



# SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education Annual Report 2024/2025

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## **SECTION 1: CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this report as Chair of the Portsmouth SACRE and to offer my thanks to all SACRE members, teachers and community members who have worked so hard to support RE in Portsmouth over the past academic year. I would also like to thank the City of Portsmouth College, Eastney Evangelical Church and St Paul's Catholic Primary School for hosting our SACRE meetings over the past year.

Our work together demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that schools in Portsmouth are able to deliver the highest quality RE for each context, specifically enabling pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and academically. Ongoing support for primary RE subject leaders is offered through the network meetings and we are thankful to all school leaders who allocate time for staff to attend these sessions.

We are proud of the strength of relationship between RE leaders and the School Improvement team which enables the quality of teaching and learning in RE to be sustained.

Thank you to all who contributed to the continued monitoring and evaluation of RE particularly through Collective Worship visits, the review of school websites for the provision of RE and references to the locally agreed syllabus (Living Difference IV) these extra initiatives take time, and I am grateful to all who have contributed to these pieces of work.

The locally agreed syllabus, Living Difference IV is at the heart of the framework for RE in Portsmouth and it has been good to see the development of the "golden thread" concepts becoming more embedded across the key stages and that places of worship are working together with schools to support the teaching of RE. It is so important that there is a consistency between the teaching of RE in maintained schools as well as in academies.

The bigger picture for RE has had its difficulties and concerns particularly relating to the falling number of specialist RE teachers entering the teaching profession. We have been encouraged to learn this year that there may be a few more who have undertaken teacher training in RE this past academic year. We are aware that some schools can find it difficult to devote curriculum time for RE and we would love to see more schools enter pupils for public examinations of GCSE and A-Level RE. Historically we have noticed that when pupils do study RE at exam level they perform well.

The directory of places of worship is in place to enable all schools across the city of Portsmouth to engage with visiting a variety of places of worship. It is so important that we keep celebrating the many different cultures that make our city so diverse and there is so much more potential to learn from each other.

As a SACRE we are engaged with national developments particularly in the area of Ofsted Subject Reports, RE Hubs and their development and we keep connections with our local partnerships including EMAS, Portsmouth Education Partnership.

A big thank you to all those who work in a professional capacity to steer, support and advise Portsmouth SACRE particularly Chris May, Justine Ball, Debbie Anderson and our clerk Claire Campbell-Best your professional approach and wisdom for all that we do together is so appreciated. A special thanks should also be given to Geoff Wheeler (Group A) for his commitment and dedication to the SACRE after twenty-five years as a member.

Revd. Sam Duddles  
Chair, Portsmouth SACRE

## **INFORMATION ABOUT SACRE**

### **1.1 Duty to establish a SACRE**

Since the Education Reform Act of 1988, all Local Authorities (LAs) have been required by law to constitute a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) within their local area<sup>1</sup>.

### **1.2 What does a SACRE do?**

SACRE is a unique body; it is set up by the LA but is independent of it, with the role to give advice to that LA. The law states that Religious Education must be taught in all maintained schools<sup>2</sup> and a SACRE's role is to advise what needs to be done to improve religious education (RE) and collective worship for schools in its area.

The main purpose of the annual report is to hold the LA to account, by informing the Secretary of State and key partners what advice SACRE gave the LA during the year and how the LA responded to that advice. This includes advice on Religious Education and Collective Worship in those schools for which the LA has responsibility.

### **1.3 Composition of SACRE**

There are four groups or committees, as below:

- A: The Christian denominations and other religious denominations, reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area.
- B: The Church of England
- C: Teachers
- D: The Local Authority

The Local Authority has determined that the SACRE should comprise:

- Representatives of Christian denominations and other religious groups reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area
- Four representatives of the Church of England.
- Six teacher representatives of the key stages of education and an association recognised by the Authority.
- Four representatives of the local authority, at least two of whom should be elected members.

Other members may be co-opted from time to time as appropriate for all or part meetings.

### **1.4 Membership of SACRE**

The names of the SACRE members and the religious denominations for Group A can be found at Appendix A.

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<sup>1</sup> Education Act 1996 Section 390:1

<sup>2</sup> School and Standards Framework Act 1998 Section 69

## 1.5 SACRE Functions

- To advise the LA on collective worship and the Religious Education to be given in accordance with the agreed syllabus including methods of teaching, advice on materials and the provision of training for teachers
- To consider whether to recommend to the LA that its current agreed syllabus should be reviewed by convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- To consider whether the requirement that religious worship in a county school should be 'broadly Christian in nature' should be varied (determinations).
- To report to the LA and the Department for Education (DfE) on its activities on an annual basis.

## 1.6 Census data on Portsmouth 2021 shows that:

47.1% have no religion  
39.4% are Christian  
4.9% are Muslim  
0.8% are Hindu  
0.5% are Buddhist  
0.2% are Sikh  
0.1% are Jewish  
0.6% are Other Religion

## 1.7 Meetings and attendance

SACRE met on three occasions during the academic year 2024-5:

Wednesday 6th November 2024  
Wednesday 12th March 2025  
Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

These meetings were quorate and occurred in person. One meeting took place in Portsmouth College, one in a local church and one in a primary school. Minutes of all SACRE meetings and the current membership are available from the Portsmouth City Council website: [Committee details - Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education \(SACRE\) Portsmouth City Council](#)

During this reporting period, SACRE has been seeking representatives from the following:

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Group A</b> | Baha'i Faith, Portsmouth Catholic Diocesan Office, Buddhist, Hindu, Islam and other Christian denominations (1 each) |
| <b>Group B</b> | CofE representative (1)  |
| <b>Group C</b> | Early Year representative (1) appointed June 2024  |
| <b>Group D</b> | None (0) current appointments run to May 2026  |

The percentages attendance 2024/25 per group is as follows:

Autumn Term meeting – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Group A = 75%	6/8
Group B = 66%	2/3
Group C = 17%	1/6
Group D = 25%	1/4

Spring Term meeting - 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Group A = 50%	4/8
Group B = 66%	2/3
Group C = 50%	3/6
Group D = 75%	3/4

Summer Term meeting - 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

Group A = 75%	6/8
Group B = 33%	1/3
Group C = 84%	5/6
Group D = 50%	2/4

## **SECTION 2: STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN 2024/25**

### **2.1 Activities undertaken by SACRE**

SACRE has continued to monitor the provision of RE and collective worship across Portsmouth and is grateful for the support given by the LA in undertaking these activities. In this period, SACRE activities have included the following:

- Review of Ofsted reports
- Website monitoring
- Engagement in network meetings and other training opportunities
- Monitoring of recruitment and vacancies for religious education
- Monitoring of collective worship in schools

These activities have been undertaken by members of the SACRE Monitoring Group. This group is comprised of representatives from each of the four SACRE groups along with the SACRE Adviser and the Head of School Improvement for the LA. During this period the Monitoring Group met three times in advance of the main SACRE meeting to review the monitoring activities undertaken. The Adviser to SACRE updated full SACRE on this work during each of the three main meetings through a written report.

### **2.2 Monitoring of School Provision**

- There is one LA secondary school in Portsmouth which is a voluntary aided

faith school. As such, monitoring activities in relation to secondary school provision has been more challenging. A number of secondary schools continue to use the Locally Agreed Syllabus and the Adviser to SACRE has maintained contact with these schools, although no visits have taken place to secondary schools during this period. Website monitoring and communication with the SACRE Adviser has meant that SACRE remains informed of provision within these schools.

- Primary schools continue to engage with training opportunities and other events. Network meetings for primary RE leads have continued to run regularly and as a result teaching and learning for RE remains strong. Website monitoring and other contact with primary schools provides evidence that RE leads are secure in implementing the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Website monitoring across both primary and secondary schools has provided a useful window into RE provision across the LA. Curriculum sequencing was clearly displayed across schools and in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Less schools explicitly referenced collective worship or the right to withdrawal. However, this does not mean that these are not present, they are simply not on the public facing area of websites. This activity was undertaken by members of the monitoring group and a written report provided to the full SACRE.
- One SACRE meeting took place in a primary school. This allowed discussion of provision within that school. Additionally, several schools have been visited by members of the Monitoring Group to see collective worship practice in those schools.

### **2.3 Meeting Training Needs**

- Support for schools continues to be provided through the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Hampshire, Portsmouth, the Isle of Wight and Southampton. This includes advice on planning and teaching and learning for teachers. It is available for all schools here: [HIAS Religious Education Moodle \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://hants.gov.uk/religious-education). The Locally Agreed Syllabus is shared by a number of local authorities and therefore training and support continues to be advertised and available across LA's. For example, the annual Hampshire Cross-Phase RE conference was advertised to Portsmouth schools, and representatives from Portsmouth SACRE and schools attended. Secondary network meetings were also advertised to Portsmouth schools where Portsmouth specific networks currently do not occur.
- The Hampshire Inspector/Adviser for History and RE, along with the Hampshire Secondary Teaching and Learning Adviser continue to offer support and advice to schools in Portsmouth. This includes advertising events and training available within Portsmouth and more widely. The Head of School Improvement for Portsmouth also regularly shares relevant opportunities through newsletters sent to schools.
- While Academies are not required to follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus, several continue to do so, and these schools remain in contact with the Secondary Teaching and Learning Adviser for advice and support. SACRE remains committed to promoting the Locally Agreed Syllabus

- and the support offered through this to all schools in the area.
- SACRE's artefact loan collection continues to be available to schools and is maintained by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) and the Authority's dispatch team deliver/collect boxes for schools.
- Schools have been regularly updated and encouraged to utilise resources more broadly. For example, SACRE promotes the use of the RE Hubs website to support visits to places of worship and in identifying school speakers. Additionally, the Jerusalem Trust Grants, which offer schools up to £600 to support the teaching of Christianity has been widely advertised and taken up by a number of schools.

### **SECTION 3: COMPLAINTS ABOUT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

SACRE has received no formal complaints about religious education in the past year.

### **SECTION 4: STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Within Portsmouth advice is available to schools around Collective Worship (CW) through three forms:

- Hampshire's published advice on CW in schools (available from the Hampshire RE centre)
- The SACRE RE Adviser, and
- An annual collective worship course run by Hampshire County Council.

#### **Monitoring Collective Worship**

- Ofsted reports are considered as part of the work of the Monitoring Group, and this includes looking for references to collective worship. Collective worship has been mentioned in a small number of reports, and where this has occurred, the comments have been positive.
- As part of the monitoring activities undertaken by the Monitoring Group, a number of schools are being visited to view their collective worship. Two schools have so far been seen, and others are in the process of being organised. The visits undertaken so far have been positive with time for reflection and discussion around the themes introduced within the collective worship.
- Regular training and advice on collective worship continues to be available to schools.
- The SACRE Monitoring Group revised the SACRE guidance to schools on collective worship. This was presented to SACRE who requested some further revisions before approval which will occur in the following academic year.

## SECTION 5: COMPLAINTS

There have been no complaints about Collective Worship in schools.

## SECTION 6: DETERMINATIONS

No requests for determination have been submitted to SACRE and there are no current determinations for review.

## SECTION 7: LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

- The SACRE Advisor is a member of the AULRE executive and presented at the joint AULRE/AREIAC conference on the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- SACRE members have also attended the NASACRE virtual monthly training program which has helped maintain links with NASACRE.
- SACRE members have also visited schools as faith representatives.
- The SACRE Advisor has maintained good contacts with Winchester University Teacher Training departments, as the closest such institution and has delivered input on the Locally Agreed Syllabus to PGCE students.

### 7.1 Links with other Authorities and SACRES

- Portsmouth retains strong links with the Hampshire SACRE through members who are on both bodies and through the SACRE adviser and the Secondary RE Teaching and Learning Adviser.
- Portsmouth SACRE is also represented at the South-Central SACRE Hub meetings in Winchester.
- The SACRE Adviser has attended the NASACRE/RE Hubs meetings for SE SACRE chairs, vice chairs, advisors and LA officers and maintains strong links with Hampshire SACRE.

### 7.2 NASACRE

- Portsmouth SACRE is a member of NASACRE and NASACRE bulletins are regularly circulated to all SACRE members by the Clerk.
- SACRE members have attended a range of NASACRE training events during the year:

Provider	Date	Topic
NASACRE	21 <sup>st</sup> September 2024 (recording)	So you've joined your local SACRE
NASACRE	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	So you've joined your local SACRE

NASACRE	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2025	Calling all members of SACRE Group D – How to be an effective member of your SACRE?
NASACRE	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Being an effective SACRE Clerk
NASACRE	24 June 2025	'So, you've joined your local SACRE...'

## **SECTION 8: SACRE'S CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORTING SCHOOLS THROUGH EVENTS AND TRAINING**

- Primary network meetings for Portsmouth schools have continued to run. Three primary network meetings ran across this period and were well attended. One of these was in person and the other two online.
- A cross phase RE Conference took place in March 2025 in Hampshire with delegates from a range of Portsmouth primary and secondary schools in attendance. The conference offered a range of workshops to support teaching and learning with Living Difference IV including supporting pupils with SEND needs and subject knowledge enhancement.

## **SECTION 9: SACRE'S OWN ARRANGEMENTS**

- During this period SACRE has adopted a three-year action plan and reviewed and updated the code of conduct for members.

## **APPENDIX A - PORTSMOUTH SACRE MEMBERS 2024-2025**

### **Group A Representatives - One representative of each of the religions and other bodies listed in the constitution**

Baha'i Faith - Elizabeth Jenkerson (to January 2024)  
Baptist - Geoff Wheeler (reappointed March 2022)  
Buddhism - vacant position  
Evangelical Church - Pastor Chris Thomas (reappointed March 2022)  
Hinduism – vacant position  
Humanist UK - Barbara Spiegelhalter (reappointed June 2021)  
Humanist UK - Geoff Wade (nominated reserve representative reappointed June 2021)  
Islam - Sheikh Fazle Abbas Dato (reappointed June 2022)  
Islam - vacant position  
Methodist Church – Revd Ray Goddess (appointed March 2022)  
Judaism – Michael Zeffertt (appointed 2023)  
Quakers - Sarah Coote (reappointed March 2022)  
Roman Catholic – vacant position  
Sikh - Jaswant Singh-Digpal (appointed March 2021)  
The Assemblies of God - vacant position  
Salvation Army - Captain Sarah Ilsters (appointed November 2024)  
United Reformed Church - Christine McMillan (reappointed June 2022)

### **Group B Representatives - Church of England**

Sue Bowen (reappointed March 2022)  
Revd Sam Duddles (reappointed March 2022)  
Jane Kelly (reappointed March 2022)

### **Group C Representatives - Six teachers representing the various key stages and an association recognised by the Authority for the purposes of consultation and negotiation.**

Ella Harbut - Early Years Representative (appointed June 2024)  
Rachael Osborne - Primary Headteacher Representative (June 2022-June 2024)  
Zoe Killick - Primary Headteacher Representative (appointed June 2024)  
Fiona Kelly - Primary Teacher Representative (June 2023-June 2024)  
James Newsam - Primary Teacher Representative (appointed June 2024)  
Beth Smith – Secondary School Representative (appointed November 2022)  
Kari Laing - Post-16 Representative (reappointed March 2022, appointed Vice Chair March 2022)  
Helen Reeder - Teacher Liaison Panel (June 2022-June 2024)  
Trish Gumedde - Teachers Liaison Panel (appointed June 2024)

### **Group D Representatives - Four representatives of the Authority, at least two of whom shall be elected members of the Authority**

Taki Jaffer (reappointed June 2022)  
Councillor Benedict Swann (appointed June 2022)  
Councillor Asghar Shah (appointed June 2022)  
Councillor Abdul Kadir (appointed June 2022)

**Co-opted members**

Jessi Wilson - Council of Portsmouth Students representative

**Officers in Attendance:**

Debbie Anderson, Head of School Improvement

Chris May, Secondary Teaching and Learning Adviser, HIAS

Claire Campbell-Best, PCC Democratic Services

## **APPENDIX B: LIST OF ORGANISATIONS RECEIVING THIS REPORT**

Copies will be sent electronically to the following relevant bodies:

- Director of Children, Families and Education, Portsmouth City Council
- Deputy Director of Deputy Director of Children, Families and Education, Portsmouth City Council
- Cllr Nick Dorrington, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, Portsmouth City Council
- The Department for Education (Central Government)
- NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education)
- Headteachers and Governing Bodies of all Portsmouth Schools
- All members of SACRE
- The Anglican Diocese of Portsmouth
- The Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

This report will be available on the Local Authority and NASACRE websites for interested parties to download.