



NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

2021

An overview of the work of North East Lincolnshire SACRE during the calendar year January
2021 to December 2021.

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Welcome and Executive Summary

Welcome to our Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) annual report for the period January – December 2021.

During 2021 the continued impact of Covid-19 led to significant disruption for schools and academies in this region. Schools, through senior leaders, teachers, governors, and local authorities, have had to adapt to emerging guidance and complex situations. This includes carrying out ongoing reviews of the curriculum to ensure all children and young people have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, however they are accessing this.

North East Lincolnshire SACRE has worked hard to continue to support schools and academies in this region during the pandemic by providing information and resources to ensure that RE continues to be a key part of the broad and balanced curriculum. Guidance was also offered with regards to collective worship.

SACRE meetings have been held remotely throughout this period. Whilst the Annual Conference was unable to go ahead, we are currently planning our 2022 joint Conference with North Lincolnshire SACRE for 11th March 2022. RE teachers and leaders from North East Lincolnshire will contribute to this conference by delivering workshops.

Context

Local authorities have a duty to set up a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The duties of the SACRE include gaining an overview of the quality of religious education provision in local authority maintained schools and developing effective strategies to promote the highest standards.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) holds the legal responsibility for revising the Agreed Syllabus. The ASC members are all members of SACRE.

Part of a SACRE's role is to support the effective provision of collective worship in community schools and to advise the local authority on issues related to provision and quality. It must also consider applications from head teachers in community schools that the requirement for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of broadly Christian character be disapplied for some or all of the pupils in that school.

SACRE 'determines' the appropriateness of that application and grants a 'determination' to those schools where the application is judged to be in the best interest of the pupils. All pupils in schools with determination continue to have an entitlement to daily collective worship.

A SACRE is set up to represent a balance of all the interests of the local community. This includes elected councillors, representatives of local faith communities and members of the education community. The constitution of the SACRE is determined by law.

SACRE membership is comprised of the following groups:

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- Representatives of Christian denominations other than the Church of England and representative of other faiths
- Representatives of the local Church of England diocese
- Representatives of Teachers' Associations
- Local Authority Representatives

For a list of serving SACRE members, please see Appendix 1 on p.8 below.

SACRE Meetings 2021

During this year, SACRE met on three occasions:

23rd March 2021

1st July 2021

14th October 2021

In addition to this, a smaller working party met on the following dates to discuss the SACRE priorities and action plan on the following dates:

17th June 2021

25th November 2021

All these meetings were held remotely via Microsoft Teams in order to facilitate attendance by SACRE members.

The key focus of these meetings was the publication, communication and implementation of the new Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE. The launch of this syllabus had been postponed from 2020 due to Covid.

As in previous years, North East Lincolnshire worked jointly with North Lincolnshire SACRE to ensure that the locally agreed syllabus was shared across the two unitary authorities in order that schools and academies could receive the most consistent information and support. Unlike in previous Agreed Syllabus Conferences, the agreed syllabus review that took place in 2020 did not include the two unitary authorities on the other side of the Humber: East Riding and Hull. This is because it was felt that schools and academies in North and North East Lincolnshire work more closely with schools and academies in Lincolnshire, rather than those in East Riding and Hull. Consequently, it was felt that it would be more efficient to adopt the same locally agreed syllabus as that used in Lincolnshire.

This annual report provides an overview of the work of North East Lincolnshire SACRE during the period January – December 2021.

Commented [GG1]: I seem to have a lot of dates in my diary, and I'm not 100% sure that these are correct! Could someone check, please?

Commented [GG2]: We need to state whether these meetings were quorate or not – I don't have that information.
We might also need to have some sort of statement that shows how these meetings were publicly accessible (e.g. were they recorded to be shared? Were members of the public welcome to attend?); the legislation around holding local authority meetings virtually was revoked in March 2021 – from that point onwards, they should have been held in person because they are publicly accountable meetings.

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Statutory Responsibilities: Religious Education

North East Lincolnshire SACRE sought permission from Lincolnshire SACRE and formally adopted the [Lincolnshire locally agreed syllabus](#) for the academic year 2020-21. North Lincolnshire SACRE also adopted this locally agreed syllabus in order to ensure a smooth transition for schools and academies across the two regions.

This syllabus was launched in September 2020 with a series of seven training sessions for primary and secondary RE teachers and subject leaders. These sessions were delivered virtually by the Diocesan RE Adviser, Gillian Georgiou, from September 2020 to March 2021. They were advertised to RE teachers and subject leaders across North and North East Lincolnshire; each session was also recorded and all seven recordings were distributed to school leaders in North East Lincolnshire. North and North East Lincolnshire SACREs funded these training sessions so they were free at the point of access for local schools.

Agreed Syllabus Launch Training Sessions (2020-21)

Date	Session
11 th November 2020	Introduction of the Lincolnshire agreed syllabus and RE subject leadership
2 nd December 2020	RE subject knowledge: Christian worldviews
20 th January 2021	RE subject knowledge: Muslim worldviews
2 nd February 2021	RE subject knowledge: Hindu worldviews
2 nd March 2021	RE curriculum design (primary)
3 rd March 2021	RE curriculum design (secondary)
23 rd March 2021	Assessing pupil progress in RE

Use of Agreed Syllabus in Academies

SACRE does not have data to confirm how many academies in North East Lincolnshire have adopted this locally agreed syllabus as the basis of their RE curriculum. However, RE subject leaders from local primary and secondary academies have been attending RE support meetings, which would suggest that academies across the region are using the syllabus as the basis of their RE curriculum.

Standards and Monitoring of RE: GCSE and A Level

The pandemic had an ongoing impact on GCSE and A Level examinations in 2021. The following statistics are drawn from Ofqual data for the examination period 2021.¹

¹ <https://analytics.ofqual.gov.uk/>

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Please note that in this data set, both North and North East Lincolnshire fall into Lincolnshire, which means that the data below covers all three local authorities.

GCSE Religious Studies (Lincolnshire):	
Number of Entries = 3365	
Grade 4+	78.8% (<i>national = 80.2%</i>)
Grade 5+	65.7% (<i>national = 67.5%</i>)
Grade 7+	34.8% (<i>national = 37.7%</i>)
Grade 8+	21.1% (<i>national = 23.8%</i>)
A Level Religious Studies (Lincolnshire):	
Number of Entries = 215	
Grade C+	95.8% (<i>national = 91.7%</i>)
Grade B+	77.9% (<i>national = 72.8%</i>)
Grade A+	48.8% (<i>national = 43.9%</i>)
Grade A*	17.4% (<i>national = 16.6%</i>)

This data suggests that GCSE outcomes across greater Lincolnshire are consistently lower than national. RE is a statutory element of the broad and balanced curriculum for all students in KS4, so further information is needed to be sought to ascertain how this is being provided for students who are not entered for a GCSE qualification in Religious Studies. SACRE has sought to access this information by studying publicly accessible curriculum information on the websites of all secondary academies in the region. Where it has been unable to confirm that all students are receiving their entitlement to RE, SACRE has contacted school leaders to provide information about statutory requirements and to offer support.

The data for A Level Religious Studies outcomes is stronger, with Lincolnshire schools performing consistently higher than the national average. It is worth noting that only 2 secondary academies in North East Lincolnshire provide post-16 qualifications, and of these 2, only 1 offers an A Level qualification in Religious Studies.

Standards and Monitoring of RE: Compliance

Anecdotal evidence shared with SACRE suggested that not all secondary academies in North East Lincolnshire are delivering RE as part of the broad and balanced curriculum in line with their academy funding agreement (e.g. to *all* students in the academy up to the age of 18). SACRE has been proactive in contacting secondary academy leaders across the region to share information about statutory and funding agreement duties, as well as offering support to ensure that the RE curriculum is effective.

Standards and Monitoring of RE: Primary

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Standards in RE are not monitored in primary schools and academies across the region, other than by reference to RE in Ofsted and section 48² reports. Due to the impact of the pandemic, inspections have been disrupted during this year and SACRE has not analysed Ofsted or SIAMS reports.

RE Support and Advice

As noted above, North East Lincolnshire commissioned and funded the Diocesan RE Adviser to deliver a series of seven training sessions to coincide with the launch of the new agreed syllabus for RE. Support meetings were also held for primary and secondary RE teachers and subject leaders on the following dates:

31st March 2021

22nd April 2021

11th June 2021

8th July 2021

In addition, the Diocesan RE Adviser has begun a specific support group for secondary RE subject leaders across North and North East Lincolnshire to reflect the fact that many secondary colleagues leading RE across the region are not RE-specialists.

The support and advice provided has taken two forms:

1. General advice and support relating to designing and implementing an effective RE curriculum (especially in relation to the [Ofsted RE Research Review](#) published in May 2021): this includes support on subject leadership, curriculum design, subject knowledge and assessment;
2. Bespoke advice and support relating to specific requests made by schools and academies.

In all cases, the advice and support was delivered by the Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE (both primary RE subject leaders) and the Diocesan RE Adviser.

Other Information

During this period of reporting, SACRE did not receive any complaints about the delivery of Religious Education in North East Lincolnshire schools or academies.

² Section 48 inspections are carried out by denominational authorities on schools of religious character (Church of England and Methodist schools) and faith schools (Catholic schools). In North East Lincolnshire, there are six Church of England and/or Methodist schools and two Catholic schools.

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SACRE did not track the number of pupils withdrawn from the RE curriculum, although information on how to handle requests for withdrawals was shared with school and academy leaders across the region.

SACRE did not provide any specific advice to the local authority regarding Religious Education, other than the advice shared with school leaders at local authority leadership briefings.

Statutory Responsibilities: Collective Worship

Due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic, many schools met their statutory duty to deliver a daily act of collective worship virtually, rather than in person. During this period of reporting, North East Lincolnshire did not actively monitor collective worship, although members of SACRE offered advice and guidance to schools and academies that sought it, especially regarding the right of parents/guardians to withdraw their children from collective worship. No training on collective worship was provided by North East Lincolnshire SACRE.

North East Lincolnshire SACRE did not receive any requests for determinations during the period of reporting.

North East Lincolnshire SACRE did not receive any complaints in relation to collective worship.

Links with other bodies (local and national)

North East Lincolnshire SACRE continues to work closely with the Church of England Diocese of Lincoln, and the Diocesan RE Adviser has worked alongside the Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE to deliver advice, support and training to schools and academies in North East Lincolnshire.

The Chair of SACRE is also a regional ambassador for the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and this has facilitated the sharing of resources and key data to schools and academies in the region.

Other members of SACRE provide a useful link with faith communities in the region and schools have benefited from this through the arrangement of virtual and in-person visits and visitors.

Management of SACRE and Contribution to Wider Local Authority Agenda

Historically, North East Lincolnshire SACRE has not been well-funded, although professional and administrative support has been provided by the local authority. The local authority has been through a period of significant challenge, including both financial challenge and challenges in leadership. This has impacted on the ability of SACRE to carry out its statutory duties effectively.

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The work of SACRE is funded by the Central School Services Block (CSSB). In the academic year 2020-21, North East Lincolnshire received £0. SACRE recommends that 2% of the CSSB should be designated for the work of SACRE. In the period of reporting, North East Lincolnshire SACRE received the funds to retain the use of a clerk, but no other funding. Unlike other local authorities in the region, North East Lincolnshire SACRE does not retain the services of a local authority RE adviser; support work and advice is primarily provided by the Chair and Vice Chair (both primary RE subject leaders) and the Diocesan RE Adviser, who sits on SACRE as a co-opted adviser. This had a direct impact on the capacity of the body to fulfil its statutory duties and is a matter of serious concern to the members of SACRE. Questions have been asked of council leaders on multiple occasions, but no resolution has yet been made. In the meantime, the members of SACRE seek to fulfil their statutory duties as best they can.

Members of SACRE have continued to emphasise the importance of the statutory role it plays to wider local authority leadership. The work of SACRE does not yet have the impact that it could have on the wider local authority agenda and the members of SACRE continue to offer practical examples of how this might be achieved.

Members of SACRE have received regular updates from the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) and have been invited to NASACRE virtual training opportunities.

SACRE has struggled to remain quorate during this period of reporting, in part because of stressors relating to the pandemic. Recruitment and training of new members of SACRE is an ongoing priority.

Appendix 1

Chair of SACRE: Julie Childs

Vice Chair of SACRE: Katherine Bruning

Strategic Officer for SACRE: Matthew Ward / Wendy Jackson

Clerk to SACRE: Nicola Best

Membership of North East Lincolnshire SACRE during the period of reporting:

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Representatives of Christian denominations other than the Church of England and representative of other faiths

Representatives of the local Church of England diocese

Representatives of Teachers' Associations

Local Authority Representatives

Gillian Georgiou, the Diocesan RE Adviser, supports the work of North East Lincolnshire SACRE as a co-opted RE Adviser.