

Lewisham SACRE Annual Report 2020



**Lewisham Standing Advisory Council on Religious
Education**

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Lewisham SACRE is a member of the [National Association of SACREs](#)



Information about RE and the SACRE can be located on [the Lewisham website](#)

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Overview

Lewisham SACRE meetings in 2020

Date	Venue
28 th January 2020 (including training for SACRE members)	Trinity School

Lewisham Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) meetings in 2020

11 th March 2020 (including hosting session for teachers)	London Sivan Kovil
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Combined SACRE & ASC meetings on Zoom in 2020

18 th June 2020	Zoom
16 th September 2020	Zoom
23 rd November 2020	Zoom

As can be seen above, the members of the SACRE and Agreed Syllabus Conference continued to work and meet regularly through the pandemic. The first zoom meeting was preceded by a zoom orientation meeting for members unsure how zoom operated which was very successful. Attendance has been good and meetings have been quorate.

SACRE members continued to engage in many activities to support their communities, the schools and each other. As well as attending the full SACRE and ASC meetings, members were involved in working groups and individual meetings, including planning and supporting local events for Holocaust Memorial Day, the Peace Walk and the NASACRE EGM.

1. Foreword by the Chair of Lewisham SACRE

Welcome to Lewisham SACRE's Annual Report for 2020.

'Unprecedented' has become the well-used, yet so relevant a word for this year! 2020 has been incredibly challenging for so many, having been impacted by the COVID pandemic which has, in no small part impacted the way in which Lewisham SACRE has had to function. Meetings have moved online to allow for a continued safe operation, and I have

been so encouraged at the way in which our team have learned and adapted to this new medium, navigating the technology to allow for the important work of SACRE to continue over the year.

At this time of a global pandemic, students and teachers alike are having to cope with extremely challenging and displaced learning environments and the huge additional stresses this places upon them. For many it has become a sad truism that everyone will know of someone having to navigate their grief journey over the loss of a loved one. For many other young people there will be other types of loss to negotiate – parents who are furloughed or have lost their jobs, a home or school move, or they may have experienced long-term isolation from important figures in their life such as grandparents

This will particularly impact the learning environment for students and as part of their response, Lewisham SACRE are exploring grief support initiatives for students and have revisited the Journey of Life and Death unit in SACRE's Agreed Syllabus to ensure that it offers robust guidance and material for the current circumstances.

Having a well-balanced and relevant RE syllabus that addresses some of these unique circumstances can help students navigate the bemusing changes to their learning and the many serious questions that they will inevitably raise.

The racial injustices that came to the attention of the world in the summer of 2020, and the overwhelming response seen in the UK will also have raised key issues and challenges for all of us and especially in the minds of young people in Lewisham. Being able to fully endorse NASACRE's statement as a SACRE, on Black Lives Matter and to affirm that our RE syllabus provides a robust framework to explore such topics as racism and discrimination fully, is something I am pleased to be able to report.

Lewisham's SACRE have remained passionate in ensuring that well taught, inclusive R.E. remains a key part of school curricula in both primary and secondary education. However, in these extraordinary times, we consider it absolutely vital for the future development of our society that pupils understand that we are all human and have far more in common than that which divides us! The foundational values of respect, understanding and inclusiveness, so vital to a progressive society, are strongly reflected in our syllabus and I am proud to say that our SACRE works hard to see these values reflected in its resourcing, signposting and support to schools.

I remain deeply indebted to Shaun Burns, our Deputy Chair who continues to bring quality input and guidance to the work of our SACRE – whilst chairing another SACRE in London; to Denise Chaplin, our School Improvement Officer, who despite having to navigate illness this last year, has kept us all on track as a SACRE and to Kim Knappett, chair of the Agreed Syllabus Conference, who despite her incredibly demanding workload has remained committed to ensuring that our resources on RE remain highly relevant and insightful for the young people of our Borough.

I would like to place on record my deepest thanks to all who have volunteered their time, expertise and effort to make our diverse and inclusive SACRE team such a privilege to work amongst. The Borough is fortunate indeed to have such a committed, faithful team.

Respectfully submitted

Pastor Nick Hughes
Chair, Lewisham SACRE

2. Religious Education

The Locally Agreed Syllabus “Learning together through Faiths and Beliefs”

The Lewisham Agreed Syllabus was launched on 10th October 2018 following 3 years of dedicated and intense work. The syllabus can be located on the Lewisham website.

It was expected that 2020 would be a year of hosted visits to local faith venues to support teachers and provide on-site in-service training; We had one successful meeting at the London Sivan Kovil and we look forward to co-hosting more of these with a variety of faith leaders once the restrictions are lifted.

Monitoring

The pandemic has left SACRE with an even bigger challenge in finding ways to monitor the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus - work on this continues.

Standards in Religious Education

Locally devised measures of pupils' attainment: Assessment Guidance

Draft Primary guidance for assessment in RE was completed this year and circulated during the first lockdown for comments from RE subject leaders. It is expected to agree this for inclusion online with the Agreed Syllabus in 2021.

National Religious Studies Performance in 2020

Lewisham SACRE conducts an annual review of GCSE and A Level religious studies examination entries and outcomes.

Public Examinations - The national picture

The number of pupils taking GCSE Religious Studies in England and Wales remained stable in 2020 despite ongoing challenges, reflecting the relevance of the subject and its popularity among young people. In England, RS GCSE entries for the full course fell by less than 1% to 225,719 compared to 227,913 in 2019.

The number of Religious Studies A-level exam entries has declined at a lower rate than other humanities in 2020, performing better than some subjects despite a backdrop of overall declining entries and changes to the examination system.

The overall number of A-Level entries in England and Wales fell by 2.6% from 768,217 in 2019 to 748,905 in 2020. The reduction reflects both a smaller cohort of 18 year olds (599,393 in 2020 compared with 618,873 in 2019 [Office for National Statistics]) and changes to the assessment of A level and AS examinations that had an effect in 2018, when the majority of schools changed their policies to recommending three A-levels, versus four in previous years. The number of AS exam entries also declined by 24.6% following AS and A-level reforms.

In 2020 schools were not required to share their KS4 and 5 data as it could not be used for any reporting or accountability purposes, so an analysis is not possible this year. All the same, SACRE sends its congratulations to the staff and students for all their efforts in an exceptionally challenging year.

Teaching

Methods of teaching – training

National information about courses has been circulated to schools electronically.

Methods of teaching - The choice of teaching materials

During the year schools were also sent information about national resources, courses particularly targeted at Holocaust Memorial Day and research opportunities for teachers.

Other Information

Complaints about RE

No formal complaints about RE in Lewisham schools have been presented to the SACRE this year.

Membership

SACRE attempts to have proportional representation in relation to communities in the borough but accepts that sometimes it is important to have representation from very small but significant communities such as the Baha'i. During the year SACRE has endeavoured to ensure the membership have continued to have a sense of shared purpose and teamwork.

3. Collective Worship

Advice

SACRE's advice on Collective worship can be found on the [Lewisham council website](#).

Determinations

No schools applied for a Determination this year. The Determinations process and guidance can be found on the [Lewisham council website](#).

Monitoring Collective Worship & Spiritual Development

Part of SACRE's role is to monitor the quality of Collective Worship in Lewisham schools.

No work has been undertaken towards this end during the year due to the lockdown and the restrictions on holding assemblies / collective worship in many schools.

Other information - Complaints

There have been no complaints about collective worship in Lewisham schools this year.

4. Links with other agencies

National

Information from a number of contacts and bodies enables the SACRE to keep abreast of national initiatives and to be involved in developments.

The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC)

The School Improvement Officer supporting the SACRE is a member of AREIAC, as is the Deputy Chair of SACRE; information from this body informs SACRE's work.

The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)

Lewisham SACRE is also a member of the National Association of SACREs and its Adviser is on the Executive of that body. Their AGM was to be held in London this year but was cancelled due to the Pandemic; a NASACRE EGM was held on zoom on 17th November and was attended by the Adviser, Shaun Burns and Joan Goldberg. Information was fed back to SACRE in their November zoom meeting.

The RE Council of England and Wales (REC)

The work of the REC has been disseminated throughout the year to inform SACRE, faith communities and local schools.

The Inter Faith Network UK (IFN)

The work of the IFN has been disseminated throughout the year to inform SACRE, faith communities and the LA. This has included emergency briefings on national and international events.

Local

SACRE members have links with local schools and faith communities. -The ASC Chair, SACRE Deputy Chair and a couple of other members of SACRE are members of the LIF

(Lewisham Interfaith Forum and provide a useful link between us and the rest of the faith communities in Lewisham. SACRE is represented on the local Holocaust Memorial Day planning group.

5. SACRE Arrangements

Support

The SACRE and the ASC are supported by a part time School Improvement Officer / RE Adviser. Minutes have been taken by a minuting clerk whilst other clerking responsibilities have been covered by the RE Adviser. The London Borough of Lewisham meets costs for these posts and also provides a budget for SACRE, the ASC and the revision of the Agreed Syllabus.

The SACRE has a limited budget to cover printing, stationery and minor administrative costs as well as spending on initiatives to support RE and collective worship. The budget is monitored regularly.

Training

In their February meeting SACRE members had a brief training session using the NASACRE training materials. This was either a revision course or 'starter for 10' for members.

The roles and responsibilities of SACRE and the LA in relation to SACRE were explored and discussed at length.

The Chair commented on the usefulness of the presentation, commenting on how it piques interest when explaining to others what the SACRE does, emphasising that it is a significant body. The vice chair echoed this sentiment, commenting on the unique role that SACRE has in the community and how other subjects would envy the trust within the committee.

6. Other areas of work

Holocaust Memorial Day

SACRE received feedback on the 2020 Holocaust Memorial Day event activities in their February meeting. The Jewish faith representative explained that Lewisham had hosted a moving HMD event called 'Stand together' which was a culmination of the work that Lewisham schools had carried out.

SACRE members have been kept apprised of the 2021 plans during the year.

The Inter Faith Peace Walk

Due to the Pandemic the Peace Walk was not undertaken this year. However SACRE members were shown a film prepared by members of the Interfaith Forum to mark the [Peace Walk](#). This is a useful resource for schools.

SACRE Constitution

The SACRE's constitution is published on Lewisham's website.

Ramadan Advice to Schools

As schools were disrupted this year no new advice was produced. Advice for 2021 will be produced to cover the situation schools will be managing in spring next year.

Visits and visitors to schools.

The Covid 19 pandemic has been extremely challenging to schools and to faith communities. During the year SACRE members discussed and shared their concerns that RE lessons would become of necessity remote from local faith communities and that pupils would lose their awareness that these local communities represented and lived out the faiths they were learning about. There were also new and different ways of practising the faiths both in regular worship and in the marking of life events such as naming, marriage and funerals. SACRE members are endeavouring to put together some short film clips showing their venues and 'welcoming' guests in to find out more about them. This project continues. The SACRE are also updating a Directory of Places of Worship in Lewisham for school visits, to prepare for the time when such visits can once again be undertaken.

6.6 Black Lives Matter

In June SACRE discussed the death of George Floyd and how different faith groups responded to this crisis. SACRE members approved the NASACRE statement (Appendix C).

7. Appendices

Appendix A MEMBERSHIP OF LEWISHAM SACRE in this reporting year.

Representatives of the following communities	Name
Baha'i	Afonso Veiga
Buddhism	David Hutchens
Free Church (Assemblies of God)	Pastor Nick Hughes (Chair)
Free Church (Assemblies of God) <i>substitute</i>	Leanne Rudder
Free Church (Baptist)	Vacant
Free Churches (URC)	Rev Raymond Singh
Hinduism	Vallipuram Bala, Narmadha Saravanan , Mrs Srivanathan
Humanism	Vacant
Independent Evangelical	Nigel Desborough
Islam	Aisha Lodhi, Dr Ahmed Adem
Judaism	Gerald Rose, Joan Goldberg
Pentecostal	Layo Afuape
Pentecostal <i>substitute</i>	Cheryl Abbam
Roman Catholic	Rt. Rev. Monsignor Nicholas Rotherham
Sikhism	Vacant
C of E – The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education	Shaun Burns (Deputy Chair)
C of E teacher Secondary	Samantha Alder
C of E teacher Primary	Karen Hansen.
C of E Governor	Vacant
C of E Minister	Paul Wynter
NEU	Kim Knappett (ASC Chair)
NEU	Kim Griffiths
NEU	Vacant
Academy / Free School	Vacant
NAS/UWT	Mandy Keeble
Lewisham Headteachers & Deputies	Judith Purkiss
LA members	Councillor Jacq Paschoud
	Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin
	Councillor Hilary Moore
Primary School Governors	Isaac Sackey
Secondary School Governors	Adelire Adedeji
Director of Children's services	Angela Scattergood
Others	
Young Mayor Team	C/o Katy Brown & Malcolm Ball
RE School Improvement Officer	Denise Chaplin
SACRE Minute Clerk	Stephen Sealy

Appendix B

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is a statutory body that advises the Council on the provision of religious education and collective worship.

A SACRE is made up of four groups in order to bring a wide range of interests and talents to this work, and to reflect local faith communities.

These groups are:

- Group A: Christian denominations (other than the Church of England) and representatives from a wide range of other faiths and beliefs representative of Lewisham's communities.
- Group B: The Church of England.
- Group C: Teachers' professional associations.
- Group D: Elected members of the Council, with representatives of the Executive Director for Children and Young People and governors of Lewisham schools.

Members of these groups are nominated by their respective organisations.

What the SACRE does

Lewisham SACRE meets approximately four to five times annually.

The meetings are often held in a local place of worship in order to enhance members' knowledge and understanding of faiths other than their own.

At the meetings, members discuss issues relating to religious education in Lewisham schools and other educational establishments and monitor the delivery of that education.

We develop ways of supporting schools in delivering the religious education syllabus. We develop and maintain links with local and national faith communities.

SACRE also produces advice to support schools at times of local, national or international difficulty.

We welcome contact and visits from representatives of interested organisations or individuals to our meetings.

Appendix C

NASACRE statement on Black Lives Matter

The shocking killing of George Floyd in the USA sparked protests globally, including in the UK, highlighting deaths, acts of brutality and racism within society. It once again brought to the fore the very deep fault lines that exist in society around the issue of race. Sadly, this is not a stand-alone incident. Racism is evil wherever and whenever it happens and has no place in our society. It is undeniable that in this country there are ingrained racial biases, inherent inequalities and racism within traditional institutions. Whilst recognising it is a complex issue, we need to ask how should we - as members of our society - respond? The NASACRE Executive Committee is asking this question of our organisation and challenging our member SACREs to do the same.

SACREs bring together a diverse range of members of local communities to work collectively and collaboratively to support high quality RE in their schools and to prepare the pupils in their schools for life in a multi – faith society, where black lives matter. Many members of our SACRE communities will be grieving over what has happened around recent events, and as an Executive, we want to grieve with them. At this time, we feel we should be slow to speak, quick to listen and compassionate towards those who mourn.

Religious Education and Collective Worship in our schools provide opportunities for reflection on justice and diversity around these sensitive issues. Whilst NASACRE has always worked to promote greater inclusion of diverse voices in education, we recognise that there is more to do, and this work needs to be done with greater urgency. **As your local Agreed Syllabus Conference sets your local syllabus for religious education, there is important work to be done reviewing your current curriculum, checking it is fit for purpose, and ensuring Black Lives Matter is within it.**

The NASACRE Executive has always sought to reflect the diversity of its membership and to encourage member SACREs to review their membership to ensure they are fully representative of their local diversity. Historically NASACRE has been at pains to provide space for a range of voices to be heard in our meetings, our membership and in our conferences; we recognise there is more to do and commit to working to challenge inequality, racism and to hear the voices that are frequently silent or ignored.

Appendix D

Distribution of this report

The report is made available electronically to:

The Department for Education

The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)

Lewisham SACRE members

The Mayor and Lewisham Council, Elected Members

Executive Director for Children and Young People

Teaching Unions in Lewisham

SACRE Nominating Bodies

The main Faith Groups in Lewisham,
including Catford & Bromley Synagogue, & Lewisham Islamic Centre

Ecumenical Borough Deans

All schools in Lewisham

Lewisham College

Goldsmiths' College (University of London)

Lewisham Libraries

Lewisham LA Website

Lewisham Inter Faith Forum

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