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DATE: 29 June 2021

To: Members of the
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Reverend Roger Bristow (Chairman)

Councillors Kim Botting FRSA, Mike Botting, Kevin Brooks, Robert Evans,
David Jefferys, Kate Lymer and Pauline Tunncliffe

Church of England: Reverend Rachel Archer, Ms Jan Thompson and
Mr Christopher Town

Teachers: Mrs Denise Angell, Ms Hannah Arnold, Mr Lee Kings, Ms Stella Odusola
and Mrs Caroline Ringham

Other Faiths: Mr Daniel Coleman, Mrs Patricia Colling, Mrs Donna Gold,
Mr Sanjay Gupta, Ms Dorothy Lampert, Mr Saiyed Mahmood, Mr Arvinder Nandra
and Dr Omar Taha

A meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education will be held on
WEDNESDAY 7 JULY 2021 AT 6.00 PM

**PLEASE NOTE: This is a 'virtual meeting' and members of the press and public
can see and hear the Committee by visiting the following page on the Council's
website:**

<https://www.bromley.gov.uk/councilmeetingslive>

Live streaming will commence shortly before the meeting starts

MARK BOWEN
Director of Corporate Services

Copies of the documents referred to below can be obtained from
<http://cbs.bromley.gov.uk/>

A G E N D A

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 - Welcome to new Members and visitors
- 3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
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 - NASACRE funding report (Pages 19 - 28)
 - Ofsted RE research review – *can be viewed via the following link:*
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-publishes-research-review-on-religious-education>
 - Insight UK report on the state of Hinduism in Religious Education in UK schools – *can be viewed via the following link:*
https://insightuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Hinduism-in-RE_Project-report.pdf
- 12 **SACRE ACTION PLAN (INCLUDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS)** (Pages 29 - 30)
- 13 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 14 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

6.00pm, Wednesday 1st December 2021
6.00pm, Wednesday 23rd February 2022

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STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Minutes of the meeting held at 5.30 pm on 3 March 2021

Present:

Reverend Roger Bristow (Chairman)

Councillors Kevin Brooks, David Jefferys, Kate Lymer,
Keith Onslow and Chris Pierce
Mrs Denise Angell, Reverend Rachel Archer,
Ms Hannah Arnold, Mr Daniel Coleman, Mrs Donna Gold,
Mr Lee Kings, Mr Arvinder Nandra, Ms Stella Odusola,
Dr Omar Taha, Ms Jan Thompson and
Mr Christopher Town

Also Present:

Julia Andrew, LBB Head of School Standards
Carol Arnfield, LBB Head of Service for Early Years,
Schools Standards and Adult Education
Stacey Burman, SACRE RE Adviser

14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Robert Evans.

15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

16 COMPLIANCE OF THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

No breaches of the GDPR were reported.

17 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH NOVEMBER 2020

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2020
be confirmed as a correct record.**

B) MATTERS ARISING

Minute 7: Bromley Agreed Syllabus

The Chairman advised that the support materials for the Syllabus, being produced by the SACRE RE Adviser, were “a work in progress”. Members were shown how the SACRE section of the Bromley Education Matters website could be accessed. The SACRE RE Adviser informed Members that the ‘Curriculum Map’ had been uploaded to the website and that she was working with teachers during the network meetings to devise contents for each unit and look at how it could be delivered. The Curriculum Map took into consideration Ofsted’s expectation of the progression of a pupils’ key knowledge – this key knowledge had been identified for each unit and would be built upon as pupils moved through the school. Each unit had an enquiry question, based on the model within the Syllabus which included key beliefs and values; key philosophical thinking; and practices in the lives of believers and non-believers. This gave pupils the opportunity to reflect, consider these big questions and look at responses from different faiths and world views, in order to establish their own response. Three units had been created per year which allowed teachers the flexibility to choose how they delivered them. The units each consisted of eight to ten lessons which could be added to, and each unit plan had resources to accompany or explain how the suggested activities could be delivered to get the key knowledge across to pupils.

In response to a question, the SACRE RE Adviser said that the units of work did not result in an exam or test, however an element of work she would be undertaking with the teachers was looking at how they could assess pupils’ work and progress against the ‘Skills Spectrum’ of the Syllabus. At the network meeting in the summer term they would be discussing how to use pupils’ work to consider the skills demonstrated, which would allow teachers to report on pupil progress.

Minute 8: SACRE Action Plan (including relationships with schools)

The Chairman noted that the strategy for collating RE resources for pupils would be discussed in further detail later in the meeting (Minute 19 – REal Resources).

Minute 11: SACRE Self-evaluation

The Chairman noted that Members’ responses to the SACRE Self-evaluation had been collated by the SACRE RE Adviser and would be discussed in further detail later in the meeting (Minute 21 – SACRE Self-evaluation).

18 REVIEW DETERMINATIONS

No determinations had been received.

19 'REAL' RESOURCES

Report CSD21035

The Bromley SACRE Adviser was seeking to support the creation and development of a wide range of electronic resources that could support the

delivery of the new Agreed Syllabus. These resources would be made available to schools via the SACRE section of the Bromley Education Matter website.

The SACRE RE Adviser reminded Members that the idea to create videos demonstrating personal faith to share with schools had been discussed at the last meeting, and thanked those that had already sent in video clips. It was noted that the creation of videos was not just limited to the faith representatives on the SACRE and any Member wishing to do so could submit a clip.

There were four key questions to be addressed which related to the Curriculum Map:

- "What do I believe about how the world began?" (Year 1);
- "What buildings/places are important to me/do I use for worship, and how do the features or items here show what I believe [about God] and value as important?" (Year 3 and 5);
- "What do I wear that shows my beliefs/values?" (Year 2); and
- "What do I believe happens when we die?" (Year 5).

A SACRE Member enquired if there was the potential for others to contribute to the videos. It was suggested that the Bromley Three Faiths Group could collaborate on a video, if it would be considered helpful, to show an aspect of community cohesion. The SACRE RE Adviser agreed and said that she would like to expand on this idea even further by setting up and recording a debate between representative from a number of different faiths. Depending on the question, this would help to demonstrate to pupils both the similarity and vast differences of the response received from members of different faiths. Following a brief discussion, SACRE Members agreed that this sounded like a good way forward, however, it was highlighted that there was a need to ensure that all those being interviewed were provided with the questions in advance to allow responses to be prepared.

In response to a question, the SACRE RE Adviser said that clips had been received covering responses to the four questions. "What do I believe about how the world began?" had been covered from the aspects of Judaism and Christianity, and a clip covering "What do I wear that shows my beliefs/values?" and "What do I believe happens when we die?" had been received from Islamic faith representatives. The Chairman had also agreed to film a tour of his church and the Islamic faith representative would be filming a tour of a mosque. The Jewish faith representative had spoken with members of her reformed synagogue and would be looking to put together responses to some of the other questions and a tour. It was highlighted that the more responses received for each question the better, as it would allow pupils to discuss and compare.

The SACRE RE Adviser informed Members that she had also approached friends with regards to creating video clips, and noted that a school had contacted her to advise that parents had prepared a video of worship in the Hindu home, which was an idea that she would share and discuss in further

detail with teachers at the network meetings. A Member highlighted that if those creating the videos included their own children, if there was the capacity to do so, it would be beneficial as children often liked to listen to other children talking.

A Member suggested that Richard Martin, who had written a number of books on inter-faith relations, could be approached to see if he would like to provide an overview. The Chairman agreed that this was something that could be pursued. **ACTION: Chairman**

Another Member suggested that SACRE Councillor representatives could consider providing a clip focussing on religion and how it was dealt with in public life, including explaining why the SACRE was in existence and the impetus behind it.

The SACRE RE Adviser noted that a meeting would take place over the next couple of weeks to discuss how the videos could be uploaded and shared. The Chairman advised that this may be via a secured private page on Youtube, which would safeguard against any of the materials being misused.

20 INTER-FAITH COMPETITION

The SACRE RE Adviser informed Members that the schools' calendar competition had been launched – primary and secondary schools had been notified and details were listed on the Bromley Education Matters website. Despite only being launched the previous week, three schools had already submitted competition entries and lots more were hoped for.

Teachers had been provided with a document, produced by the SACRE RE Adviser, giving clear details about the competition theme and how ideas could be generated with pupils. Entries were to be scanned in high definition and submitted via email.

21 SACRE SELF-EVALUATION

Report CSD21034

At the autumn meeting of the SACRE, Members were asked to communicate in their representative groups to look at the following sections of the SACRE Reporting and Evaluating Toolkit:

Group A members (representatives of other faiths and Christian denominations) were asked to focus on Section 5 – Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community.

Group B members (representatives from the Church of England) were asked to focus on Section 3 – Collective worship.

Group C members (teachers) were asked to focus on Section 2 – The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus.

Group D members (Councillors) were asked to focus on Section 4 – Management of SACRE.

The Chairman thanked Members for sending their thoughts to the SACRE RE Adviser, and a summary was provided. The SACRE RE Adviser informed Members that all of the responses received had been incorporated into the document and colour coded in ‘developing’, ‘established’ and ‘advanced’ criteria. Overall, most areas were light and dark green as they were considered to be ‘established’ or ‘advanced’.

The SACRE RE Adviser informed Members that she had been particularly pleased with the responses relating to the locally Agreed Syllabus, which had recently been launched and had received extremely positive feedback. In future years, further work would be undertaken with teachers to monitor its use and implementation, although they were already aware of around 25 schools using the Syllabus.

With regards to Section 4 – ‘Management of SACRE and partnership with LA and other key stakeholders’, the SACRE RE Adviser noted that her personal reflection was that the Bromley SACRE was extremely well supported and encouraged by the Local Authority.

The SACRE RE Adviser highlighted that Section 5 – ‘Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community’ was the only section that had areas considered to be ‘developing’. However, it was highlighted that the self-evaluation related to the previous academic year and some of the recommendations listed were already being worked towards. The ‘REal Resources’ would be useful for helping to build on the SACRE’s knowledge and understanding of world faiths and world views, and the idea discussed earlier in the meeting of an inter-faith interview would also support community cohesion. The SACRE RE Adviser considered that Section 1 – ‘Standards and quality of provision of RE’ was always hard to evaluate as it was dependent on schools engaging with the Local Authority and SACRE RE Adviser. The school network meetings were now attended by between 20-30 primary schools and 7-8 secondary schools. This highlighted that they were now engaging with a larger number of schools in the Borough. The Head of School Standards informed Members that the feedback received from teachers attending the network meetings had been phenomenal.

A SACRE teacher representative highlighted that there were two areas within Section 2 – ‘Effectiveness of the Locally Agreed Syllabus’ which should be rated as ‘established’ rather than ‘advanced’ for the 2019-2020 academic year. With regards to 2c – ‘How well does SACRE promote the Agreed Syllabus and provide training to prepare teachers to use it effectively?’, it was considered that during this period the numbers of teachers attending the meeting had been inconsistent, and had only become more consistent in the current academic year. This was echoed by another teacher representative,

who felt that 2c could only be rated as 'advanced' for the current academic year as there was evidence of regular attendance to support it. Question 2d – 'To what extent is membership of the Agreed Syllabus Conference able to fulfil its purpose?' was also considered to be 'established' as during the previous academic year there had often only been a couple of teacher representatives in attendance at meetings. The SACRE RE Adviser suggested that a recommendation should be included in the self-evaluation to increase the number of teacher representatives across all phases to ensure attendance was consistent.

Following a brief discussion, SACRE Members agreed that 2c and 2d in the self-evaluation should be amended and rated as 'established'. These changes would be incorporated and the self-evaluation would be added to the finalised SACRE Annual Report.

In response to a question, the Chairman said that he was not aware of any advice or guidance being produced for schools regarding acts of remembrance or worship for those who had lost their lives during the pandemic, but agreed to check this in further detail with NASACRE.

ACTION: Chairman

It was noted that a day of national remembrance and reflection was proposed for 23rd March 2021, which was the first anniversary of the first period of lockdown. The SACRE RE Adviser highlighted that a common issue in schools was the difference between assemblies and Collective Worship. The 'Reflective Pools' resource was available to schools on the Bromley Education Matters website and was something that she would like to work on in the future. With regards to any sort of commemorations for those that had passed during the pandemic there was a need to be aware of the distinctions between worship and commemoration.

22 DRAFT BROMLEY SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

SACRE Members were provided with a copy of the draft Bromley SACRE Annual Report 2019-2020.

The SACRE RE Advisor noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic there had not been any GCSE data and therefore the draft Annual Report included information from the previous academic year.

A Member noted that on page 5 of the Annual Report there was a reference to the 'GCSE Short Course in Religious Studies' and asked for further information relating to it. A SACRE teacher representative advised that in the Short Course less content was taught over the normal period of time (usually two or three years). The SACRE RE Adviser highlighted that not as many schools now undertook the Short Course following changes to the core studies of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), in which it was no longer included.

The Chairman noted that the amendments to the SACRE self-evaluation discussed earlier in the meeting would be incorporated, and following a brief discussion, Members agreed that they were happy to approve the SACRE Annual Report 2019-2020. The SACRE RE Adviser would provide the clerk with the finalised version to be submitted to NASACRE, Department for Education and published on the Council's website.

ACTION: SACRE RE Advisor / Clerk

RESOLVED that, subject to the agreed amendments to the SACRE self-evaluation being made, the SACRE Annual Report 2019-2020 be approved.

23 SACRE ACTION PLAN (INCLUDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS)

Members had been provided with a copy of the SACRE Action Plan covering September 2020 to September 2021 which had been produced by the SACRE RE Adviser.

The SACRE RE Adviser noted that as the second network meetings for both primary and secondary school teachers had taken place these actions could now also be marked in green as 'complete', as could the inter-faith calendar competition which had now been launched.

A Member said that he would like to see a return to the organisation of SACRE Member visits to schools so they could see how RE was being taught. The SACRE RE Adviser said that there had been a discussion regarding the Local Authority consolidating visits when she had first joined the SACRE, however all visits would have been paused due to the pandemic. A teacher representative noted that there was likely to be a delay before schools could allow visitors – however visits were considered a very good idea and would help “put RE on the map” and provide support for RE leaders in schools. The SACRE RE Adviser suggested that consideration could also be given to holding future SACRE meetings at local schools. This would provide an opportunity for schools to showcase the work being undertaken and allow SACRE Members to see pupils work first-hand.

The Chairman advised SACRE Members that due to the pandemic the planned live launch of the Agreed Syllabus had been unable to take place, which they had intended would include input from students, and it was hoped that something similar could be held at some point in the future.

24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Membership

The Chairman informed SACRE Members that Mrs Edlene Whitman, Free Church representative, had resigned from the SACRE as she was planning to

move away from the area in the near future, and he was actively trying to seek a replacement representative. It was noted that the SACRE RE Adviser was also looking to identify representatives of Buddhist and Orthodox Jewish faiths.

SACRE Members were reminded that last year, a discussion had taken place regarding whether they wished to have a Humanist representative sit on the Committee. An email had recently been received from Humanists UK assuming automatic inclusion on the SACRE and advising that a representative had been identified. The Chairman informed SACRE Members that a response had been sent advising that this proposal would be brought back to the Committee to gather their views, and asked if they felt a Humanist representative was required and if they should be appointed to Bromley SACRE.

A teacher representative said that from a curriculum perspective having Humanist representation on the SACRE would be valuable. The curriculum focussed on 'Religions and World Views', and Humanism was now incorporated within the new Agreed Syllabus. A Member noted that he was not against the appointment of a Humanist representative but highlighted the 'Religious Education' element in the name of the SACRE. It was queried if Humanism was considered to be a religion as this could cause some confusion. The SACRE RE Adviser responded that when the Agreed Syllabus had been revised the wording had been amended to 'Religions and World Views', an element of which was recognising that there were lots of people that did not have a religious view, or believe in a particular religion. It was noted that more information would be available following the 2021 Census, but based on the 2011 Census they were aware that there was a demographic of those that did not believe in religion and therefore they did not want RE to exclude those pupils. The Agreed Syllabus had been carefully worded to incorporate non-religious viewpoints, of which Humanist was just one example. The SACRE RE Adviser highlighted that she was aware that it was not considered to be a religion by some SACREs, who therefore had Humanist representatives sitting within the membership group of the Local Authority.

The Vice-Chairman suggested that it would be a good idea to take guidance from what other SACREs had done in terms of appointing a Humanist representative, as although they did not have a faith or religion, Humanism was itself a widespread belief system. A Member agreed and noted that NASACRE should also be contacted to see if any further correspondence relating to this had been issued.

A teacher representative informed Members that Humanism was about celebrating the uniqueness of humanity, and all its diversity, and celebrating life in all its richness in the here and now. The SACRE RE Adviser noted that this was a helpful distinction as when looking at responses to the ultimate questions Humanism had a particular belief system and would not be the only Atheist response, therefore consideration could possibly be given to the requirement of an Atheist representative.

The Chairman agreed that this was complex and noted the point previously made regarding Members being unsure how a Humanist / Atheist view would be embraced within a committee for Religious Education. However, with the curriculum expanded to 'Religions and World Views' there could now be a case for a representative. The Chairman said that he felt further consultation was needed – a response could be sent to Humanists UK advising that their proposal would be seriously considered, however, they were not currently in a position to confirm if the SACRE would appoint a Humanist representative.

In response to a question from a Member, a secondary teacher representative confirmed that Humanism had been taught within the GCSE Syllabus over the last few years. A primary teacher representative said that this element of the Syllabus gave a child information to shape their own identity from both a religious and non-religious perspective. The Syllabus was designed to teach a child that there was diversity within all religions – they were given the knowledge and the ability to think about how this applied to them, which allowed them to shape their own faiths and beliefs.

In response to a question from a SACRE Member, the SACRE RE Adviser said that within Collective Worship there needed to be awe and wonder and reference to a 'supreme being'. Some Humanists may interpret that as humanity itself and therefore would not necessarily be opposed to Collective Worship. The input of ideas and contributions may be slightly lent towards that element, however, it was emphasised that this would be dependent on the individual. The Local Authority had a responsibility to appoint suitable representatives – there would be a caveat that anyone appointed to the SACRE would work within the agreed objectives of the Local Authority, and that they would have a mindset based on community cohesion. The Chairman advised SACRE Members that the last Humanist representative to sit on the SACRE had previously been a Councillor representative and had always personally chosen to abstain from taking part in any discussions relating to worship.

The Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education suggested that in addition to contacting NASACRE, questions could be put to Humanists UK asking how they recommended that any representatives dealt with the scenarios posed, such as discussions around Collective Worship. The SACRE RE Adviser noted that they could also be approached to provide information relating to representation on other SACREs. The Chairman agreed and highlighted that the SACRE needed to gather as much information as possible before making a decision. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the Chairman would draft a letter of response to Humanists UK to that effect. **ACTION: Chairman**

Hinduism Report

The SACRE RE Adviser informed Members that in January 2021 the results of a national survey of Hindu parents had been released by Insight UK. The main concern of the findings was that 81% of the parents surveyed had stated

that they were unhappy with the teaching of Hinduism in schools – particularly the knowledge of teachers and the content of the curriculum. The SACRE RE Adviser emphasised that they had worked hard to ensure that the locally Agreed Syllabus and curriculum did not present a negative picture of Hinduism. The Hinduism section of the Syllabus focussed on the beliefs around creation and not to harm any living thing. It was hoped that some responses from the Hindu faith could be incorporated in the 'REal Resources', and it would be key to have active participation on the SACRE from Hindu faith representatives, and have more than one representative if required.

A Member said he considered that members of any faith were their own best advocates to promote their religion, and they may need to address how they felt the teaching in schools could be improved. Whilst being sensitive towards this feedback, it was possible that if parents of other religions were surveyed similar results may be returned.

NASACRE AGM and Conference

The Chairman advised SACRE Members that the NASACRE AGM and Conference would be taking place virtually on the 24th May 2021, and he would provide an update at the July meeting of the SACRE.

25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.00pm, Wednesday 7th July 2021
6.00pm, Wednesday 1st December 2021
6.00pm, Wednesday 23rd February 2022

The Meeting ended at 6.56 pm

Chairman

[NASACRE Conference & AGM: Authority in RE on Monday 24th May 2021 09:45-16:00](#)

A write up by Sukaina Manji – NASACRE Exec

The day of the conference had finally arrived, with all the groundwork behind the scenes. NASACRE members logged onto Zoom full of energy, with a buzz going around the virtual room.

Our Chair, Linda, thanked everyone for their attendance as the numbers grew to over 190 participants. The Chair highlighted three themes that demonstrated the ongoing work through the pandemic of COVID-19:

Resilience throughout, with Executive meetings, meetings with the DfE and others, in keeping the NASACRE agenda on the move, SACREs' continuous excellent work in dealing with unprecedented queries as well as schools keeping RE alive. Flexibility and commitment were the following two themes that demonstrated the outstanding work carried out by the Executive in dedication to NASACRE and all the SACREs. Our mission statement identifies how '*NASACRE works to support, strengthen and promote the work done by local SACREs and represent members' interests at a national level.*'

While introducing the day's programme of Authority in RE, Linda spoke about the afternoon break for offering prayers for Muslim delegates, highlighting how public bodies like SACREs try to keep in mind the needs of members regarding daily prayer, reflection, festivals, and holy days.

Our Patron Charles Clarke congratulated NASACRE for organising the conference as the title sums up all the challenges faced across the country, hence the importance of clarity, integrity, and openness. He acknowledged that the Brexit process and the current Covid-19 situation made it difficult to debate publicly; however, the report on SACRE funding and its openness demonstrates the public responsibility and the essential need for SACREs to be supported. He also encouraged NASACRE to continue to push for public debate and mentioned how his work with Linda Woodhead continues in seeking the government's readiness and support for RE. By playing a constructive role, NASACRE can continue to be proactive in teaching RE and SACREs, playing a crucial role in ensuring this provision.

Keynote Address 1:

In her keynote speech, Denise Cush, the first female professor of RE in the UK in 2003, began with two iconic pictures as a sample of authority in the world. Using an image of the oldest copy of the Holy Qur'an in the world and two females dressed in religious clothing, she began by differentiating what authority could be and that the more she reflected on it, it made her question whether authority is about protection or power. Denise captured the audience by linking authority to the angel and one of the primary antagonists of Philip Pullman's trilogy, *His Dark Materials*, in contrast to Laurie Anderson's 1982 lyrics '*O Superman*' that depicts the power of control through the ambiguity of its words. Is authority about power, knowledge, truth, rules or even protection? Who or what should one believe, and how can that be known? Does it shape behaviour? Denise examined the different sources of authority in religions where sacred texts, for example, the Holy Qur'an or Bible for Abrahamic beliefs, come from revelations within the theist forms, whilst the non-theist from something deep within us. Therefore, authority is coming from somewhere. Scholars can be saints, too, as they have written commentary or given explanations. Authority thus rests with, for example, God, Dharma, the ultimate reality or truth, and individuals' experience, especially women, as sources of authority and authority as relative. Non-religious tradition could also include key thinkers, experts, empirical evidence, institutional and communal authority, who also influenced the wearing of masks during the Covid-19 pandemic. Who can make changes and influence by giving recommendations? Whose experience and knowledge bears weight within RE or RWV as a subject? The expertise within includes academics and professionals such as teachers, teacher trainers, communities, and bodies such as AREIAC, NATRE, AULRE, and faith groups. In her conclusion, Denise quoted a pupil who exemplified what RE can do: 'I like RE because in other subjects you get told what to think, and in RE you can say what you think, and no one can say you are wrong.' Denise said this comment was not something she would agree with - RE provides a chance to discuss your opinion within the discussion. NASACRE is an authority that works together. In the highlight of the keynote speech, Denise pointed out that authority is a chance for service and is not about having the power. Using the Indian tradition of '*sewa*' is about the service in ensuring children's/students' entitlement to the provision of RE, service for the young people to get the best possible RE/RWV.

Breakout areas:

There was a lot of energy within the Zoom room as delegates recognised their 'sewa' authority in ensuring that young people have the best opportunity for RE/RWV.

Questions that helped to engage discussions within the first breakout area included:

1. Who do you think has the most power/authority in RE?
2. Who do you think should have more power/authority in RE and why?
3. How can we as SACREs influence those in power/authority well?
4. If we all understood authority as a chance for service, what difference do you think this would make in RE?

Here are some of the highlights of the morning discussions:

- It was apparent that it is essential to question 'who are we speaking about?'
- Teachers' authority is important, whereas finance is a massive challenge, mainly as it drives academy chains.
- SACRE's authority should be locally focused to ensure different traditions meet through mutual respect, valuing all contributions to maximise engagement of various groups; the role of RE in anti-hate crime through engagement with multiple authorities
- Opinions towards the syllabus and teaching of Islam and Judaism sometimes need to be corrected as they do not accurately question which authority can change things
- RE subject leader needs to be empowered to be the authority in school
- Schools need reminders of the way SACREs can support them at a local level
- Councillors on Comm D can offer a political lobby for schools which is often under-used
- Parental engagement, e.g. schools explaining/negotiating their RE curriculum offer
- Problems with limited teacher competence, as shown in the recent study of teachers re. Hinduism
- Some concern over the power of Ofsted – much authority in one voice! Another group felt that this was not so
- Teachers have authority as they translate whatever they are given to the pupils, so ultimately what happens in class is up to them
- Media is one of the areas of authority outside the classroom, as well as parents and faith leaders
- The key agreement was that the power locally rests with the Senior Leadership in schools, especially in academies
- Some authority is with RE teachers, but not all are specialists, so this may impact confidence in leadership
- Discussion about checking websites to see how well schools are following legal requirements
- Some were disappointed that teachers were not mentioned as authorities, maybe because many are non-specialists who need CPD, but are willing to learn. Headteachers, Ofsted, SIAMs, etc. mentioned. Parents???
- Need to make informed choices
- Discussion re. teacher training - how many hours of RE?
- The elephant in the room - money. Money for teacher training, CPD, etc. Free 12-hour course on RE for teachers - Teach RE website
- Discussion included the different universities that offer RE teaching
- RE knowledge includes in-depth, or more faiths and minority faiths

Keynote Address 2:

In his keynote speech, Richard Kueh, Ofsted's subject lead for Religious Education, outlined the quality of education within the 2019 Education Inspection Framework and explored the idea of the curriculum as a 'narrative over time'. In line with the conference theme, Richard outlined three authorities - that on which the RE curriculum draws; the 'authoritative status' of what is taught and teacher development on 'becoming an authority' in RE. Richard outlined the RE curriculum as a journey. As pupils go on their journey, they enter a rich discourse about the religious and non-religious traditions that have shaped Great Britain and the world.

In their judgement, Ofsted considers that the locally agreed syllabus acts in a similar way to the National Curriculum. It supplies the high-level outcomes which schools turn into their RE curriculum to teach pupils in a local context. He discussed ambitious end goals that may overload and become superficial. At the same time, he acknowledged that it would be impossible to cover everything. The 'journey' maps out what gets better in a subject. High-quality RE prepares pupils to engage in a complex multisecular and multifaith world.

Richard discussed how types of knowledge would differ between subjects and linked to the EIF, which states: 'knowledge that is taught, and pupils learn and remember'. The question is to recognise where the knowledge 'journey' leads pupils to and think carefully about representation and the importance of reflecting accurately. Richard pointed out that more than half of RE teachers have no qualifications, and half of primary school teachers lacked confidence in teaching RE. The 'knowledge journey' should be one where teachers can address pupil misunderstanding and strengthen their RE teaching, as they become leaders in the field of RE.

Breakout areas:

Once again, the energy within the room after Richard's knowledge 'journey' led to vibrant discussions within the breakout areas.

Questions included:

1. Given that the Locally Agreed Syllabus is an authority for constructing a school's RE curriculum, what consideration do SACREs need to have to ensure this curriculum is of high quality?
2. Another key area of authority for teachers is the professional training they receive; what can SACREs do to support teachers' access to high-quality RE training?
3. As SACREs, how do we model authority in a positive way for the diverse range of schools in our local RE community?

Here are some of the highlights of the afternoon discussions:

- Importance of Pupil Voice and Governor training
- Collaboration between SACREs to deliver regional training and reach more teachers
- SACREs working with all available partners, e.g. universities
- A good LAS is only the beginning (but necessary) e.g. need for good resources, monitoring how LAS is being delivered, keeping a finger on the pulse
- SACREs have to earn the aura of authority - by being known, by engaging/enthusing for good RE
- Importance of expertise
- What are high-level outcomes? Do our syllabuses make these clear? Wonder about collaboration on these rather than 151 SACREs working separately on them? (need to be based on research)
- Norfolk AS (that Richard was involved in and is 'disciplinary') – available freely
- A mixture of CPD needed – develop the voices of representation (also training for leaders and governors)
- Possibility of linking with universities (SACREs are often particularly good at content knowledge)
- Collaboration using Zoom for SACRE training events?
- Funding is an issue
- SACREs need to signpost but, if they can, offer funding for teacher CPD helps
- Collaboration across LAs might be good too
- We need to see the development of high-quality RE as a journey
- See the whole picture over several years of teaching
- Keep it simple and concentrate on main faiths rather than a 'Cook's tour' approach
- Some saw the need for an overarching agreement on the core curriculum
- There was agreement on the importance of a balanced view
- Each SACRE should produce a briefing paper on the key features of a local syllabus
- What about sequencing? Intent, implementation and the impact
- School matching – support teachers, leaders, head
- Contexts – buddy systems
- A mutual partnership between teachers and faith groups leads to harmonious good quality RE
- Holistic and integrated approach necessary

Workshops:

The day also included workshops with delegates having made their choices beforehand. These were opportunities to get insights into the NASACRE and Westhill grants, the proposed annual report template for SACREs, RE Quality Mark, and many more. Here are the highlights from both the morning and afternoon workshops:

a. Making sacred text scholarship and the multidimensionality of meaning central (Bob Bowie)	A hermeneutical approach to interpreting sacred texts that opens a pathway to helping SACREs support schools as a curriculum method that is rich and relevant. Worth SACREs' time to investigate and advertise to schools. (Sheila Gewolb)
b. Pan-Berkshire - winners 2019-2020 Real People, Real Faith: Bringing local faith communities into the classroom (Anne Andrews)	The six unitary LAs out of the former Berkshire, working together with the same AS to develop a further Award project to create resources for schools in filmed interviews with individuals from local faith communities. Clips shared were of Reform Judaism (KS1), Baptist (KS2) and Hinduism (KS3), with others planned. Supporting materials delayed by Covid-19, but will come – all materials freely available to all SACREs via NATRE website. In the afternoon, participants asked about various aspects of the process and commented on the good quality of the film clips. (Preb Michael Metcalf)

<p>c. Bath and NE Somerset - winners 2019-2020 RE-Live: example lesson plans that use Big Ideas for RE (Dave Francis) Shropshire - winners 2017-2018 Supporting Local RE with Local Experts - Collective Worship Video Project (Adrian Black)</p>	<p>Big Ideas offer 'what really matters' in children's lives; offer personal development aspects on contemporary issues, such as COVID... resulting in slimmed-down content, but in greater depth. (Sue Holmes)</p> <p>This winning project is offering local people the opportunity to speak into local schools, even those minority faiths who wouldn't normally get into schools. Videos are useable both in RE and Worship. (Sue Holmes)</p>
<p>d. South Gloucestershire - winners 2019-2020 The Wire Award: Inclusion through RE (Jane Allinson and Adam Robertson)</p>	<p>Need to underline respect for other religions. Interesting to see how this project supports Muslim children to visit churches and other places of worship, and ensures all children get to visit mosques, so it is a balanced approach. (Roy Galley & Alex Klein)</p>
<p>e. Quality RE through local authority and national frameworks (Linda Rudge)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most people were hearing about REQM for the first time. 2. Very few who spoke use any form of 'celebrating' RE in their areas, whether REQM or not, to advertise competitions and NASACRE opportunities more widely? 3. When people realised all the material is 'free' and useful for local CPD and curriculum development, the £475 fee for each school didn't seem quite high... 4. At least two people said they set aside a fund to support schools with REQM progress. (Linda Rudge)
<p>f. New SACRE annual report template proposal (Denise Chaplin, Lesley Prior, Sukaina Manji, Neil Lawson-DfE head of curriculum)</p>	<p>Work in progress on a revised format for SACRE Annual Reports was shared along with the proposal that future work will link an updated SACRE self-evaluation process to SACRE accountability and to the report-writing process. The DfE is working to support the health of SACREs and is taking an interest in this. Attendees emphasised that statutory requirements for SACREs need to be indicated strongly in both documents. SACREs are partnerships – made up of a range of stakeholders for RE in all sorts of contexts. It is important within the new framework that NASACRE and the DfE produce, that we are mindful of supporting all members. The template will be helpful to ensure that SACREs are functioning within statutory requirements. (Sukaina Manji)</p>
<p>g. What do SACREs need to know and understand about worldviews? (Ruth Flanagan)</p>	<p>Pupils can discover and evolve their worldview. What led you to join a SACRE? That's your worldview. It's a presupposition about the world. Worldviews sometimes compared to a map, but a map can be ignored; worldviews can't be. There's a need to go beyond generalisations (all Christians, all Muslims). Not a code for Humanism but a frame or lens. Worldviews are changing, awareness of the effects of worldviews is changing. (Elizabeth Jenkerson)</p>
<p>h. Where now with worldviews? (Dr Trevor Cooling)</p>	<p>https://www.reonline.org.uk/research/research-of-the-month/what-does-the-shift-to-worldview-mean-for-teachers/ Discussion on national entitlement. There were varying views about whether we should have a national curriculum. A suggestion that RE Today curricula could become a <i>de facto</i> national syllabus. (Roy Galley)</p>
<p>i. How can national data help SACREs speak with authority? (Deborah Weston and Paul Smalley)</p>	<p>In both sessions, delegates appreciated the report and the fascinating data Deborah shared, showing pupils do better overall in GCSEs when they study RS GCSE. There was a desire for a longer session - perhaps a workshop to delve deeper into the data. Delegates felt empowered to have discussions with LAs around funding. (Paul Smalley)</p>
<p>j. What makes a text sacred? (Kate Fowler & Annika McQueen of the British Library)</p>	<p>The presentation showed what excellent resources are available to support high quality RE teaching in schools. Worth looking at materials on the website: https://www.bl.uk/sacred-texts (Alex Klein)</p>

Question Time Panel:

The day was incomplete without a Question time panel. The importance of recognising the end goal of RE and avoiding generalisation of "all Muslims" "all Christians" was pointed out. Some of the questions included:

- How can high-quality RE be measured/evidenced?
- What does it mean to be a religiously educated person? How do we define it at different ages and stages? It's about the person/people, not the product?

Amongst the responses, there was consensus that if schools ask anyone to take a lead, then there needs to be a level of investment. The other challenge is how to develop teachers' knowledge and how important it is to upskill teachers and HLTAs to teach RE when initial teacher training provides so little guidance, and there are problems with funding. In response to looking at worldviews, a paradigm change can sound like a complete change from the past; it's more about drawing from the insights of religion, as RE is about every human being and not only about religious people - a new way of looking at the subject. Other responses included a worldviews paradigm reflecting the complex, diverse and plural nature of religious and non-religious worldviews. As young people are more negative about religion and think RE is only about religion, it can create more negativity. The direct opposite to adding more -isms is about deconstructing -isms, making it for everybody and about diversity.

The virtual conference ended with much food for thought for all SACRE representatives to take back to their SACREs. The NASACRE Exec welcomed newly elected executives to the team. The new website that NASACRE is soon launching will have valuable documents for SACREs to share.

June 2021

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SACRE funding in England



A Report from the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education

May 2021



Foreword

It is my pleasure, as current Chair of the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on RE, to introduce this report to our members, and to thank everyone involved in its production.

Levels of funding for SACREs have been a source of some concern and interest to the Association for some time. Discussions with the Department for Education during 2019 also demonstrated that advice on the levels and sources of funding was of interest to their teams, to ministers and to Members of Parliament. In 2019 NASACRE issued this advice:

'...having looked at the statutory expectations that could reasonably be expected to be funded from CSSB¹, set out a national recommendation that an LA should allocate at least 2% of the CSSB to SACRE in order that SACRE can carry out their statutory duties.'²

SACREs are in the main made up of volunteers, supported by LA officers. Despite inadequate funding and appropriate support structures in some local areas, many SACREs have continued to meet, provide a syllabus and training to schools, and to provide advice on the interface between education and religion and worldviews. SACREs have also continued this work online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Freedom of Information request underpinning this report emerged from another NASACRE and RE Council project on piloting 'Local Area Networks for Religion and Worldviews', as proposed by the Commission on Religious Education³. The FOI request was issued to LAs during the autumn of 2020. We cannot let the publication of the report go by without thanking all who responded, and all who helped FOI officers and SACRE Clerks find the answers during the Covid 19 pandemic, and its series of partial or complete lockdowns.

NASACRE is a non-statutory organisation supported mainly by volunteer executive committee members. The research and writing team gave freely of their own time and expertise to produce this summary of findings, and to offer some advice. The Department of Education has commented positively to NASACRE on this advice⁴, acknowledging that its officials might use NASACRE's estimate of a funding level of 2% of the CSSB to advise local authorities. However, authorities can, of course, determine their own budgets and where funding comes from to support SACREs.

NASACRE is likely to repeat this FOI request on a regular basis, and the executive committee is very happy to receive feedback on the process and the questions, and other areas we might focus on. Feedback has already shown us that the FOI request in itself helped SACRE officers and members to understand the challenges and complexities of current education funding levels. This report highlights the facts as submitted through LA data, and it shows that many SACREs deserve better support from their local authorities. As statutory bodies, SACREs have a right to raise questions about their levels of support, and to receive the funding that is needed to underpin their work.

We look forward to working with Chairs of SACREs, partner RE associations, politicians, and officials at the DfE on the next steps to achieving some parity of provision in terms of the financial and other resources. These are urgently needed to enable statutory bodies to achieve their obligations, operate efficiently within local democracy, and to promote excellent Religious Education and Collective Worship in schools.

I commend the report to you all.



Linda Rudge,

Chair

The National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on RE

¹ The CSSB (Central Services School Block) is funding allocated by central government (through the Education and Skills Funding Agency) to local authorities to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in both maintained schools and academies in England.

² NASACRE (2019), SACRE Briefing 22, <https://mailchi.mp/8292b1171b7d/6g3v9uvmy6-1332313?e=da7db1e3e7>

³ Commission on Religious Education(2018) *Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward* Religious Education Council of England and Wales <https://www.commissiononre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Final-Report-of-the-Commission-on-RE.pdf>

⁴ DfE (2019) email to NASACRE, 18th March.

Headlines

The majority of SACREs in England do not get a sufficient share of the CSSB to enable them to carry out their duties well.

Only 12 Local Authorities in 2019-2020 stated that they used 2% or more of CSSB funds on SACRE business, meaning 92% of SACREs were allocated less than 2% of the CSSB.

25 Authorities (18%) claim to use no funding on SACRE business in contravention of statutory responsibilities.

Over a quarter (27%) of Authorities told us they allocate no funds to professional support for the SACRE.

More than half of LAs (42, 53%) disclosed that they do not use any funds to support RE in schools.

Due to lack of adequate support it is increasingly difficult for some SACREs to fulfil their statutory duties; 7 LAs told us that their Agreed Syllabus was over 6 years old. One syllabus was last reviewed in 2010.

Note: All percentages are based on data from those authorities that provided an answer to that question.

Context

In the 1988 Education Reform Act, all Local (Education) Authorities (LAs) were given a statutory duty to establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). In many areas they had existed prior to this date, to agree and support the local syllabus for RE. The latest guidance on RE confirms that “each LA must establish a permanent body called a standing advisory council on religious education”. The LA must also “establish an occasional body called an agreed syllabus conference (ASC) to review the agreed syllabus for RE adopted by the LA” and must “institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus within five years of the last review, and subsequently every five years after the completion of each further review”. “An LA should fund and support a SACRE and an ASC satisfactorily in line with the duty to constitute or convene each of these bodies and to enable them effectively to carry out their functions.”⁵

Local Authority funding has been reduced significantly in the last decade with, on average, a 21% real term fall between 2009 and 2019.⁶ Financially squeezed Local Authorities often appear to underfund the work of SACREs. The last Ofsted subject report into RE suggested that:

“Recent changes in education policy are having a negative impact on the provision for RE in some schools and on the capacity of local authorities and SACREs to carry out their statutory responsibilities to monitor and support it.”⁷

A survey of SACREs completed in 2017 confirmed that a major concern of many SACREs was indeed their capacity to carry out even their statutory duties due to underfunding⁸. When asked a parliamentary question about SACRE funding in March 2018, Schools Minister, Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP gave the following written answer:

The Government is continuing to provide local authorities with funding for Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) through the Central School Services Block from 2018/19 onwards. Local authorities are expected to ensure that SACREs are funded adequately to perform their duties. SACREs continue to play an important role in supporting schools to teach high-quality religious education.⁹

⁵ DCSF (2010) *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance*, pages 10-11. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf

⁶ Neil Amin Smith & David Phillips (2019) *English council funding: what's happened and what's next?*, IFS Briefing Note, Available from: <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14133>

⁷ Ofsted (2013) *Religious education: realising the potential*, Page 6

⁸ Paul Smalley (2019): A critical policy analysis of local religious education in England, *British Journal of Religious Education*.

⁹ HC Deb, 26 March 2018, cW, <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2018-03-21/133819>

In a letter dated 15th August 2019, Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Gavin Williamson MP stated “it is important that SACREs should be resourced sufficiently to be able to fulfil their statutory functions”¹⁰. NASACRE considers that an LA would need to allocate at least 2% of the CSSB to the SACRE to enable it to carry out its statutory duties, and significantly more in the year that the Agreed Syllabus is reviewed.

The following can reasonably be expected to be funded from the CSSB:

- a clerk
- a professional officer who has expertise in RE curriculum design
- a publicly accessible place to meet
- the reasonable expenses of members
- publishing the agreed syllabus and other SACRE materials (including agendas and minutes), most usually on the LA website
- NASACRE subscription and AGM attendance.

A small-scale survey carried out by NASACRE in 2019 suggested that many SACREs were being underfunded. This report, based on a much fuller data set, is intended to enable policymakers to make informed decisions about SACRE funding.

Research Methodology

A freedom of Information request was sent to all Local Authorities in England on the 6th November 2020 by the National Association of SACREs. Specifically, the questions were as follows:

1. How much funding was allocated to your local authority in the ‘ongoing commitments’ category of the CSSB (Central Schools Services Block)
2. How much of the funding specified in (1) above (as a raw figure and a percentage) was allocated to SACRE related spending and if relevant to ASC (Agreed Syllabus Conference) related spending?
3. How much money from the CSSB funding for 2019-2020 did you spend on:
 - (a) Democratic services to support SACRE meetings through 2019-2020 (e.g., a clerk)
 - (b) Professional support (A Religious Education specialist advisor or consultant to support the work of SACRE)
 - (c) Support for schools, including CPD and training specifically for Religious Education and or Collective Worship
 - (d) Other costs: please specify e.g., for separate clerking costs
4. How much money from other funds outside the CSSB fund (e.g., the community integration fund) was used to support RE in your local authority with schools?
5. When was your last agreed syllabus for RE revised, and how much did it cost to complete this revision? (i.e., to write it, develop it, publish it and launch it including initial training for your schools)
6. How/Where would a member of the public access your Agreed Syllabus for RE?
7. Who is the contact for SACRE business in your LA? (Name and email address)
8. Are there any barriers for providing funding to fulfil your statutory duties in relation to SACRE and/or the Agreed Syllabus Conference that you want to tell us about?
9. Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Responses were obtained from 136 LAs, with 15 not supplying answers by the end of March 2021.

Following an analysis of the data received, the following conclusions were reached:

¹⁰ Gavin Williamson (2019) private correspondence, 15th August. <http://www.nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/1-246-letter-from-gavin-williamson.pdf>

1. Total Authority spend on SACRE

Of the 111 local authorities that reported any spending on SACRE, 82% of the total, the mean spend was £11,000.46. The remaining 25 authorities, 18% of the total, reported allocating no funding to SACRE. The biggest spend by any authority was £93,574, whilst one Authority appeared to use only £105.

One explanation for the wide variance in spending could be the size of the LA, and the number of schools; an LA with few schools may be expected to use less money to fund RE provision in those schools. It would be tempting to assume that those LAs providing the most significant levels of professional support were the largest authorities. That is not the case. Figure 1 below, indicates that there appears no correlation between the number of state-funded secondary schools in an LA (a reasonable measure of the size of the authority) and the amount spent by the LA on SACRE.

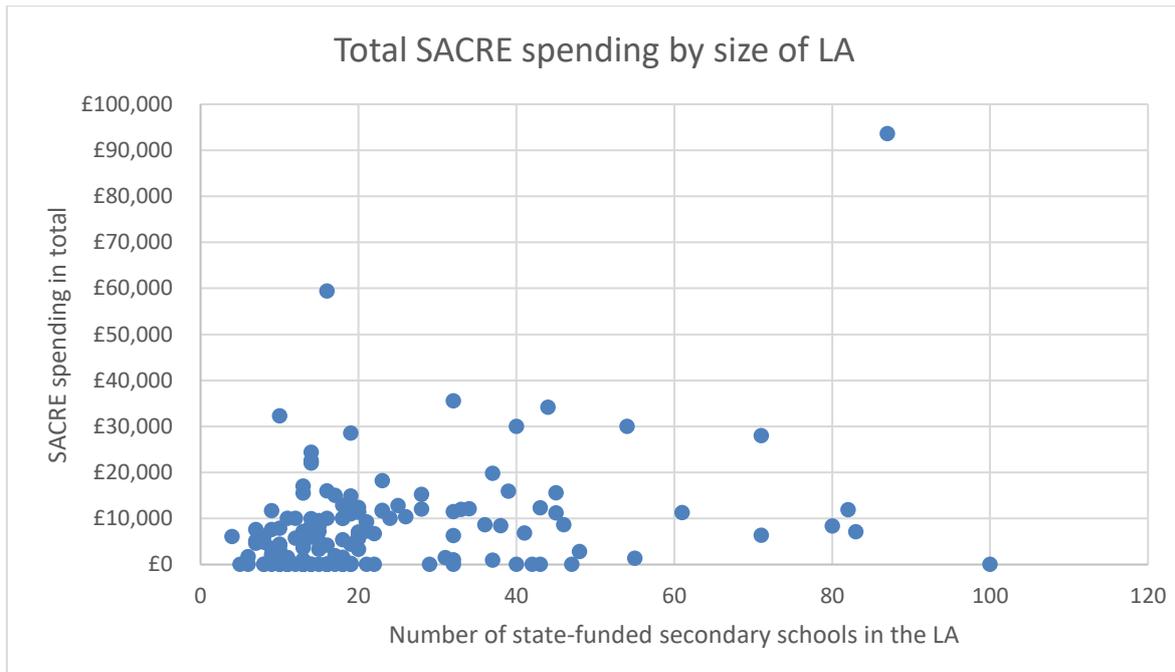


Figure 1

2. CSSB and Funding Sources for SACRE

The expectation of the Department for Education is that SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences are funded from the Central School Services Block (CSSB).

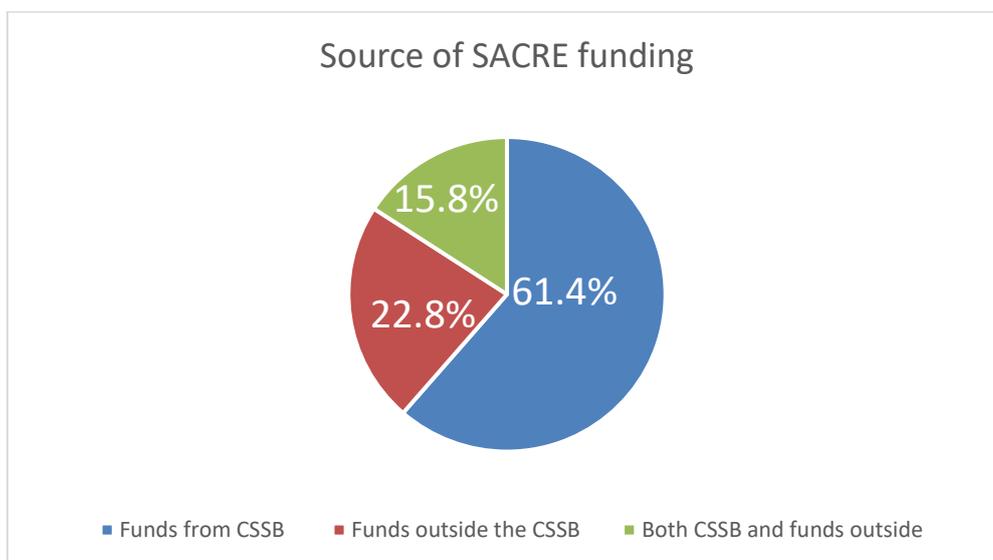


Figure 2

- 62 authorities (61.4% of the 101 that responded to this question) reported that they use funding for SACRE from the CSSB only
- 23 authorities (22.8% of the 101 that responded to this question) reported using funding from outside the CSSB only
- 16 authorities (15.8% of the 101 that responded to this question) reported using both sources.

The most well-funded SACRE received 6% of the CSSB from their LA in 2019/20. The average spending on a SACRE, Religious Education and Collective Worship, as a percentage of the allocated CSSB funding source (based on data from 136 LAs) was less than one percent, 0.72%.

Of the 136 SACREs who responded to the FOI, 79% (107) spent under 1% of CSSB fund or equivalent on SACRE, RE and Collective Worship in 2019/20. There is no correlation between the size of the LA and the proportion of CSSB that is used on SACRE business as the scattergram below shows.

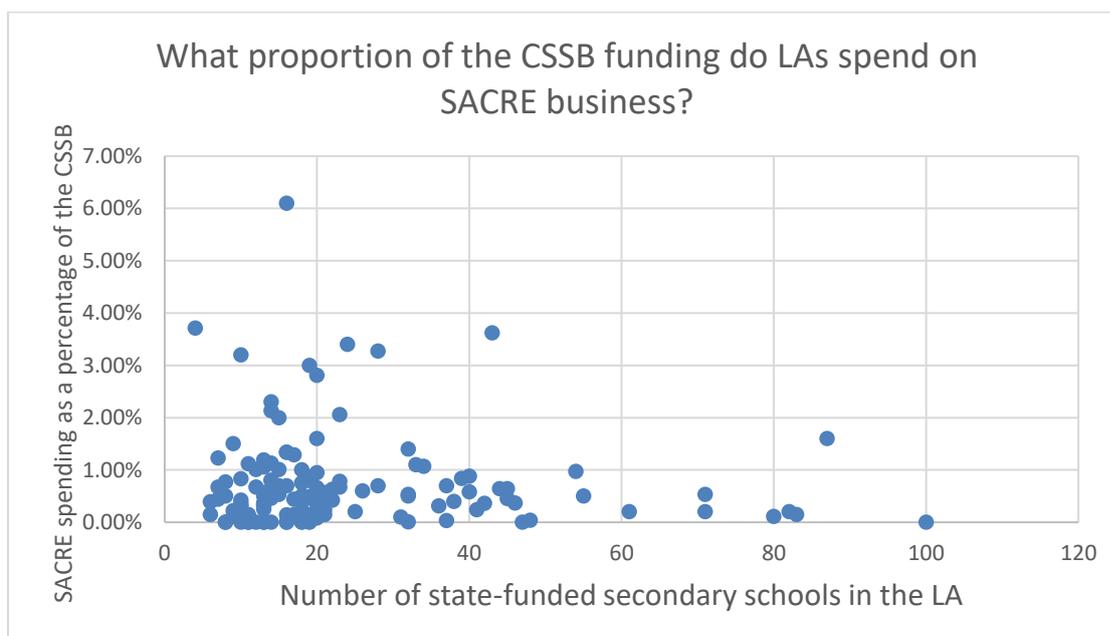


Figure 3

3. Spending on Specific Items

We asked LAs how much they allocated to **professional support** including advisers and consultants. 100 LAs answered this question. 27 reported that they allocated £0 of funding to professional support. The average spend on professional support by the 73 authorities that responded to say they allocate funding was £7,095.03. The responses ranged from £59,418 to £145.

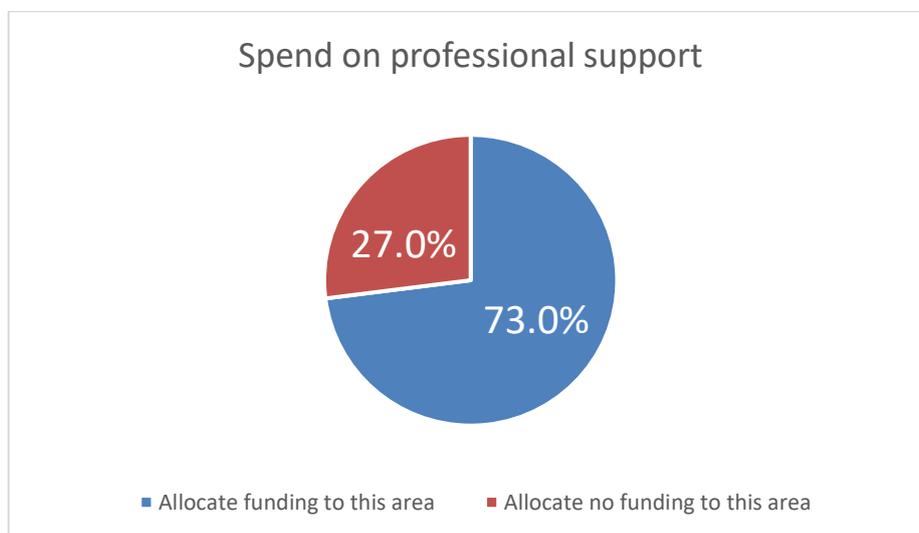


Figure 4

We asked LAs how much they allocated to **democratic services** (e.g. clerking). 49 authorities responded to this question. Seven authorities reported allocating £0. 42 authorities responded that they allocate some funds to this area and their mean spend on democratic services was £2648.18. The responses ranged from £25,574 to £200.

We asked LAs how much they allocated to **supporting RE in schools**. 80 authorities responded to this question. 42 authorities allocate £0. The mean spend for the 38 authorities who allocate funding to this area is £2529.07. The level of support ranges from £10,829 to £112.

It is difficult to see how a SACRE can be fulfilling its statutory duties, let alone performing well, if an LA does not allocate some budget to professional support, democratic services and support for schools.

4. The Agreed Syllabus

The LA must “institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus within five years of the last review, and subsequently every five years after the completion of each further review¹¹. When the FOI was sent in November 2020 this would mean that the oldest syllabus review should have been 2015. Seven LAs told us that their syllabus was last reviewed earlier than that, three in 2014, one in 2013, two in 2012 and one in 2010, making it 10 years old. This most fundamental duty of LAs is subject to difficulties due to underfunding. When we contacted those SACREs they did tell us that those very old syllabuses were at various stages of review.

81 LAs disclosed the cost of completing their last revision of the Agreed Syllabus, including writing, developing, publishing and launching it with initial training for schools. The mean reported cost was £8,452. The most expensive Agreed Syllabus review was almost £45,000, with five Authorities spending committing more than £20,000 of resource to the last syllabus review; of these five, four were locally produced and one was licenced from RE Today. Most syllabuses (30) cost between £5,000 and £10,000. Three LAs claimed to have spent less than £1,000 on the review, with one suggesting a total cost of £81.

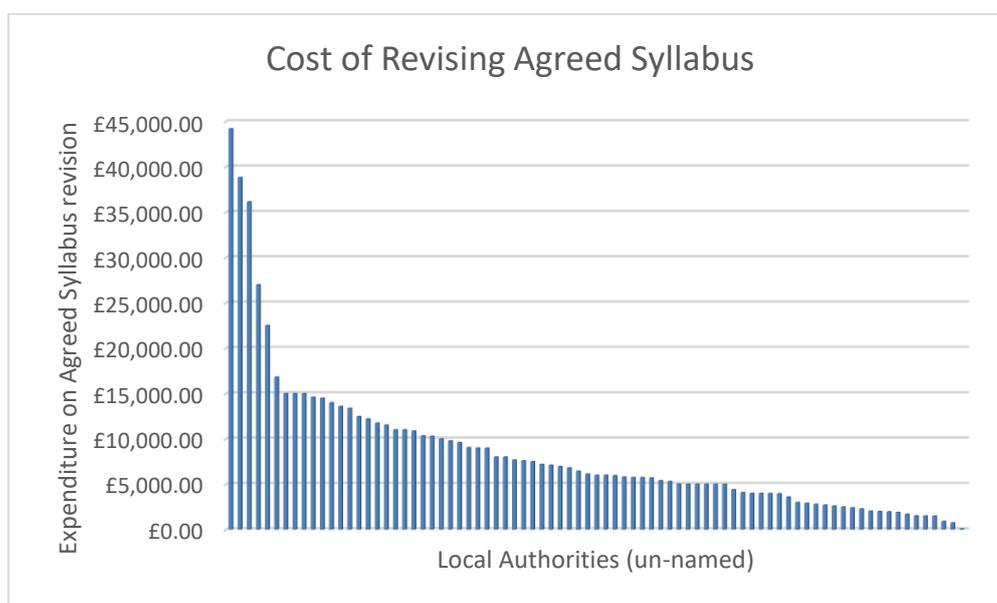


Figure 5

It is difficult to see how a syllabus can be properly reviewed without a significant spend. If minor changes are required, we would consider £5,000 to be a very bare minimum spend. We would expect a proper review process to cost in excess of £10,000.

¹¹ DCSF (2010) *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance*, Page 11.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf

5. Recommendations

A. SACREs

SACREs should consider offering formal advice to the local authority about the level of spend required for them to discharge their functions properly. They should share this report with their LA and ask for it to be noted. They should request from the LA their response to our FOI of November 2020 and then compare their local data with the national data in this report. This would provide many SACREs with a rich discussion to have with their LA. The Secretary of State himself has stated that the DfE “would investigate any complaint that statutory responsibilities were not being delivered to ensure that the LA took any necessary remedial action.”¹² SACREs should be able to set out ambitious work programmes without the fear of underfunding. Further clarification of the statutory responsibilities of LAs in respect of their SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences can be found in the 2010 guidance.¹³

B. Local Authorities

LAs must adequately fund SACREs to enable them to carry out their statutory duties and to support high quality RE and collective worship in schools.¹⁴ We consider 2% of CSSB to be a reasonable spend to enable this. LAs must set aside sufficient money to ensure the Agreed Syllabus Review can be effective every five years. We reiterate that as a minimum expectation, LAs must provide the following:

- a clerk
- a professional officer who has expertise in RE curriculum design;
- a publicly accessible place to meet;
- the reasonable expenses of members;
- publishing the agreed syllabus and other SACRE materials (including agendas and minutes), most usually on the LA website.
- NASACRE subscription and AGM attendance.

The minister for school standards; Nick Gibb MP included this statement in response to a parliamentary question from Stephen Timms MP. “If the Department is informed that an individual SACRE or ASC is experiencing difficulties in fulfilling its statutory duties, the Department will contact the local authority to remind them of their duty to support their activities satisfactorily.”¹⁵

C. The DfE

In line with the Secretary of State’s directive above, the department should write to LAs who have not published a timely Agreed Syllabus review and ask for an explanation and a project plan. They should also write to the 25 authorities who declared no spending on SACRE business and ask them how they can be expected to fulfil their statutory duties without using any funds.

D. Ministers

Finally, NASACRE recommends that government ministers should reiterate at every opportunity the expectation that Local Authorities will use a significant portion of their CSSB to adequately fund SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences to discharge their statutory duties.

Thanks

NASACRE would like to express gratitude to all those who give so much to ensure that SACREs do their very best to support high quality RE and Collective Worship in schools across the country. Thanks also to Claire Clinton, Marie Cooper, Paul Smalley and Deborah Weston for putting this report together.

Cover photograph of a SACRE meeting taken by P. Smalley.

¹² Gavin Williamson (2019) private correspondence, 15th August. <http://www.nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/1-246-letter-from-gavin-williamson.pdf>

¹³ DCSF (2010) *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance*, pages 10ff: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf

¹⁴ *ibid.*, page 11

¹⁵ HC Deb, 28 March 2018, cW <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2018-03-28/134697>

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	Need		Actions	Dates	Notes
Teacher training and support: network meetings	1 st Primary Network	Invitations/promotion	SB to confirm venue and date, send materials for publicity	7/10/20	To include: defining what is good RE, survey of RE provision; launch calendar competition; develop Syllabus support materials Contributing to: ASC; building links with other faiths and SACRE and how Syllabus could best support teaching and learning; clearer picture of school provision; building network support; improving pedagogy in T+L in schools;
			JA information released on school circulars and email		
		Plan and run Network	SB plan and run network		
	1 st Secondary Network	Invitations/promotion	SB to confirm venue and date, send materials for publicity	8/10/20	
			JA information released on school circulars and email		
		Plan and run Network	SB plan and run network		
	2 nd Primary Network	Invitations/promotion	SB to confirm venue and date, send materials for publicity	10/2/21	
			JA information released on school circulars and email	10/2/21	
		Plan and run Network	SB plan and run network	24/2/21	
	2 nd Secondary Network	Invitations/promotion	SB to confirm venue and date, send materials for publicity	10/2/21	
			JA information released on school circulars and email	10/2/21	
		Plan and run Network	SB plan and run network	26/2/21	
3 rd Primary Network	Invitations/promotion	SB to confirm venue and date, send materials for publicity			
		JA information released on school circulars and email			
		SB plan and run network	8/7/21		
3 rd Secondary Network	Invitations/promotion	SB to confirm venue and date, send materials for publicity			
		JA information released on school circulars and email			
	Plan and run Network	SB plan and run network	May 2021		
Interfaith Competition: RE Calendar 2021- 2022	School Entries		SB confirm themes with SACRE and email materials for school circular	4/12/20	
			JA information released on school circulars	10/2/21	
			Winners selection made at Network meeting(s) or independently	After 14/5/21	
	Design		SB confirm design, details sent to create draft		
			SB send to Clerk to email SACRE Chair, CA and members draft for approval (and dates)		
	Production		Design finalised	25/6/21	
	Sharing		SB create accompanying wording for schools circular, Council and LA website, JA share		
		JA ensure sent to schools, brought to SACRE Meet 3, CA sharing with relevant LA team(s)			
Annual Report 2019-20	Draft		JA ensure data sent to SB; RB provide relevant info	8/1/21	
			JP ensure SB sent self-evaluation materials	4/1/21	
			SB write draft 1 for proofreading/check	29/1/20	
			SB amend draft (add RB intro), send revised draft to JP	12/2/20	
	Review		SACRE review at Meet 2	3/3/20	
	Share		SB amend accordingly	19/3/20	
			JP to send to NASACRE, JA to add to public SACRE page	26/3/20	

Agreed Syllabus	Support Materials (see also Teacher training and support: network meetings, above)	SB initial feedback for primary Autumn unit plans	7/10/20	Supporting: SMSC in schools; develop interfaith understanding and communication teaching resource; promoting awareness of SACRE boosting awareness and inclusion of diversity in RE	
		SB devised primary Spring unit plans email to primary network teachers	10/11/21		
		SB feedback for Autumn and Spring unit plans, pupil samples	24/2/21		
		SB devise primary Summer unit plans and email to primary network teachers	18/3/21		
		SB feedback for Summer unit plans, collate assessment samples	8/7/21		
		SB send unit plans to Jo to share with SACRE faith members	September 2021		
Electronic Teaching Resources	REal Videos	Design	SACRE approval of electronic resources collation	11/11/20	Contributing to: building links with other faiths; clearer picture of school provision; improving pedagogy in T+L in schools
			SB source/liaise with colleagues/contacts for best software	17/12/20	
			SB devise list of suggested resources, email to JP		
		Create	JP ask SACRE members for contributions		
			SACRE members independently devise/create and email SB		
	Revise	SB collate materials, edit/proof and consult with individuals if required			
	Share	JA ensure upload, SB share materials with teachers			
	Membership	Write to invite Buddhist (SB) and Jewish (SB/JP) members			
	Funding: Interfaith Dialogue event	SB complete application form, RB to sign, CA approve	26/3/21		
		SB send in application form	31/3/21		

For 2021-22 (if successful)

Electronic Teaching Resources	Interfaith Dialogue event	Preparation	If above successful: SB to prepare material and share with SACRE faith members		As above...
			SACRE members independently devise/create and email SB		
			SB collate materials, edit/proof and consult with individuals if required, prepare 'script'		
		Event	SB rehearse and record 'interviews'		
			SB/JA edit resources		
		Share	JA ensure upload, SB share materials with teachers		
			SB evaluations of impact – case studies with schools?		
			SB complete funding requirements		