



Oldham
Council

**Standing Advisory Council on Religious
Education
(SACRE)**

Annual Report 2021-22

Table of contents

Section One: Introduction and the Work of SACRE	3
• Words from the Chair	
• Overview	
• Dates and content of meetings	
• Priorities for 2021-22	
• Self-evaluation	
• Dates for 2022-23	
Section Two: Statutory Responsibilities: Religious Education	8
• Local agreed syllabus	
• Standards and monitoring	
• Professional development and support	
• Other information	
Section Three: Statutory Responsibilities: Collective Worship	11
• Standards and monitoring	
• Complaints and determinations	
• Professional development and support	
• Other information	
Section Four: Links with other organisations	13
Section Five: Other areas of SACRE involvement	13
Section Six: SACRE arrangements	14
Section Seven: Advice to the Local Authority	16

Section One: Introduction and the Work of SACRE

Words from the Chair

I am delighted to have served as chair of Oldham SACRE for another year, working alongside a truly committed group of people. I particularly wish to thank our local authority colleagues: Tony Shepherd, Shajia Begum and of course, Alastair Ross, our RE consultant/adviser. Alastair continues to be an immense personal support, guiding me through the myriad of issues to consider, in order to deliver high quality RE in Oldham. My focus remains on how our excellent teachers can best be supported by Oldham SACRE and what we can do to encourage them in their work. The annual questionnaire to all schools, provides a snapshot of RE provision and highlights areas where we can offer targeted support.

We are planning a Teacher CPD Conference for June 2023 to bring RE teachers together to network and share resources. This conference will be held at Ashton Sixth Form College with invitations extended to all RE teachers across Oldham and Tameside. This further illustrates our desire as neighbouring SACREs to collaborate where possible.

The publication of a booklet focusing on cultural and religious sensitivities in school settings was a practical way to utilise the knowledge and understanding of SACRE members, to inform classroom teachers, as well as our senior leaders.

In addition to our focus on staff, we are seeking to develop leadership skills and growth within our SACRE members by encouraging them to participate in national training and attending local events. I am particularly grateful for our close working relationship with Oldham Inter Faith Forum and GM Inter Faith Network in enhancing these opportunities. Although we have a fair spread of faith representation at meetings, we look to increase this and also to develop a succession plan for building members skills and confidence to take on the roles of sub group chairs/convenors and ultimately as the next Oldham SACRE chair.

Huge thanks to everyone who has played a part in #TeamOldhamSACRE

The Rev Canon Jean Hurlston
Chair of Oldham SACRE 2021 - 22

Overview

This annual report is prepared by Oldham SACRE. SACRE as a body is required to advise the Local Authority on matters relating to Religious Education and Collective Worship. This report provides a picture of the support given for Religious Education and Collective Worship during 2021-22. The report is a public document which is also sent to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) and the Department for Education.

For further information on the report or on RE and Collective Worship, contact Alastair Ross at alastair@penninelearning.com. The clerk to SACRE is Shajia Begum shajia.begum@oldham.gov.uk.

Dates and content of meetings

There were three meetings of Oldham SACRE during the year 2021-22, all held virtually via Teams. Meetings are open to the public and minutes are also available on-line. These meetings were held on 25th November 2021, 23rd March 2022 and 30th June 2022.

As well as considering the general position of RE and collective worship in Oldham, SACRE discussed the following issues at its meetings during the year:

- Annual Report
- CPD for teachers including possible conference
- Secondary RE provision
- SACRE audit and work plan
- Organisation of SACRE – exploring roles for SACRE members
- ‘Still Standing’ – report from NASACRE on future of RE
- Reports from regional and national bodies (NASACRE and GM Faiths Forum)
- Reports from network and schools
- Questions to be included in enquiry to schools
- Collective Worship: Update on Advice
- Drafting advice for schools on sensitive issues about faith in schools.
- Self-evaluation form (SEF)
- Development Plan

Self-evaluation

During the year, Oldham SACRE completed a process of self-evaluation based on the NASACRE template. Arising from this the following areas future development were identified and will be built into the development plan for the next two years.

SACRE

1. Membership should be widened, in particular to include attendance from more representatives from faith communities and the inclusion of non-religious viewpoints, such as Humanism. Contacts with partners, such as HE providers, should be developed.
2. Attendance and participation should be improved and care taken to include more interesting items
3. Members should be encouraged to attend NASACRE training courses and consideration should be given to induction for new members.
4. The development plan should be continually reviewed, revised and evaluated as part of meetings
5. An annual questionnaire should also be sent to all schools to elicit relevant information and to enquire about what support might be needed
6. More opportunities should be found to hear from pupils and teachers and
7. Explore whether a more structured link with MATs is feasible and beneficial.

Religious Education

1. An annual questionnaire should be used to enquire about RE and collective worship. Members should undertake a website trawl.
2. Data analysis can now be restored. SACRE could explore if there are ways in which information can be more systematic and what capacity there would be for using this to support schools.
3. The relationship between SACRE and school senior leaders could be developed further.
4. Explore whether a more structured link with MATs is feasible and beneficial.

Local Agreed Syllabus

1. Planning for the review and revision of the agreed syllabus should follow the criteria outlined in the SEF when the process starts in 2024.
2. A reminder and briefing on the LAS may be offered in 2022-23

Collective Worship

1. Advice should be produced
2. Consideration should be given to including questions about CW in an annual enquiry and to the provision of professional development

Community Cohesion

1. Membership should be widened, in particular to include attendance from more representatives from faith communities and the inclusion of non-religious viewpoints, such as Humanism. Contacts with partners, such as HE providers, should be developed.
2. Advice should be prepared to support schools in dealing with sensitive issues connected to faith and beliefs.

SACRE Priorities for 2022-23

Self-evaluation has helped to identify key areas for development which are included in SACRE's development plan for 2022-24:

Developing the effectiveness of SACRE and building partnership

- maintain and build wide and participative membership
- distribute leadership and responsibility within SACRE
- make training available to members
- develop regional collaboration
- produce annual report
-

Promote continuing improvement in standards, quality of teaching and provision in RE (including the syllabus)

- monitor provision
- monitor standards
- keep abreast of wider developments and share information with schools and local authority
- provide or publicise opportunities for professional development
- liaise with teacher networks
- review local agreed syllabus

Promoting continuing improvement in the provision and quality of collective worship

- ensure practical advice is in place
- offer peered support or review
- publicise or make available professional development

Contributing to cohesion across the community

- nurture partnership with local authority and other agencies and groups
- develop practical guidance for sensitivity to faith in schools
- encourage educational collaboration between faith communities and schools

Further details of the self-evaluation or the development plan can be obtained via the clerk to SACRE.

Meetings for 2022-23

SACRE meetings for 2022-2023 have been provisionally arranged for these dates: 3rd October 2022, 21st March 2023 and 7th June 2023. For more information contact the clerk, Shajia Begum shajia.begum@oldham.gov.uk.

Section Two: Statutory Responsibilities: Religious Education

The Local Agreed Syllabus

The current Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was produced by RE Today Services and implemented in September 2020. The agreed syllabus is due to be reviewed and updated by 2025. The process for this review will be introduced at the SACRE meeting in September 2023 and a timeline for completion will be put in place. Following the recent completion of the SACRE self-evaluation (SEF), it was agreed that 'Section 3: The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus' will be used as a framework for the syllabus review.

Standards and Monitoring

SACRE enquiry

At the end of the summer term 2022, Oldham SACRE asked secondary and primary schools to complete a brief survey about the provision of RE. The questions asked about the time provision given to RE and whether this was taught by teachers or support assistants, specialist or non-specialist. It also asked what support would be valued by schools.

The results of this will be analysed in the autumn of 2022 and responses made to all schools. Information will also help to sculpt the priorities of SACRE's work and support for schools.

Examination results

Exam analysis is not yet available. This will be included later in reports to SACRE.

RE Quality Mark

No Oldham schools applied for the REQM this year. There have been just over 40 REQM awards across the country in 2021-22, of which 12 were from the north of England.

Professional development and support for schools

General support

During the year this professional support continued through the RE consultant, Alastair Ross who is contracted through Pennine Learning, a small regional company specialising in RE and community cohesion. The team also includes three other experienced consultants in

primary and secondary RE. Oldham Council contacted ten days during the year though this time is arranged as flexibly as possible to facilitate effective working with schools and others. Pennine Learning also supports SACREs and RE in neighbouring Tameside, Calderdale and Kirklees, enabling appropriate collaboration and partnership.

Support is available to schools in a number of ways, including:

- Advice on the local agreed syllabus;
- Consultancy over specific or general RE issues, including advice about withdrawal from RE;
- Support for schools wishing to develop and improve RE following Ofsted inspections.

Training

This year the primary RE network has been re-established and is led by a local head and member of SACRE, Sue Callaghan.

A secondary network has been established for Oldham and Tameside and is run by the Northern Teaching Alliance based at The Blue Coat School and led by Kate O'Neill.

A successful series of five twilight webinars on subject knowledge of world faiths took place over the academic year and included guests from faith communities. These were held in cooperation with partner local authorities.

A half termly newsletter and CPD digest is sent to all schools and this includes information about professional development opportunities in RE regionally and nationally. Oldham teachers have been able to access training for RE coordinators and sessions for subject knowledge development.

A day course for new RE coordinators in Oldham is being held in October 2022.

A 'Deep Dive' in Religious Education is also offered to schools. This half-day session focuses on a review of curriculum provision, looking at its scope, rigour and sequencing. RE Policy.

Oldham Schools are particularly fortunate to have access to visits provided through Oldham Interfaith Forum and to the Oldham Pledge project.

During the year Oldham SACRE has worked with partners in Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Tameside to produce advice on sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools. This will be signed off in the autumn of 2022 and be available to schools as practical information and support to school leaders.

Section Three: Statutory Responsibilities: Collective Worship

Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship

Guidance is offered to schools and Ofsted reports are scrutinised in order to keep up to date with current issues and concerns. It has been difficult for schools to maintain an effective programme of collective worship during the pandemic and one of SACRE's key priorities in the coming year will be to remind, facilitate and support schools. This will include offering light-touch review conversations with practical suggestions.

Complaints and determinations

There were no complaints made during the year to SACRE about Collective Worship. There were no new or reviewed determinations to vary statutory requirements in any maintained school in Oldham. Responsibility for determinations in English academies and free schools rest with the Schools Funding Agency.

Professional development and support for schools

SACRE is always ready to advise or support schools on request. A half-day course on planning for collective worship/ inclusive assemblies will be available to Oldham schools in the summer of 2023 to aid schools in developing an effective and inspiring programme.

SACRE is currently in the process of producing revised advice on collective worship and it is expected this will be ready for schools during the autumn of 2022.

These questions may be helpful in reflecting on the value and effectiveness of collective worship in school:

1. Collective: How does the assembly celebrate and promote a sense of community within the whole school (or group)?
2. Educational: Is there a clear aim and focus, with appropriate learning? Does it engage and interest pupils and staff?

3. Spiritual: How does the assembly nurture pupils' awareness of their beliefs and values - and those of others (including non-religious beliefs)? How does it develop a sense of the meaning, purpose and value in their lives?
4. Reflective: Is there space and opportunity for thoughtful reflection, in the assembly or as a follow up? If prayers are used do these allow for different approaches and responses?
5. Inclusive: How does the assembly programme develop understanding of different perspectives and cultures? How does it promote values of tolerance, diversity and equality?
6. Responsive: How did pupils respond and participate?

Other information

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their children from collective worship. Guidance on good practice and protocols for withdrawal is available to schools; consultants are available if further support is needed. SACRE recognises parents' legal rights but hopes all children will be enabled to receive stimulating and balanced RE as part of their entitlement to a broad curriculum.

Section Four: Links with other organisations

SACRE has active links with the following organisations:

- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)
- The North-north-west SACRE Hub
- RE Today
- The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC)
- Faith communities and organisations
- Oldham School Performance Team
- Northern Teaching Alliance based at The Blue Coat School
- The Oldham Inter Faith Forum
- Greater Manchester Interfaith Network
- Oldham and Tameside RE Practitioner Network

Section Five: Other areas of involvement

The Oldham Interfaith Forum

SACRE is grateful to the work of the Interfaith Forum in, among other things, supporting links between schools and local faith communities. This helps to fulfil our obligation to promote fundamental values of respect and tolerance.

The virtual faith trail, *Many Faiths, One Community*, is also a great resource for schools and comprises a set of videos for schools, exploring what goes on in four places of worship: a Christian Church, a Hindu Temple, a Mosque, and a Synagogue. Schools should contact the Interfaith Forum or the SACRE consultants for the link.

Faith sensitivities

During the year SACRE has worked with partners in Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Tameside to produce advice on sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools. This will be signed off in the autumn of 2022 and be available to schools as practical information and support to school leaders.

Section Six: SACRE arrangements

Oldham Council funds the operation of SACRE by contracting its consultant, providing a clerk and supporting its work through links with senior education officers.

SACRE membership includes representatives from all four constituent committees.

Committee A	Faith communities except for the Church of England
Committee B	Anglican representatives
Committee C	Teachers and schools
Committee D	Oldham Council

Buddhist	A	Vacancy
Hindu	A	Mrs Krishna Sisodia
Hindu	A	Nitiksha Raghvani
Jewish	A	Rabbi Daniel Walker
Muslim	A	Mr Nasim Ashraf
Muslim	A	Mr Bilal Brown
Sikh	A	Vacancy
Humanist	A	Vacancy
Oldham Interfaith forum	A	The Rev Howard Sutcliffe
Salvation Army	A	Major Annette Allen
Free churches	A	Mr Peter Butler
Free churches	A	Ms Jenny McGhee
Free churches	A	Mr Ian Whitehead
Roman Catholic Church	A	Mr Patrick McMahon
Church of England	B	The Rev Canon Jean Hurlston
Church of England	B	Mr Graham McGuffie
Church of England	B	The Rev Dr Paul Monk
Church of England	B	Vacancy
Primary head (Ch Ch Denshaw) & network lead	C	Sue Callaghan
Secondary head	C	Vacancy
Special School head	C	Ms R Lomax
NEU	C	Mrs Mary Butt
NEU	C	Miss Jacqueline Beattie
Secondary academies (Hathershaw)	C	Ms Claire Harwood

Special schools (Kingfisher)	C	Ms Nicola Smith
Teaching school (N Tchg Alliance)	C	Laura Almond
SLE and network lead	C	Ms Kate O'Connell
Teachers associations and HE	C	Francesca Frazer-Davies
Local authority	D	Cllr Pam Byrne
Local authority	D	Cllr Mohon Ali
Local authority	D	Mr Tony Shepherd
Coopted	Z	Available
Coopted	Z	Available
Coopted	Z	Available

SACRE needs to ensure there continues to be consistent attendance and needs more teacher representatives. Contacts with partners, such as HE providers, should be developed. It is worth exploring whether a more structured link with MATs is feasible and beneficial

Training is provided by NASACRE and offered to SACRE members, though better induction is needed locally.

Section Seven: Advice to the Local authority

The following advice is given by SACRE to the local authority:

1. Ensure SACRE's annual report is considered carefully by the Scrutiny Panel of the Council and any of its content noted.
2. The local authority should ensure that SACRE has its full complement of attending local representatives, especially from faith communities.
3. The local authority should encourage the best local provision for skilled and specialist RE teaching in Oldham.

No appendices are attached to this report; all the relevant information is contained within the main body. However, any further information can be requested via the clerk, shajia.begum@oldham.gov.uk.



This annual report is prepared for Oldham Standing Advisory Council on RE (SACRE) as part of its statutory responsibility. For further information on the report or on RE and Collective Worship, please contact Alastair Ross at alastair@penninelearning.com.