



Wandsworth

Chief Executive
Brian Reilly

Wandsworth Borough Council
Chief Executive's Group
The Town Hall Wandsworth High Street
London SW18 2PU

Date: 13th February 2025

For further information on this agenda, please contact the Democratic Services Officer: Ruth Wright on ruth.wright@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk, 020 8871 6038

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**MONDAY, 3RD MARCH, 2025 AT 7.30 P.M.
BALHAM SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH, 83
ELMFIELD ROAD, LONDON, SW17 8AD**

SACRE Membership:

Group A – Religious denominations other than the Church of England – namely Christian and other denominations, religions and world views which appropriately reflect the principal faith traditions and belief systems in Wandsworth:

Mr Dominique Joseph Clem (Seventh-day Adventist Church), Ms Sharon Coussins (Wimbledon Synagogue), Mr Nabhinandan Das (London Institute of Vedic Education (Hindu)), Ms Saffi Haines (Society of Friends), Rev. Rosamund Hollingsworth (the Methodist Church of Great Britain), Ms Lottie Holmes (Humanists UK), Mrs Maria Liddy (Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark), Ms Jyotika Pandya (Hindu Education Board UK), Imam Hamzah Patel (Balham Mosque and Tooting Islamic Centre), Mr Colin Perry (Buddhapadipa Temple), Mr Paul Phillips (Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is), Mr Usman Shazhad Butt (Ahmadiyya Muslim Association), Mr Charan Singh (Khalsa Centre Gurdwara) and Mr Harbans Singh Mehta (Khalsa Centre Gurdwara).

Group A Substitute: Ms Shanta Chellappoo-Phillips (Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is).

Group B – Church of England:

Rev. Susan Bolen, Mr Shaun Burns, Ms Rachel Croft and Miss Sharon Cunningham.

Group C – Teachers’ Associations:

Mrs Claire Beecher (NEU), Ms Clare Hewitson (NEU) and Ms Anna Madden (NAHT).

Group D – Local Authority:

Councillor Jo Rigby (Chair), Councillor Mrs Rosemary Birchall, Councillor Clare Fraser and Councillor Angela Graham.

Co-opted members: Ms Ruhena Bakhsh (Burntwood School), Ms Brigitte Sayers- (Shaftesbury Park Primary School).

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. Minutes - 30th September 2024

(Pages 5 - 24)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting of the SACRE held on 30th September 2024 and to consider any matters arising.

DfE letter referred to in the minutes included for information.

3. Membership

To receive a verbal update on the membership of the SACRE.

4. SACRE Annual Report 2023/24

(Pages 25 - 36)

To consider the SACRE Annual Report for 2023/24.

5. Faith Direct Feedback

(Pages 37 - 38)

To receive feedback on the event (attached).

6. Have Your Say- Interfaith Week Consultation Feedback

To receive verbal feedback on the consultation sessions.

7. SACRE reflection resources from NASACRE

Workshop session using NASACRE resources to consider the effectiveness of Wandsworth’s SACRE.

8. Future Meeting Dates

To note the forthcoming SACRE meetings scheduled for 2025-26:

- Monday 9th June 2025, location to be confirmed
- Monday 22nd September 2025, location to be confirmed
- Monday 9th March 2026, location to be confirmed

All meetings of the SACRE start at 7.30pm.

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Minutes of a meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education held at the Town Hall, Wandsworth, SW18 2PU on Monday, 30th September, 2024 at 7.30 p.m.

Group A – Christian and Other Religious Denominations:

Mr Dominique Joseph Clem (Seventh-day Adventist Church)
Ms Sharon Coussins (Wimbledon Synagogue)
Ms Saffi Haines (Society of Friends),
Dr Lottie Holmes (Humanists UK)
Mrs Maria Liddy (Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark),
Imam Hamzah Patel (Balham Mosque and Tooting Islamic Centre)
Mr Paul Phillips (Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is),
Mr Charan Singh (Khalsa Centre Gurdwara)
Mr Harbans Singh Mehta (Khalsa Centre Gurdwara).

Group B – Church of England:

Mr Shaun Burns (Southwark Diocesan Board of Education)
Miss Sharon Cunningham (Church of England representative)

Group C – Teachers' Associations:

Ms Clare Hewitson (NEU)
Ms Anna Madden (NAHT)

Group D – Local Authority:

Councillor Jo Rigby (Chair)

In attendance:

Mr Andy Hough, Assistant Director of School Participation and Performance
Mrs Angela Rundle, SACRE Officer
Mrs Ruth Wright, Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Rosemary Birchall
Rev. Susan Bolen (Church of England)
Ms Rachel Croft (Church of England)
Councillor Clare Fraser
Councillor Mrs Angela Graham
Rev. Rosamund Hollingsworth (the Methodist Church of Great Britain)
Imam Usman Shahzad Butt (Ahmadiyya Muslim Association)

2. Minutes - 4th March 2024

RESOLVED – it was unanimously agreed that the minutes of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education meeting held on 4th March 2024 were a correct record.

3. Membership

The new Chair, Councillor Rigby welcomed Dr Lottie Holmes from Humanists UK, who had taken over the position from Jon Fayle, and Imam Hamzah Patel from Balham Mosque and Tooting Islamic Centre, who had taken over from Imam Khubaeb Raja.

Mrs Wright commented that Ms Brigitte Sayers-Eugster (NASUWT) had left SACRE as she was no longer a member of the union. The Group D vacancy would be filled as soon as possible.

There were no questions or comments about membership.

Mrs Wright reminded members of the WhatsApp group as a supplemental communication to emails. If any member wished to be part of the group, they needed to email her with their mobile number.

4. Remembering Lesley Prior

Mr Burns and Ms Coussins led a short remembrance for Ms Prior, who had been a member of Wandsworth's and 10 other SACREs and NASACRE (National Association of SACREs). They spoke of her friendship, achievements and passion for RE to be taught well in schools. Ms Prior had been filmed by the BBC teaching a class of children many years beforehand and a copy of it was shown at her funeral. She had provided a lasting teacher training legacy through her work at Roehampton University. Ms Prior's passing was a loss to the RE and teaching community and many others.

5. Monitoring Religious Education in schools: annual review of Ofsted reports and presentation on a 'deep dive'

Mrs Rundle opened the discussion on the published 2023/24 Ofsted reports provided. She added that no 'deep dive' had occurred the previous year and due to changes within the Ofsted Section 8 framework, they would be less likely in future, as all foundation subjects would be reviewed in less depth.

Ms Charlene Folkes from Granard Primary School spoke about what a 'deep dive' looked like in her school in 2022/23. She used a PowerPoint presentation (a copy of which is attached to these minutes).

Ms Folkes explained that before the inspection was called, she had started an action plan at Granard Primary School to raise the profile of the subject. The plan included changing the subject from being taught fortnightly to weekly, having its own exercise books and being taught from Year 1 to 6 within mixed ability groups. She added that work was underway to increase RE provision in their resource base. Teachers attended annual training on the action plan, to help them enjoy and develop knowledge with the children. The teachers valued the training support and continuing professional development (CPD) provided by Ms Folkes and through the RE Subject Leaders network managed by Mrs Rundle.

Ms Folkes outlined that at the start of a new topic a single-page factsheet was shared with parents/carers. All lessons followed a consistent approach, using the 'KWL' model, looking at what the children know (K), want to know (W) and learnt (L). Lessons started with a recap, included consolidation using differentiated learning, and ended in an informal assessment. Ms Folkes advocated the use of the Learning Resource Centre for artifacts and other resources to enliven lessons. Lessons progressed through the year groups from more discussion based work, for example on festivals in younger classes, to more writing based tasks and comparison work between faiths and world views in classes with older pupils. Work was tracked and monitored using a progression map. Some parents/carers supported lessons by sharing first-hand experiences. Parents/carers could view the progression through the subject on the school's website.

As a result of the engagement with families, and children seeing what fun their peers were having in class, the number of children being withdrawn from RE had fallen.

Ms Folkes stated that her headteacher specifically asked the inspectors to conduct a 'deep dive' into RE when they visited, because of the amount of work that had been done to raise its profile and progress made. During the 'deep dive', the inspectors viewed the action plan and the activities listed above. They viewed samples of books, planning documents, children's work, lessons and teacher assessments.

Ms Folkes advised that having an open-minded headteacher and teacher engagement was crucial, together with the structure of the action plan, continuity and progress monitoring, all of which involves a lot of work. Ms Folkes added that she had shared her presentation within a RE Subject Leaders meeting the previous year. Ms Folkes was thanked for her work and the presentation.

RESOLVED – details noted for information.

6. School faith inspection reports

Mrs Rundle advised that the two-day faith inspections had resumed during 2023/24, following a pause during and after the pandemic, and were in addition to Ofsted. The scheduling meant that some schools would have seven years between inspections, rather than the usual five. It was therefore expected that more inspections would take place in the current academic year, not just for the Christian schools, but also Islamic and Jewish schools, which had their own inspectorate.

Members were provided with the latest Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) report for Saint Cecilia's Church of England School and the Catholic Schools Inspectorate (CSI) report for St Boniface RC Primary School. The reports were good and showed the range of ways in which faith was covered within the schools.

RESOLVED – details noted for information.

7. 'Deep and meaningful? The religious education subject report'

Mrs Rundle explained that the report was based on 'deep dives' at 25 primary and 25 secondary schools, so was a small sample. However, the selected schools were a cross section, with a mix of size, rural and urban, large and small numbers of children receiving Pupil Premium.

Similar issues were raised in other reports discussed, that there was a lack of subject knowledge in some schools, and some did not have a regular scheduled slot for RE. There remained a lack of professional development in schools. Lessons require progression, substance, depth and diversity to be good. It was recognised that especially in London it was difficult to ensure that all the main faiths and denominations were taught in some depth, as they were numerous. Therefore, a balanced subject curriculum was required.

Concern was raised that secondary schools sometimes taught RE according to exam requirements, so missed local connections and depth. Meaningful assessments were found to be missing in some schools, which hindered children's progress.

RE teacher recruitment was at an all-time low in secondary schools, and there was a further lack of enthusiastic teachers in all years.

One recommendation in the report was that RE should be taught as a specific subject, with its own curriculum, progression and consolidation. It could then be bespoke to be appropriate for the local area.

Mrs Rundle lamented that the report was not positive reading. She added that RE could not be taught sporadically or on one day per term, as it meant that children would miss out if absent and no depth and progression could be achieved. She advised that there should be an urgent update of the RE expectations. The DfE needed to undertake a 'root and branch' assessment with joined-up thinking and apply consequences and sanctions where RE was not taught.

As part of discussions within items 5, 6 and 7 similar themes were raised, as it was highlighted that good RE provision in schools was not always apparent, despite the requirement that the subject is taught in all state schools up to Year 13. In some schools no RE was taught. Mr Burns and Ms Coussins added that there were large numbers of RE teaching vacancies in London. The situation was not helped by the fact that postgraduate studies in the subject were no longer taught in Roehampton University and there were only four students at St Mary's University. It was thought that Ofsted's policy to move away from one-word judgements may assist in providing a fuller picture of a school, including RE teaching.

The riots in Summer 2024 showed that misinformation, misunderstanding and intolerance existed in the UK. Members agreed that good RE teaching, incorporating world views, and community understanding that comes through it, was needed for society cohesion. Mr Philips stated that Sir Stephen Timms had said in a lecture that the Labour government wanted to work with faith organisations on its programme of national renewal, as no other networks could

match the presence of faith communities. He shared a link to an article about the lecture:

<https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/news/sir-stephen-timms-lecture-faiths-place-in-labours-mission-of-national-renewal/>

The Chair suggested that a letter be sent by her on behalf of SACRE and with the Leader of the Council, the Executive Director of Children's Services and hopefully the local MPs to the DfE to voice the concerns raised. The timing was pertinent because of the recent reports, summer riots, there being a new government in place and the changing Ofsted framework. Matters for inclusion comprised:

- urgent need for RE expectations in school to be updated;
- the need for checks and consequences/sanctions against schools (including academies) that did not teach RE as a distinct subject or one that incorporates it (e.g. 'philosophy and ethics');
- the need to boost specialist RE teacher numbers and support;
- highlight the need for RE to be taught in schools for the benefit of society;

Members were asked to email Mrs Wright with a few lines that they wanted to be included in the letter. The Chair and Mrs Rundle would then craft the letter over the subsequent week. The deadline given to members to provide wording was 15th October.

8. Religious Education Council of England and Wales Handbook

Mrs Rundle advised that there was a similar theme to those mentioned previously in the meeting for non-faith schools. The Handbook was the result of a three-year project.

The Handbook provided suggestions for new syllabuses to include world views. Mrs Rundle informed members that a unit on world views had been written into the latest Wandsworth syllabus, which was an updated version of the previous one. A new approach using the ideas from the handbook would inform the next syllabus.

When asked how many schools used the Wandsworth syllabus, Mrs Rundle replied that about half of the community schools had responded to the questionnaire sent with the last syllabus and said they did. She reminded members that faith schools and academies were not required to follow the local syllabus but were encouraged to do so. Mrs Rundle added that about half of the school RE lead teachers attended the RE Leaders Group meetings, and that included some faith school representatives.

RESOLVED – details noted for information.

9. National content standard for Religious Education and FAQs

Mrs Rundle advised that the shared document included some of the same messages as the handbook. It intended to inject rigour into the RE syllabus, in

the way that National Curriculum subjects enjoy and to establish a benchmark for high quality in the subject. There were no questions about the content.

RESOLVED – details noted for information.

10. Wandsworth London Borough of Culture - 2025

The Chair relayed that she had spoken with Councillor Akinola (Deputy Leader) about the Council's vision for the celebrations and that faith communities would be a key element of it to incorporate diversity and differing cultures. She added that there were no specifications as to what would take place, so it was an open discussion.

Members suggested:

- music and dance could be celebrated within a concert;
- a family faith trail/open house event to visit various places of worship and maybe include the Town Hall where there was no place of worship (e.g. for the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is and Humanists UK. The trail could be organised in a similar way to the school's Faith Trail;
- 'open door' weekend/summer or half-term holiday events, where places of worship and Town Hall could be open for people to visit and be given token to collect using a QR code;
- schools invited to events in places of worship.

Further ideas and considerations linked to the above included:

- having children's stories available via written work, pictures etc. via a QR code at the connected place of worship;
- avoid having a faith trail/open house on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday only, as it would limit the places available because of their holy days.

Mr Philips commented that he had worked with Lewisham Council when Lewisham was the London Borough of Culture, and offered to provide details of what he was involved in there with the Chair.

The Chair asked that members email her as soon as possible with ideas for the London Borough of Culture, which she would discuss with Councillor Akinola.

11. Faith Trails update

Mrs Rundle stated that there had been 27 trails for primary school children over the last three years. She thanked the host places of worship, faith leaders and volunteers for their input. She added that feedback from schools and faith representatives was positive.

Balham Baptist Church had hosted for the first time this year and enjoyed the experience. Mr Philips mentioned that he was working with Rev. Bolen at St Paul's Wimbledon Parkside as a joint host on a trail.

Members enthused that the trails were invaluable and covered a range of faiths within a neighbourhood. As such, it provided pupils with a better understanding

of faiths and places of worship, where they could see the similarities as well as differences between faiths and their own world view/faith. The result was increased religious literacy and understanding for the children and their families. Furthermore, it showed that places of worship were welcoming and positive places to visit.

One member suggested that schools use 'All are welcome' book by Alexandra Penfold, as it celebrated diversity and faith groups in the school community.

RESOLVED – details noted for information.

12. Faith Direct update

Mrs Rundle explained that Faith Direct was geared towards Key Stage 4 students, but other secondary school year groups could attend. The event would be in Interfaith Week on 13th November in the Town Hall Civic Suite, 1.30pm to 4.30pm, with lunch provided beforehand for the faith leaders and representatives. The Leader of the Council would be opening the event and the Mayor closing it. It would be the first time that Faith Direct would be held since the pandemic. At the time of the meeting, two schools had confirmed attendance and Mrs Rundle was chasing others.

There would be ten tables for ten different faiths and denominations. The accompanying information booklet would be updated by faith leaders beforehand. Ms Coussins advised members who were participating to bring artifacts to show and items the children could take away, as they would be well received.

RESOLVED – details noted for information.

13. NASACRE training and resources

Mrs Wright had previously sent a link to members regarding the virtual NASACRE courses and asked that members email her if they wished to attend as they won't be charged. She highlighted one forthcoming course, especially relevant given the agenda:

'15th October 2024, 7-8pm: How can SACREs make strategic use of the Deep and Meaningful Ofsted RE Report (May 2024) in their work?'

Led by Bill Moore and Claire Clinton

Hazel Henson from Ofsted will be attending the session

Description: This session will help SACREs to understand how to use the Ofsted report in their work with LAs and schools to support high quality RE in schools.'

RESOLVED – details noted for information.

14. NASACRE conference talk: '35+ things a good SACRE can do!'

Mrs Rundle highlighted some of the suggestions raised that were already being undertaken by Wandsworth SACRE in some form. For example, arts competitions, exhibitions, meeting at different places of worship and monitoring RE in schools and their websites. She added that involvement in the London Borough of Culture would cover some too and/or enhance what was already in place. It was understood that some points were outside the control of SACRE, for example tackling teacher shortages. However, that and lobbying the Government for action on RE was discussed earlier in the meeting as an action point. The Chair indicated that the Council's 1000 new homes policy may help with teacher recruitment and retention, as it sought to provide affordable homes.

Any further suggestions about how to cover the areas raised within the paper would be welcomed.

15. Future meeting dates

RESOLVED – the next scheduled meeting date was noted as being on:

- Monday 3rd March 2025 at Balham Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Further dates would be shared once confirmed.

16. AOB

How faith groups can help promote vaccination programmes across the borough
Mrs Wright explained that colleagues in Public Health had asked that this item be raised with members, to ascertain views and advise about how faith communities could support vaccination programmes. Leaflets regarding measles immunisation were available after the meeting in English and several other languages for members to pass on.

Members said that electronic versions of the leaflets would be helpful to share with their community via email or WhatsApp. Spanish leaflets were said to be useful for refugees supported within one community.

Mrs Wright offered to receive emails from members to pass on where they wanted to hold a conversation with Public Health and would relay feedback from the meeting. On the request of Public Health, a slight change to the above was communicated by email to members, that any recommendations/advice/questions regarding a member's organisation could be sent to the generic team email address:
healthprotection@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk.

Review copies of the 'Caring For The World We Love' project book

Ms Haines advised members that the Society of Friends had a 'Loving Earth' project, whereby schools could apply to take part in making non-faith specific tapestry panels which would be displayed to the public. She added that copies of

the accompanying 'Loving Earth' book could be obtained through her. [More details were provided after the meeting:

The aim of the Loving Earth Project (<https://lovingearth-project.uk/>) is to help people engage with the environmental challenges the world faces, without being overwhelmed, and inspired by love. Textile panels and accompanying text, illustrating something the maker loves and what they are going to do to help, have been made by people in many different communities, around Britain and in a dozen other countries. Many have been made by children. The Quaker Art Network have found that it has helped children to not only to understand some of the issues better, but also that taking action themselves has helped reduce their climate anxiety.

The book, Caring for the World We Love, is a good introduction to the project for people of all ages. It can be used as a group or classroom resource, as well as for reading alone, and has links to the Loving Earth Project's website where a lot more information can be found. It is one of four publications produced by the Quaker Arts Network based on the project .

For a review copy, please contact Ms Haines. Some books are on offer to schools, public libraries, community groups, and educational establishments across Wandsworth and provide a non-denominational approach to caring for our world.

Interfaith feast

Mr Philips invited members to a forthcoming interfaith feast held by the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is. He added that details would follow and be shared with members.

The meeting ended at 9.30 p.m.

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RE Deep Dive with Ofsted

Monday 30th September 2024
Charlene Folkes

Role of the RE Subject Lead

Length of time leading the subject.

What RE was like before.

What subject leader plans were for the subject.

Schools vision for RE.

The 3Is: intent, implementation and impact

- ▶ Intent – a broad RE curriculum which looks at a range of religions
- ▶ Implementation – weekly lessons with clear structure set by RE lead and followed across the school from year 1 – year 6
- ▶ Impact - to ensure RE is enjoyed by all, to observe different ways of life for specific religious cultures, to develop knowledge of different religious practices and to prepare children for our diverse society.

What does a typical RE lesson look like?

- All classes from year 1 to year 6 using slides made by RE lead to ensure consistency.
- Slides contain KWL chart, recap slide, key vocabulary for current lesson, LO, resources to support teaching, questions, differentiated tasks and SC.
- A range of artefacts, videos and additional resources to support the teaching and learning. (Ordered in advance via Wandsworth LRC)
- AFL - to enable teachers to assess progress and inform future planning.
- End topic will have an exit lesson / recap on previous learning, a quiz and compare and contrast sheet is completed.

What progress looks like in RE.

- RE progression map in place for all year groups
- Teachers use this to plan, teach and assess.
- Showed a range of RE books from across different year groups and we looked at the content and quality of work, which was the best evidence to show progression
- Children lower down the school talk about religions and festivals
- Children further up the school discuss religions and festivals in detail. They compare religions and compare experiences to their own beliefs.

Progression Map
Key Knowledge, Skills and Understanding – 2023 - 2024

	A01 – Learning about religion			A02 – Learning from religion		
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1 celebrate?	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 1	Talk about different communities that people belong to. AO1	Talk about why places of worship are important in religions. AO1	Talk about why celebrations are important. AO2	Talk about religious rituals and ceremonies and the meaning of them. AO2	Talk about and can retell some religious stories. AO2	Identify and talk about things that are important in their lives. AO2
Year 2	Explain why we have rules and compare different rules and routines in some religions. AO2	Explain and compare what light can symbolise in different religions. AO2	Compare what is important to them and other people. AO2	Explain and compare some religious practices and explain why they are important. AO1	Talk about things that happen to them and ask important questions about life and death. AO2	Explore how beginnings and endings are marked in special ways in different religions and their own lives. AO2
Year 3	Describe the key beliefs of a religion. AO1	Describe key teachings and refer to religious figures. AO1	Describe some sacred texts and explain how the teachings in them may influence religious believers. AO1 / AO2	Identify and explain religious symbolism. Suggest why religious leaders and followers have acted the way they have. AO1/ AO2	Describe some religious sources and practices and how these influence religious believers. AO2	Describe key teachings and beliefs. AO1
Year 4	Explain the key beliefs of a religion. AO1	Make suggestions about why religious and non-religious leaders and followers have acted the way they have. AO2	Describe some religious sources and explain how these affect religious groups. AO2	Identify and describe religious artefacts and how they are involved in practices and rituals. AO1	Explain religious ceremonies and rituals and their importance for people's lives and sense of belonging. AO2	Identify religious symbolism in different forms of art and communication. AO2
Year 5	Describe their ideas about how beliefs and practices influence individuals. AO2	Explain how religious beliefs can shape the lives of individuals and contribute to society. AO2	Describe the importance of religious artefacts, leaders and stories. AO2	Recognise and explain how some teachings and beliefs are shared between religions. AO1 / AO2	Understand how sacred books, scriptures, symbols, art and reading convey meaning. AO2	Recognise and explain how some teachings and beliefs are shared between religions. AO1 Express their own values while respecting the values of others. AO2
Year 6	Explain practices and lifestyles associated with belonging to a non-religious community. AO1	Explain their own opinions about tricky concepts and questions that have no universally agreed answers. AO2	Explain how religion plays an important role in the lives of some people. AO2	Explain their own opinions about tricky concepts and questions that have no universally agreed answers. AO2	Explain what is wrong and right and use examples to explain how different people's beliefs can affect how they behave. AO2	Recognise and explain how some teachings and beliefs are shared between religions. AO1 Express their own values while respecting the values of others. AO2

How do you ensure all pupils including those with SEN or those who are underachieving make progress?

- Use of OAP to support SEN and underachieving pupils.
- Differentiated or simplified tasks
- Mixed ability groups
- Pre-teaching – key knowledge and images sent home prior to learning new concepts.
- All lessons recap on previous learning.
- Celebrate pupil's success!

The inspectors wanted to know how teachers planned RE lessons.

- Showed our RE curriculum overview.
- Wandsworth's Agreed Syllabus, which is adapted by myself and the class teachers input in to ensure all pupils can access the learning and to ensure there is a variety of learning styles to make lessons more engaging and fun. E.g: posters, interviews, group discussions, comic strips and writing tasks.
- Showed planning format which detail the structure of the lessons. Smart notebooks help teachers to keep the same structure.

The inspectors wanted to know what training is in place for the subject lead and how RE CPD is delivered across the school.

- RE CPD organised by Wandsworth.
- Every September - all subject leads must deliver a brief inset on their subject, the 3I's and subject expectations.
- Subject leads will send out questionnaires to teachers to ask what training and support they would. This is taken to account when delivering training.
- Any RE CPD training attended, is shared with staff in staff meetings.

Folder shown to inspectors.

- RE curriculum action plan
- Summary of RE at Granard – The Three I's.
- Website statement
- RE curriculum map
- RE progression map
- Samples of RE planning
- RE monitoring
- RE CPD & training



Wandsworth Council

Children's Services

The Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street,
London SW18 2PU

Please ask for/reply to: Angela Rundle

Telephone: 020 8871 8856

Email:

angela.rundle@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Right Honourable Bridget Phillipson MP
Secretary of State for Education
And
Susan Acland-Hood
Permanent Secretary at the
Department for Education, DfE

Date: 29 January 2025

Dear Bridget Phillipson and Susan Acland-Hood,

'Deep and meaningful? The religious education subject report', response from Wandsworth Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

At our autumn SACRE meeting, we discussed Ofsted's 'Deep and meaningful? The religious education subject report'. We had concerns in a number of areas:

- There are a large number of teaching vacancies for religious education (RE) in London schools. This subject needs to be taught by specialists and so it is vital to attract new graduates into RE. This could be done through any of the graduate routes into teaching at secondary schools. To help attract good graduates, more appealing bursaries for trainees should be offered. There are currently no students studying RE at Roehampton University this year and only four at St Mary's, Twickenham.
- We feel that there is an urgent need for the RE expectations in schools to be updated. There should be checks and consequences for schools (including academies) that do not teach RE as a distinct subject or one that fully incorporates it, such as philosophy and ethics. We hope that Ofsted's plan to move away from one-word judgements may assist in providing a fuller picture of a school, including RE teaching. We noted that of the 27 inspections carried out in Wandsworth's schools in 2023-24, RE was mentioned (a one-line comment) in only three schools; it was the same number for the 33 inspections of 2022-23. The only deep dive was during this year, where the school asked for it.
- The riots in Summer 2024 showed that misinformation, misunderstanding and intolerance existed in the UK. Members of SACRE agreed that good RE teaching, incorporating world views, and the community understanding that comes through it, was needed for society cohesion. We welcomed the sentiments expressed by Sir Stephen Timms in his Religion Media Centre Lecture on 19 September 2024 "Faith's Place in our national renewal", in which he stated that the Labour government wanted to work with faith organisations on its programme of national renewal, as "no other networks could match the presence of faith communities". He also noted that the Department for Education had missed its target for employing secondary RE teachers during nine of the past 10 years. "We need a new impetus on that" he said. "People need to be properly equipped to teach RE."

We are pleased to include that we have the support of our local MPs, Fleur Anderson (Putney) and Marsha De Cordova (Battersea).

We seek reassurances that you will take his concerns seriously and that RE will at last be given the status it deserves.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Jo Rigby, Wandsworth SACRE Chair
Councillor Kate Stock, Cabinet member for Children's Services

Wandsworth Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Annual Report for the academic year September 2023- August 2024

1. Introduction

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Chair's welcome

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this report for the 2023-24 academic year as the new Chair of Wandsworth SACRE. We had two meetings during the year, one of which was at the Town Hall and one hosted at one of our places of worship, where we enjoyed a presentation and tour of the Khalsa Centre, Sikh gurdwara.

We welcomed new members this year – in Group A: Dr Lottie Holmes (Humanists UK) and Imam Hamzah Patel (Balham Mosque and Tooting Islamic Centre) and in Group D, Councillor Clare Fraser and myself.

We also said goodbye to some members this year – Mr Jon Fayle ((Humanists UK), Imam Khubaeb Raja (Balham Mosque and Tooting Islamic Centre), Ms Brigitte Sayers-Eugster (NASUWT) and Councillors Sana Jafri and Denise Paul. We were very sad to hear of the death of Lesley Prior, who had been a very valued adviser to our SACRE for a number of years. She will be much missed by us, as well as to the wider RE community.

Wandsworth SACRE has continued with its work to ensure that all pupils in our schools develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally as well as academically. We participated in the NASACRE AGM and continue to follow with interest developments in RE nationally; for example, we looked to see what comments Ofsted made about RE in its annual report and assessed how the Wandsworth syllabus can encourage a Worldviews approach, following on from a revisit to the 2018 CoRE report on 2018 Religion and Worldviews.

Our SACRE actively seeks to ensure all children in Wandsworth have access to high quality and challenging RE and we provide support to primary RE subject leaders through the teachers' network meetings. These are free of charge to maintained schools and we urge school leaders to recognise the importance of

allocating school time for staff to attend. We also produce a termly newsletter which signposts resources, draws attention to issues of interest in the RE world and highlights forthcoming festivals among other features.

Pupils' learning in RE has continued to be enhanced by the Faith Trails which have allowed our children to experience exciting learning opportunities while promoting an ethos of respect for others. We are very grateful to our Group A members who have facilitated these. The trails have built on pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures and beliefs while also celebrating the religious and cultural diversity found in Wandsworth.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to members of Wandsworth SACRE and all others who work so hard to support RE in Wandsworth.

Councillor Jo Rigby
Chair, Wandsworth SACRE

Overview

1. This annual report of Wandsworth SACRE outlines the work of SACRE during the academic year 2023 to 2024. The GCSE and A-level statistics for Religious Studies for the past year are provided as an appendix to this report, with thanks to the Wandsworth Research and Evaluation Unit, which provides this information.

Meetings held in the reporting year

2. Wandsworth SACRE met on two occasions during the academic year 2023 – 2024. The scheduled meeting for the summer term was cancelled due to the proximity of the date to the general election and the agenda items carried over to the next meeting in the autumn. Meetings were held in the evenings. One meeting was held at the Town Hall and one at a place of worship; this was at the Khalsa Centre, Sikh Gurdwara in Tooting and preceded by a tour and presentation by a member of SACRE and priests at the gurdwara.

Attendance was generally good, and no meetings were inquorate. New members were welcomed, as listed above. There were five resignations and four new members, with there being one vacancy for a teacher member. The Chair of SACRE resigned due to becoming Mayor of Wandsworth and Councillor Rigby became the new SACRE Chair.

3. The NASACRE briefing is a standing item at all SACRE meetings.

Autumn Term Meeting 2023

4. Meeting held on Monday, 2nd October 2023.

The Ofsted monitoring report prepared by the Local Authority's (LA) SACRE Officer was presented for discussion. This made an analysis of any comments on Religious Education (RE) or spiritual, social, moral and cultural development (SMSC) that were found in the Ofsted reports from Wandsworth schools inspected in the academic year 2022-2023. No schools had a deep dive in RE.

The CoRE report of 2018 - 'Religion and world views: the way forward, a national approach for RE' had been provided for a discussion on the current situation in Wandsworth.

A vote was taken to approve the co-opted member for Humanism as a full member of Group A.

NASACRE's training plan, which enabled all members to attend any training provided by NASACRE free of charge, was shared with the group and members encouraged to sign up for any sessions in which they had a particular interest.

Spring Term Meeting 2024

5. Meeting held on Monday, 4th March, 2024.

The SACRE Annual Report for 2022-23 was presented and discussed. While the NASACRE template for the report was used, it was very similar to the format that had been used by the LA in previous years. There was some discussion on Wandsworth schools' Religious Studies (RS) GCSE and A-Level results, which were better than the national average at GCSE, with some very good individual school results.

The Ofsted annual report was discussed, and SACRE members agreed that it gave cause for concern in relation to the status of RE. Few of Ofsted's school inspection reports nationally gave any information on RE, which was also the case for the reports on Wandsworth's schools.

Information on RE Hubs was shared. Extending current school interfaith initiatives such as the Faith Trails were considered and it was decided to relaunch the secondary school Faith Direct event later in the year.

Summer Term Meeting - cancelled

2. Religious Education

Syllabus

The current Wandsworth Locally Agreed Syllabus (LAS) was originally launched in September 2017. Due to the new directions in RE relating to

Worldviews and forthcoming commissions for exemplar syllabi, it was updated and extended rather than replaced. The revised document was approved in February 2023 and continues to be in use.

Monitoring and standards

Standards in RE in secondary schools were monitored by scrutinising the exam data from GCSEs and A level. See appendix.

A trawl was also made of Ofsted reports to look for references to RE and SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development). This was done and reported upon in the first meeting of the new academic year, October 2023. Section 48 reports are also sent to SACRE. There were just two in the last year, one by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate (CSI) of a primary school and one SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection of a secondary school.

Continuing professional development

The primary RE subject leaders' network met once in each term at Wandsworth's Professional Development Centre. The foci for meetings in the last year were:

- A presentation and discussion on Humanism from a representative of Humanists UK followed by a teacher sharing her school's deep dive experience
- Talks and discussions from Wandsworth SACRE's Sikh representatives followed by a session on assessment
- Implications from Ofsted's Deep and meaningful report before a session on progression in the RE curriculum

Other support for schools

The email network group set up by the LA SACRE Officer continued to enable members to keep in touch with each other to seek advice and share good practice. It includes some subject leaders from independent schools as well as LA community schools.

The LA SACRE Officer produced a termly newsletter which had a calendar of events including major faith festivals, signposted good practice and shared resources.

SACRE produced guidance for schools on Ramadan, which is updated annually (see appendix).

No complaints about religious education in schools were referred to SACRE this year.

3. Collective Worship

No monitoring of collective worship, either of quality or compliance to statutory requirements, took place during the year. No requests for determinations were received during the year. No schools in Wandsworth have been given determinations in the past.

No complaints regarding collective worship in the community schools of Wandsworth were referred to SACRE during the year. SACRE produced guidance for schools on collective worship (see appendix).

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

There were two FOI requests during the past year; one about actions taken arising from SACRE annual reports and the other whether there had been any withdrawals from Christian worship. Both were responded to within the requisite time frame.

4. Links with other bodies

Wandsworth SACRE is affiliated to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

Close links were maintained with Wandsworth's Voluntary Sector Development Manager, one of whose briefs was to connect and support faith groups across the borough. She provided relevant information to SACRE meetings and was active in promoting multi faith/cultural events.

There are good links with the Church of England Diocese of Southwark and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark, whose advisers to Wandsworth's VA schools are much valued by the schools themselves and the School Improvement Service.

5. Other SACRE local involvement

The Faith Trails for Year 5 and 6 pupils in primary schools, a SACRE initiative which began in the 2021-22 academic year, grew and flourished during the last year, and were referred to in the Chair's opening remarks. Some Group A members were very helpful in facilitating these. There are now four trails in operation, covering different areas of the borough – Wimbledon Parkside, Southfields, Balham and Tooting.

16 different schools have now taken part on 27 trail occasions, with some of these schools making this a part of their regular curriculum offer in RE. Evaluations from hosts and schools were extremely positive and pupils' work from the visits of a high standard, showing much thought and perception.

6. SACRE's Administrative Arrangements and Financial Support

SACRE meetings are clerked by a Democratic Services Officer from Wandsworth Council. An officer is provided to support the LA.

The annual budget for support for SACRE in 2023-24 was £6000, the same as in 2022-23. This funded the LA SACRE Officer, NASACRE membership, the annual conference and other incidental expenses. Wandsworth Town Hall provided a room for meetings, but it has now been established that at least one meeting a year is held at a place of worship. As noted, this year, one meeting was at the Town Hall and one at the Gurdwara.

Membership

While some members had been in place for a number of years, there is always some movement in the membership, but vacancies were quickly addressed. There were no inquorate meetings in the past year.

Group A contains representatives of all the major faiths and some denominations or branches within them, and two nominated deputies for some faiths. The Humanist member gained full membership during this reporting year.

Training

The LA Officer attended the NASACRE conference in 2024. SACRE is also happy to fund a certain amount of training for members and signed up to NASACRE's training package.

7. Appendices

Tables of exam results for the year 23-24

CPD provided for schools – see above

SACRE has provided advice for schools on Collective Worship -

[wandsworth_sacre_guidance_on_collective_worship.pdf](#)

and on Ramadan

https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/media/10197/sacre_ramadan_guidance.pdf
(updated annually)

In addition to the DfE and NASACRE, the report is circulated to SACRE members and schools.

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SACRE - MARCH 2025

STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES EXAMINATIONS IN 2024

- **Introduction**

This paper summarises the Wandsworth and England results for 2024 Religious Studies GCSE and A Level examinations. It provides more detailed data for Wandsworth down to school level.

This is provided for information and discussion.

- **Summary of national data**

Outcomes are still provisional to date (software to be updated with final data in April). Headline figures are as follows:

The key outcomes for Religious Education in England at KS4 and KS5 in 2024

- There were 224,925 entries for the full course in GCSE Religious Studies (RS), a significant increase from 2023 (193,610).
- 2023 had itself seen a significant increase from 2022.
- There was no data available for entries for the short course in GCSE RS.
- The percentage of grades 9-4 dropped from 72.2 in 2023 to 72 in 2024.
- The points average rose slightly from 5.0 in 2023 to 5.1 in 2024.
- There were 14,477 entries at A level, continuing a downward trend since 2018 (14,720 in 2023, 16,660 in 2018).
- Percentages of A*- B dropped from 55.4 in 2023 to 54.5 in 2024. A - E remained constant at 97.6

- **Summary of Wandsworth data**

- 1,038 students sat a Religious Studies (RS) examination in Wandsworth in 2024, very similar to the numbers in 2023 (1,029).
- 949 students sat the GCSE full course (939 in 2023), but none the short course.
- As for previous years, the number of students in the cohort has been included in the data, which shows the wide variation in the percentage of a cohort opting for RS. There was again a great divergence between schools in this: St Cecilia's, Ark Bolingbroke and Graveney entered almost all their students; Chestnut Grove and St John Bosco, the vast majority; Ashcroft about half and Burntwood a third.
- The lowest proportion was at Harris Battersea, where it was about a fifth of the cohort but this was more than last year.
- Ark Putney and Ernest Bevin again entered no students as it was not offered as a GCSE option for this year, but it is now an option for the future. Southfields also did not enter any students this year; it has been an option in the past but is not currently being offered.
- It is not surprising that church schools enter more pupils, as RS is entitled to a defined amount of curriculum time, 10% in Catholic schools.
- The points score averages for Ark Bolingbroke, Ashcroft and Graveney were all above the LA average, Ashcroft and Ark Bolingbroke significantly so; Burntwood and St John Bosco perceptibly below. Ark Bolingbroke had made an improvement of 1.2 from 2023. While Harris was just below the LA average by 0.2, it had made a great improvement of 0.8 from last year; from 4.7 to 5.5, comfortably above the national average. The LA average of 5.7 was the same as last year, much higher than the national average of 5.1.
- The highest average points (6.7) were earned at Ashcroft, the lowest at St John Bosco (4.9) Only St John Bosco was below the national average.
- Overall the indicator of grades 9 - 4 showed that Wandsworth was again above the national average – 79.8% compared with 72% national, though just below the LA 2023 9 - 4 average of 80.6%.
- In Wandsworth there were 87 entrants for A Level, down from 97 in 2023. Except for two, all passed with at least an E grade.
- There were just two entrants for AS level, one from Graveney and one from Ashcroft.
- At A level, the percentage A* - B comparator in Wandsworth dropped to 35.6%, down from the 45.4% of 2023. This was also well below the national comparator of 54.5%. Well above the national were Ashcroft at 83.3% (6 students) and above the LA comparator, St John Bosco (nine students) at 44.4%.
- At A* - E, Wandsworth (97.7%) was only slightly below the average of 2023 (97.9%). The national average remained constant from 2023 at 97.6%.

Report to SACRE on Religious Studies examination results 2024

Subject: Religious Studies (4610)
Qual: GCSE Full Course

Centre	Entries/NOR				% 9 - 4				Average points			
	2019	2022	2023	2024	2019	2022	2023	2024	2019	2022	2023	2024
NCER National	207720	144010	193610	224945	72.4	75.3	72.2	72	5.2	5.3	5	5.1
LA Comparator	804	952	939	949	78.9	85	80.6	79.8	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.7
Ark Bolingbroke Academy	45/111	28/104	29/112	19/115	82.2	79	79.3	89.5	5.6	5.5	5.4	6.6
Ashcroft Technology Academy	98/199	97/203	108/209	111/235	91.8	96	91.7	85.6	6.1	6.5	6.7	6.7
Harris Battersea	23/115	33/166	23/174	34/165	91.3	88	73.9	79.5	6.4	6.2	4.7	5.5
Burntwood	60/264	86/261	104/280	82/253	80	91	81.7	70.7	6	6.2	5.5	5.1
Chestnut Grove	131/163	157/175	150/171	153/172	76.3	91	84	79.7	5.6	6.2	5.8	5.4
Ark Putney	0	0/118	0	0								
Ernest Bevin	6/175	13/164	0	0	83.3	100			6.5	5.8		
Graveney School	245/255	269/281	265/277	272/280	84.1	89	84.9	86.4	6.1	6.3	6	6.2
Saint John Bosco	37/45	121/130	115/133	125/137	83.8	73	73.9	72.8	5.8	4.9	5.4	4.9
Southfields	26/164	0/145	0		50				3.7			
Saint Cecilia's	133/135	148/148	144/147	153/156	62.4	70	66.7	73.2	4.8	5.1	4.9	5.3
Francis Barber			1/36				100				8	

Report to SACRE on Religious Studies Examination Results 2024

A& AS level results in Wandsworth schools (does not include sixth form colleges)

Subject: Religious Studies (4610)

Qual: GCE AS level

Centre	Entries				%A-B			%A-E			
	2019	2022	2023	2024	2019	2023	2024	2019	2023	2024	
NCER National	7180				36		TBC	87.6		TBC	
LA Comparator	130	None taken	6	2	60.8	0	50	95.4	50	50	
Ark Bolingbroke Academy											
Ashcroft Technology Academy	31			1	80.6		100	100		100	
Burntwood	0										
Chestnut Grove	38				63.2			100			
Ark Putney											
Ernest Bevin	0										
Harris Battersea	5				80			100			
Graveney School	48		6	1	54.2	0	0	91.7	50	0	
Saint John Bosco	0										
Southfields	1				-			100			
Saint Cecilia's	7				-			71.4			

Report to SACRE on Religious Studies examination results 2024

Subject: Religious Studies (4610)
Qual: GCE A level

Centre	Entries				%A* - B				%A* - E			
	2019	2022	2023	2024	2019	2022	2023	2024	2019	2022	2023	2024
National	15980	14950	14720	14477	65.1	67.8	55.4	54.5	99.6	98.7	97.6	97.6
LA Comparator	105	69	97	87	51.4	73.9	45.4	35.6	96.2	100	97.9	97.7
Ashcroft Technology Academy	7	19	7	6	100	89.5	71.4	83.3	100	100	100	100
Bolingbroke Academy		3	12	14		100	25	35.7		100	100	100
Burntwood	17	9	18	22	23.5	55.6	38.9	18.2	88.2	100	100	95.5
Chestnut Grove	18	14	23	15	66.7	57.1	43.5	26.7	100	100	100	100
Ernest Bevin	9	0	0	0	22.2	0	0	0	88.9	0	0	0
Graveney School	22	11	11	14	54.5	58.3	41.7	50	100	100	91.7	100
Harris Academy Battersea	5	0	0	0	80	0	0	0	100	0	0	0
Saint John Bosco	0	0	13	9	0	0	38.5	44.4	0	0	100	100
Southfields	10	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	90	0	0	0
Saint Cecilia's	17	12	11	7	64.7	91.7	75	28.6	100	100	91.7	85.7

2024 data is provisional

National from [Time-series - A level subject entries and grade by sex, Data set from A level and other 16 to 18 results - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

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Evaluation of Faith Direct 2024

Evaluations/comments were received from all the schools and seven of the ten faith leaders. Overall, they were very positive. All said how much they had enjoyed the day and how worthwhile it was.

Some quotes from faith leaders:

"Pupils ... enjoyed their time out of school and got to have some interesting conversations and learn something new about different faiths"

"Witnessing mutual respect and appreciation amongst multifaith colleagues"

"It's wonderful to work with young people who are interested in learning about faith."

"It's an invaluable experience for students to be able to learn from as many other faiths as possible. It will help broadening their views of the world and hopefully this will contribute to peace and tolerance in the community. I think UK must be the only country that has an event like this and it is fantastic!"

"The event was very well organized. The communication and planning prior to the event were also excellent."

Some quotes from schools:

"We had a great time. Some of the religious leaders were fantastic, Judaism, Humanism and the Baptists stood out for us!"

"Students enjoyed it as it helped promote our values of community cohesion, celebrating diversity and developing skills of empathy and dialogue."

"They loved it and found it very interesting."

"The organization was excellent. Everyone was so welcoming, patient and kind."

And the students:

"Learning about religion is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle"

"I learnt that throughout a lot of the religions there are many similarities"

More of what went well...

- Venue and refreshments/lunch
- Smooth movement between tables at the end of each session

- Time for faith leaders to chat to each other before the session and during the break
- Good week to run the event, as celebrating Inter Faith week

Suggestions for improvement

All were agreed that it was a long and intensive day and that students were fresher in the earlier part of the session. Some felt that the timings were about right; one respondent thought that the 14 minutes per faith was a bit long. One suggested starting earlier in the morning. While this would address fatigue by the end of the day, the lunchtime onwards timing was to allow students to have the morning on timetable in schools. Clearly, we can't satisfy all requirements. One school said they would be happy to come in the morning:

"I think a break with snacks and juice is a great idea. I think you have to balance them seeing lots of people and speaking to them with the attention span of teenagers! Perhaps either less time at each table or less religious leaders, and perhaps 2 hrs in total tops talking to the leaders. If two hours, I think they need at least one break, perhaps 2 x 20 minute breaks? So perhaps 9:30 - 12:30 including the breaks, intro and closing speeches?"

Others liked the afternoon.

"My main worry with this type of event is that the speed at which it is carried out, with such an overwhelming array of ideas encountered in such a short time, makes it difficult to have confidence that the students will remember which beliefs were connected with which worldview. I'd be tempted to provide each student with a sheet listing the worldviews on which they are instructed to write down 3 things they learn about that worldview - these can be brief but it might help avoid confusion and misconceptions. This would help ensure retention of what they learn and give teachers something to follow up on if they have the time."

Behaviour was an issue with one of the groups from one school. While in the charge of the teacher, it was managed; however when the teacher was otherwise engaged, the other member of staff did not intervene when it was required.

Schools came without timetables and the information booklets! Reminders the day before and some photocopies made in advance would help here. A technical reminder for the bell would ensure timings remained spot on during the afternoon.

The future

From the above, it would seem that the event is well worth running again this year. In 2025, Inter Faith Week runs from 9 -16 November.