feedback from schools gathered, evaluated, and reported on, with a satisfaction rate of 90% good or better.</p> <p>Online survey to be ready for Spring 2025 in line with the review of the Agreed Syllabus for RE which is due to take place for a 2026 first teaching.</p>

3. Partnership between SACRE, the Local Authority and other bodies

Action	Timescale	Lead Responsibility	Progress and evaluation
Local Authority			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain SACRE constitution and enable full membership and participation from members 	On-going	LA Officer / Chair / SACRE	SACRE membership fully representative; meetings always quorate; high levels of attendance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive presentations from LA officers relating to local and national initiatives which have an impact on teaching and learning in RE 	As required	LA officer / SACRE member to identify need	SACRE members' evaluation and feedback. Where appropriate, impact seen in RE support and training.
Faith communities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain good representation of members of communities of faith and belief on SACRE 	On-going	LA Officer / Chair	Membership fully representative.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop and maintain guidance for schools on Visits and Visitors in RE 	Autumn annually	SACRE members/ Regional ambassador	Amendments and additions added to Visits and Visitors Guidance online.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To expand the membership of Committee A to include two representatives of non-religious worldviews, in line with demographics for Islington in the 2021 Census 	During 2024-25	LA Officer / Chair	Membership fully representative.
Schools			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain good representation of teachers as members of SACRE 	On-going	LA Officer / Chair / SACRE	Membership fully representative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To instigate a programme of presentations to SACRE by teachers exemplifying good practice 	Autumn 2024 onwards	SACRE reps /Diocesan adviser	Programme of presentations continues with minimum of one presentation per year.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop effective methods of communicating with schools to encourage participation in network groups, conferences etc, including email list and use of local newsletters online	On-going	LA / SACRE / RE adviser	Feedback from teachers about best ways to receive information; accurate email contacts list updated regularly
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National bodies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To produce an annual report 	Autumn 2025 (for 2023/24)	RE adviser / LA	Report completed, agreed by SACRE and sent to NASACRE and DfE for January each year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To liaise with the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE), the RE Council, National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and other relevant organisations in raising issues relating to RE and collective worship at a national level. 	On-going	SACRE members	Ensure representative attendance at annual conferences where appropriate.

4. Collective worship in county schools

Action	Timescale	Lead responsibility	Progress and evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handling applications for determinations from collective worship 	As and when applications received	SACRE	Determinations successfully resolved

5. Monitoring the contribution of SACRE to the promotion of SMSC

Action	Timescale	Lead responsibility	Progress and evaluation
	On-going	SACRE members	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange one SACRE meeting a year to be held at a school or faith venue 			<p>Programme of visits under way with appropriate levels of attendance</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive presentations from faith communities represented across Islington 	<p>On-going</p>	<p>SACRE</p>	<p>Programme of presentations under way</p>

The Islington Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Annual Report will be:

- Provided, via e-mail, to all SACRE Members
- Provided, via e-mail, to the Department for Education
- Provided, via e-mail, to NASACRE
- Published on the Local Authority website