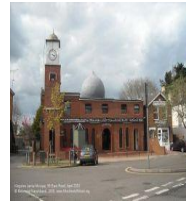
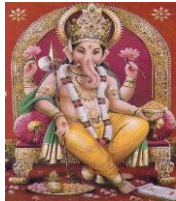




Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education



**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE KINGSTON UPON THAMES
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-2025
(SEPTEMBER 2024 TO AUGUST 2025)**

Approved by the Kingston SACRE at its meeting on 20 October 2025

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Section 1: Introduction

FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR OF THE SACRE

It is an honour and a privilege to continue serving as Chair of Kingston upon Thames SACRE, working alongside such a dedicated, and knowledgeable group of colleagues. The work of SACREs remains vital in today's ever-changing world, where young people are growing up amidst complex global and national developments.

The publication of Ofsted's 2024 subject report 'Deep and Meaningful?' highlighted the essential role of high-quality Religious Education in helping pupils engage thoughtfully and critically in a multi-religious, and multi-secular society. The report reinforced the need for schools to prioritise RE through strong subject knowledge, access to ongoing professional development, well-structured curriculum time and a coherent study that enables pupils to deepen their understanding over time.

Kingston SACRE remains committed to working in partnership with the Local Authority, schools, academies and Multi-Academy Trusts to ensure that all young people are well prepared to live harmoniously and contribute positively to life in modern Britain as responsible global citizens.

The year has also reminded us of the importance of dialogue, compassion, empathy and seeing ourselves in others. It has been a period of listening and mutual respect in times of uncertainty and conflict. SACRE's work in promoting understanding between different faiths, non-faiths, beliefs and worldviews remains as important as ever.

My sincere thanks go to all SACRE members for their dedication, to those who have served and those newly joining us. I thank all the teachers and educators in our borough who continue to deliver Religious Education as a vital and life-shaping subject.

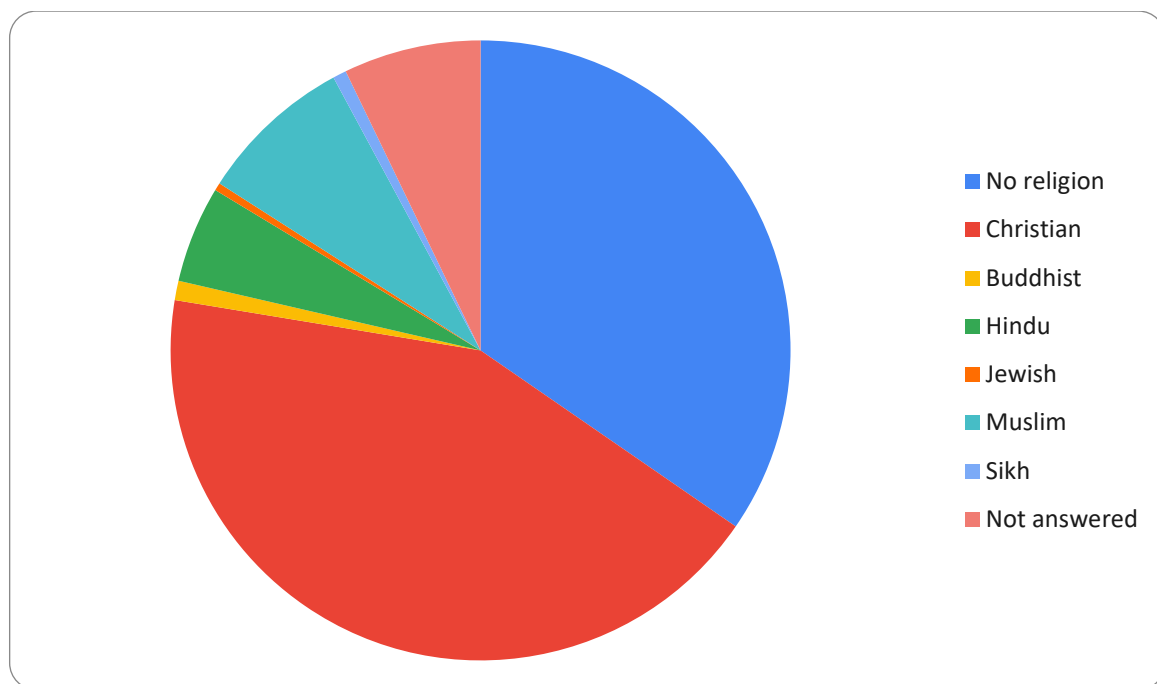
Thank you.

Charmaine Lee
SACRE Chair

RELIGIONS AND BELIEFS 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



OVERVIEW OF THE WORK OF SACRE 2024-25

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 2024-25.

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.

SACREs:

- 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.

The reporting period of the 2024-25 report starts from 1 September 2024 and runs to 31 August 2025.

SACRE met on two occasions during the academic year on 18 November 2024 and 7 July 2025. The meeting scheduled for 31 March 2025 was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

The November and July meetings were quorate. Minutes for these meetings are available on the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Council website.

Standing items in meetings:

SACRE update and membership

RE Advisor updates

RE Award scheme

School faith walks

Monitoring of standards of Religious Education and Collective worship

Additional items in meetings:

Terms of reference - 18 November 2024

SACRE annual report - 7 July 2025

Constitution and working arrangements - 7 July 2025

Section 2: Religious Education (Statutory Responsibilities)

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 current Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Locally Agreed Syllabus has been in place since September 2023 and runs until 2028. It was produced by RE Today on behalf of SACRE and encompasses early years. Key stages 1, 2 and 3, as well as giving guidance on statutory responsibility for 14-19 (KS4 and 5).

All schools irrespective of designation requested a licence and a copy of the new syllabus from RE today on behalf of SACRE.

SACRE are embedding the syllabus, making good use of the termly RE CPD (Continuing Professional Development) delivered by RE Today on behalf of the SACRE, in partnership with Kingston upon Thames SACRE.

STANDARDS AND MONITORING OF 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 2024-25, SACRE meetings focussed on:

- The development of a localised RE Award (with Richmond upon Thames SACRE). The Achieving for Children (AfC) Lead School Improvement Adviser has drafted a letter to RE subject leaders in the schools and an assessment form, ensuring the process is straightforward and minimal teacher workload completing the award process. The Award's focus would be to celebrate excellent local RE in the Borough, aligning with the national RE Quality Mark but highlighting local excellence. It is hoped and intended that the Award would promote professional dialogue and allow schools to share existing strengths. This will be implemented in the academic year 25-26
- Discussions around data on workforce hours and GCSE and A level data.
- Discussions around the ongoing challenge of engaging secondary schools within the Borough, and a suggestion inviting heads of department or coordinators to SACRE meetings to showcase their work and foster meaningful engagement. It was acknowledged that as a national issue there had been difficulty for SACREs' engagement with secondary schools in RE work.
- Termly RE updates from the professional Re advisor focusing on local and national updates
- A Faith Walks' project that would provide opportunities for pupils to visit and learn about different faith settings envisioning primary pupils visiting around three places of worship for talks and Q&A sessions. A working group was formed and the Chair planned to work with others to pilot the project in Surbiton, with potential expansion to North Kingston and other areas.
- Sharing of information pertaining to local opportunities such as: the reinstatement of the school visit programme at Kingston Surbiton and District Synagogue and subsequent visits from local schools; a new digital resource for KS3 Secondary schools produced by The Board of Deputies called *Jewish Living Online*; a local event called *Voices for Change, Inspiring Women in Faith and Education*; an online advent calendar showcasing different pieces of art work and cultures behind each door available from the diocese for both primary and secondary schools, a local company to deliver a retelling of The Christmas story for schools that wish to book them.

TEACHER TRAINING

A Good Practice Network for Subject Leaders for RE in community primary schools (in both Richmond upon Thames and Kingston upon Thames) continued to run in 2024-25. These sessions were led by Ian Nicholson, RE Consultant for RE Today. Occasionally SACRE members can attend and play a key role in building effective links between SACRE and the members of this group. The RE Subject Leaders in community primary schools met three times during the 2024-25 academic year.

Training Session 1 – Subject Leadership

Training Session 2 – Practical Approaches to Knowledge

Training Session 3 – Creative RE

A shared drive exists for Kingston and Richmond, accessible via QR codes, where teachers can upload resources to reduce workload. This is supported by the AfC Lead School Improvement Adviser.

COMPLAINTS AND WITHDRAWALS

There have been no complaints to SACRE in 2024-25 in relation to Religious Education.

SACRE has received no reports of pupils being withdrawn from Religious Education in 2024-25.

ADVICE GIVEN TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Advice was given to the local authority about the following points:

- AfC had commenced the process to contact religious and faith communities and teacher associations to seek nominations. Appointments to Members in Groups A, B and C would be made by the Director of Education Services in accordance with the Constitution.
- Following discussions, the Democratic Services Team has accepted the role of Clerk for Kingston SACRE from February 2025.
- The SACRE considered, due to recent and ongoing membership changes, a need to review the Constitution and terms of reference, bringing processes in alignment with statutory requirements and good practice at Richmond SACRE.

Section 3: Collective Worship (Statutory Responsibilities)

STANDARDS AND MONITORING OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

During 2024-25 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 2024-25 in relation to Collective Worship.

Section 4: Links to Other Bodies

NATIONAL BODIES

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACRE's (NASACRE). NASACRE's updates were shared with all SACRE Members.

The SACRE receive national updates from their RE adviser and information from NATRE and the REC has been used in meetings and shared with schools where appropriate.

Information on NASACRE conferences and meetings have been shared with SACRE Members, and they are encouraged to attend such meetings.

LOCAL BODIES

Many local places of worship and religious communities are represented on SACRE. Updates are shared about engagement and activities involving schools (section **Standards in RE**)

Section 5: SACRE Involvement in the Local Area

GOVERNOR AND HEADTEACHER LINKS

RE updates are shared widely and regularly to all governors and headteachers on the RE CPD available

ADVICE ON COMMUNITY ISSUES

The RE adviser regularly gives advice on speakers coming into schools and visits to places of worship locally. He has shared with SACRE and schools in the local area, information about the RE Hubs website and its section on places of interest and school speakers.

Section 6: Managing the SACRE and Partnership with the Local Authority (LA) and Other Key Stakeholders

PROFESSIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

During the reporting period, clerking of SACRE was undertaken by the Democratic Services Team of the Local Authority.

The Local Authority provided funding to support SACRE activity 2024-25 by contracting with RE Today Services of an RE Consultant for:

- 3 on-line SACRE meetings, attendance, pre-meeting if needed, verbal and written national updates for members
- 3 on-line training sessions - -1 hours each -Primary-in collaboration with Richmond upon Thames SACRE and LA

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

Helena Moore, AfC's Lead School Improvement Adviser for Curriculum Development Education and School Improvement providing children's services for Kingston and Richmond, holds responsibility for SACRE support and liaises with the RE consultant.

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 annual membership

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

MEMBERSHIP

<u>Representative Group A - Christian and Other Religious Denominations (9)</u>	
Ms Greta Farian	Local representative of Humanists UK
Ms Charmaine Lee (Chair)	Archdiocese of Southwark (Catholic)
Ms Rachel Leventhall	Kingston, Surbiton & District Synagogue
Ms Keren Wood (Vice-Chair)	The local Evangelical Churches
(Vacant)	The Sikh Community
(Vacant)	Free Churches Group
(Vacant)	The Hindu Community
(Vacant)	The Buddhpadipa Temple (Buddhist community)
(Vacant)	The Muslim Community
<u>Representative Group B - The Church of England (3)</u>	
Ms Rachel Phillips	Southwark Diocesan Board of Education
Canon Mrs Jane Whittington	Diocese of Guildford
(Vacant)	Diocese of Southwark
<u>Representative Group C - Representatives of Teachers' Associations (4)</u>	
Mrs Shamma Khan	Kings Oak Primary School
Ms Emma Raven	The Kingston Academy
Ms Jennifer Rickards	Malden Manor Primary & Nursery School
(Vacant)	
<u>Representative Group D - Representatives of the Local Authority (3)</u>	
Councillor Jackie Davies	The Local Authority
Councillor Ian George	The Local Authority
Councillor Alison Holt	The Local Authority
<u>Co-opted Members</u>	
Mr Simon Birch	Local Baha'i Community
Mr Tim Neale *	Insight (Secondary School Worker)

* Resigned on 04/10/2025

ATTENDANCE

		18/11/24	07/07/25
Representative Group A - Christian and Other Religious Denominations			
Ms Greta Farian	Local representative of Humanists UK	Apologies	✓
Ms Charmaine Lee	Archdiocese of Southwark (Catholic)	✓	✓
Ms Rachel Leventhall	Kingston, Surbiton & District Synagogue	✓	✓
Ms Keren Wood	The local Evangelical Churches	✓	✓
Representative Group B - The Church of England			
Ms Rachel Phillips	Southwark Diocesan Board of Education	✓	✓
Canon Mrs Jane Whittington	Diocese of Guildford	✓	Apologies
Representative Group C - Representatives of Teachers' Associations			
Mrs Shamma Khan	Kings Oak Primary School	✓	✓
Ms Emma Raven	The Kingston Academy	Apologies	Apologies
Ms Jennifer Rickards	Malden Manor Primary & Nursery School	✓	✓
Representative Group D - Representatives of the Local Authority			
Councillor Sue Ansari	The Local Authority (term ended 13/5/2025)	Apologies	N/A
Councillor Jackie Davies	The Local Authority	✓	Apologies
Councillor Ian George	The Local Authority	✓	✓
Councillor Alison Holt	The Local Authority (term started 13/5/2025)	N/A	✓
Co-opted Members			
Mr Simon Birch	Local Baha'i Community	Apologies	✓
Mr Tim Neale *	Insight (Secondary School Worker)	✓	✓

* Resigned on 04/10/2025

REPRESENTATION AND RECRUITMENT

There were changes to the membership of the Kingston SACRE during 2024-25. SACRE was pleased to welcome Councillor Alison Holt (appointed May 2025 replacing Councillor Sue Ansari).

The following SACRE members stepped down during this period: Councillor Sue Ansari. SACRE thanked her for her much valued contributions. Separately, Co-opted Member Mr Tim Neale resigned on 4 October 2025.

SACRE still has several vacancies especially representing the different faiths and beliefs in the Borough and from schools. The Local Authority has undertaken to look into filling these vacancies.

TRAINING

SACRE members have received regular updates and information regarding national RE updates including the CAAR report.

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.