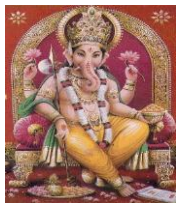




Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education



**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE KINGSTON UPON THAMES
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024
(SEPTEMBER 2023 TO AUGUST 2024)**

Approved by the Kingston SACRE at its meeting on 7 July 2025



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INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIR OF THE SACRE, CHARMAINE LEE

It gives me immense pleasure to present the 2023-2024 Annual Report for the Kingston upon Thames Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

It is a privilege to have been elected as Chair of Kingston upon Thames SACRE and would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to my predecessor, Dr Maria James, for her years of dedicated service and her contributions to Religious Education.

On behalf of SACRE members, I would also wish to pay a special tribute to Karen Bridgman, our former clerk for all her hard work and invaluable assistance. Her commitment has left a lasting legacy and we remember her contributions with gratitude.

I extend my thanks to all SACRE members who have generously volunteered their time and expertise throughout the year. Their guidance has been crucial in steering our agenda, which aligns with exciting national developments and recognises the increasingly significant role of various faiths, beliefs and non-faith communities in supporting the government's cohesion agenda.

I am delighted to report that Kingston and Richmond SACREs have jointly launched the RE Award, which commenced in September 2023. Congratulations to the schools that have already achieved this award, a testament to their commitment to high standards of Religious Education. We look forward to celebrating the achievements of more schools in the coming year.

Our Kingston Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education has now been fully embedded and continues to deliver high-quality RE across our schools, embracing a wider commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion, which will be an ongoing priority of representation for SACRE this year.

Looking ahead, I am eager to collaborate closely with my SACRE colleagues and the dedicated teachers in our borough to further strengthen the impact of quality Religious Education in our community.

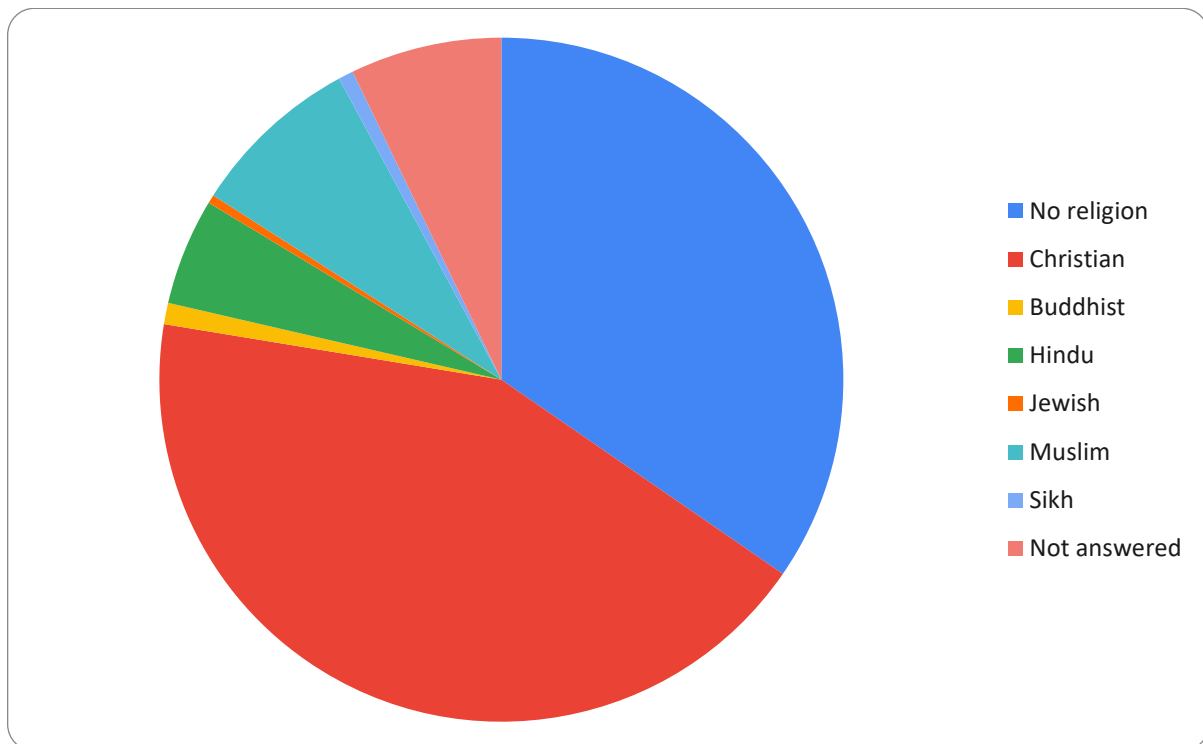
Thank you

Charmaine Lee
SACRE Chair

RELIGION AND BELIEF IN ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES

The 2021 National Census illustrates the diversity of the local authority.

Religion	No of Responses	Percentage
No religion	57,641	34.3
Christian	71,670	42.6
Buddhist	1,726	1
Hindu	8,456	5
Jewish	693	0.4
Muslim	13,366	8
Sikh	1,119	0.7
Not answered	11,966	7.1



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES)

Background

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames' Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is required, in accordance with Section 391(6) of the Education Act 1996, to publish an annual report on its activities. This report summarises its activities during the academic year 2023-24.

The main function of a SACRE is to advise the local authority on matters related to the religious education, which follows the locally agreed syllabus and on collective worship in schools.

SACRE's:

- Can require the LA to review its agreed syllabus.
- Must consider applications from a Head Teacher that their school is released from the requirement for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character (this is known as a determination).
- Must produce an annual report of its work.

The role of the SACRE is to also support good RE and collective worship within its schools by:

- Giving advice on ways of teaching agreed syllabus RE, including the choice of teaching materials.
- Monitoring school's provision for RE and collective worship as well as the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of pupils.
- Advising the LA on the provision of training for teachers in RE.
- Considering complaints about the provision and delivering of religious education and collective worship referred to it by the LA.

Locally Agreed Syllabus

By statute, every Local Authority is required to adopt a Locally Agreed Syllabus (LAS) for Religious Education and to review it every five years. The current Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Locally Agreed Syllabus has been in place since September 2018.

During 2022-2023, SACRE has reviewed the current LAS. The current syllabus was produced by RE Today on behalf of SACRE and covers all the key stages including early years and sixth form. SACRE felt that schools needed more time to embed the syllabus as this was a big change from the previous one and there was also the impact of the pandemic on our schools. SACRE agreed that the current syllabus would continue for a further five years from September 2023 but new units were added.

Standards in RE

SACRE members gave close consideration to the various national and local developments concerning the provision of RE. Their discussions are prompted by the information provided to the SACRE through the regular updates from teacher members, NASACRE Briefings and NATRE newsletters.

During 2023-2024, SACRE meetings focussed on:

- Monitoring of RE
- Teaching and Learning
- The RE Award
- Sentientism
- Ofsted – Deep and Meaning
- Termly RE update – local and national

Teacher Training

Training was undertaken with colleagues in schools through Ian Nicholson, RE Today National Adviser. Training was undertaken on three occasions, all of these were virtual in order that as many teachers could attend as possible.

Training Session 1 – Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Training Session 2 – Teaching the Dharmic Faiths

Training Session 3 – Deep and Meaningful 2024 and Ways of Knowing

Complaints and Withdrawals

There have been no complaints to SACRE in 2022-23 in relation to Religious Education.

SACRE has received no reports of pupils being withdrawn from Religious Education in 2022-2023.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP (STATUTORY DUTIES)

Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship

During 2023-24 SACRE did not receive any requests for advice and support on Collective Worship.

Determinations

No local authority maintained school in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames has ever applied to SACRE for a determination.

SACRE has not received any reports of pupils being withdrawn from Collective Worship.

Other Information

There have been no complaints to SACRE in 2023-24 in relation to Collective Worship.

LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACRE's (NASACRE) and National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) and discusses key points raised in its briefing.

SACRE ARRANGEMENTS

SACRE Meetings

SACRE met on 20 November 2023 virtually and 24 June 2024 which was hosted by Alexandra Primary School. Due to unforeseen circumstances the meeting scheduled for 4 March 2024 was cancelled.

Professional and Administrative Support

Assistance for the discharge of SACRE's duties is currently provided by:

- AfC Associate Director, School Improvement and Standards
- AfC Lead School Improvement Adviser for Curriculum Development
- Provision of a Clerk
- Funding of the NASACRE and NATRE annual membership
- Costs relating to establishing and reviewing a Locally Agreed Syllabus

SACRE is grateful to the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and Achieving for Children (AfC) for making this support available.

Membership, Representation and Recruitment

There were changes to the membership of the Kingston SACRE during 2023-2024. SACRE was pleased to welcome Councillor Rowena Bass (appointed December 2023), Councillor Ian George (appointed May 2024 replacing Councillor Bass), Councillor Jackie Davies (appointed July 2024 replacing Councillor Stephanie Archer), Tim Neale (Insight, Co-opted Member), Ian Nicholson (RE Today consultant).

The following SACRE members stepped down during this period: Maria James (Chair / The local Evangelical Churches), Councillor Yvonne Tracey, Councillor Rowena Bass and Councillor Stephanie Archer. SACRE thanked them for their much valued contributions.

SACRE still has a number of vacancies especially representing the different faiths and beliefs in the Borough and from schools.

Attendance

All SACRE meetings in 2023-24 were quorate. Members of the SACRE transitioned well with the move to virtual meetings and attendance levels remained high.

Finance given to SACRE for its work

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames does not have a separate budget allocated to SACRE. The funding for the running costs and memberships of national bodies is funded through AfC.