

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

Thursday 6 February 2025 at 5.00 pm

To be held as an online meeting

Membership:

Chair: Basma ElShayyal (Chair)

Vice Chair: Ian Slade

Adviser: Nadia Nadeem

Representatives of:

- Local Authority
- Church of England
- Brent's other faiths and denominations
- Teachers unions

For further information contact: Abby Shinhmar, Governance Officer
Tel: 020 8937 2078; Email: Abby.shinhmar@brent.gov.uk

The SACRE meeting will be open for the public and press to attend as an online virtual meeting. The link to view the meeting live will be available [HERE](#)

Agenda

| Item | Page |
|--|---------|
| 1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair | |
| To undertake the annual election of the SACRE Chair & Vice-Chair. | |
| Members are asked to note that in accordance with the SACRE Constitution the appointment of Chair & Vice Chair will be for the remainder of 2024-25 academic year, with elections for the 2025-26 academic year to be undertaken at the next meeting in July 2025. | |
| 2 Apologies for Absence | |
| 3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting | 1 - 7 |
| To consider and approve the minutes from the last SACRE meeting held on Thursday 8 February 2024. | |
| 4 Determinations (if any) | |
| Members are asked to note there are no applications for determinations to be considered at this meeting | |
| 5 SACRE Annual Report 2023-24 | 8 - 18 |
| To receive and comment on the draft SACRE Annual Report 2023-24. | |
| 6 RE and NASACRE Updates | 19 - 30 |
| To receive an update on issues relating to RE provision and NASACRE. | |
| 7 Any Other Business & Date of Future Meetings | |
| SACRE is asked to note the date for the final meeting during the 2024-25 academic year as follows: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thursday 10 July 2025 at 5pm – to be undertaken online | |

**MINUTES OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
 (SACRE)**

Held as an online virtual meeting on Thursday 8 February 2024 at 5pm

Attendees (in remote attendance):

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>GROUP A <i>(A committee of persons representing such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area)</i></p> | <p>Sagar Forouhi (Baha'i) Dr Kavita Koka (Zoroastrianism) Bhupinder Singh (Sikhism) Sally Strauss (Judaism) Amanda Whelan (Roman Catholicism)</p> |
| <p>GROUP B <i>(A committee of persons representing the Church of England)</i></p> | <p>Steve Taylor (Church of England) Tim Wright (Church of England)</p> |
| <p>GROUP C <i>(A committee of persons representing such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area)</i></p> | <p>Ian Slade (Vice Chair) Varsilla Bhudia (Association representing Teachers)</p> |
| <p>GROUP D <i>(A committee of persons representing the authority)</i></p> | <p>Cllr Neil Nerva Cllr Tazi Smith</p> |

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <p>In attendance:</p> | <p>Shaun Cremin (Associate Member) Nadia Nadeem (SACRE/RE Advisor) Shirley Parks (Brent Council – Director Safeguarding Performance and Strategy) Jen Haskew (Brent Council - Head of Setting and School Effectiveness Service) Helen Tulloch (Brent Council - School Effectiveness Service) Abby Shinhmar & James Kinsella (Brent Council - Governance Team)</p> |
|------------------------------|--|

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The meeting opened by noting that apologies had been received from Basma ElShayyal (Sunni Islam, Chair). Given her absence, it was confirmed that Ian Slade (as Vice Chair) would take over as chair for the meeting. In welcoming everyone to

the meeting it was noted apologies had also been received from Michelle Goldsmith (Humanism) and Kim Wilson (Association representing Teachers).

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was **AGREED** to approve the minutes of the previous SACRE meeting held on Wednesday 11 October 2023.

3. **Determinations**

3.1 Ian Slade, Chair, advised that there were six determinations to be considered at the meeting as follows:

- (a) Anson Primary School
- (b) Brentfield Primary School
- (c) Mitchell Brook Primary School
- (d) Mount Stewart Federation & Mount Stewart Infants
- (e) Newfield Primary School
- (f) Northview Junior and Infant School

In considering each determination application members of SACRE were keen to recognise the quality of the applications which had been submitted for consideration having noted the wider context of collective worship within the determination process and current statutory requirements in relation to the application process. Whilst recognising, as an example, the value in the provision of supporting information designed to outline how the RE curriculum had been tailored to reflect different religions in each school, members were reminded this did not form part of the formal application requirement to SACRE.

In addition, members were keen (in reviewing the Collective Worship Policy provided by each school in support of their applications) to recommend as good practice the inclusion of details, as part of any application moving forward, should any parents/carers at the school have indicated they wished to withdraw their children from collective worship.

Having considered the applications, it was therefore unanimously **RESOLVED** (with each of the four membership groups voting in favour) to approve and grant the renewal of the following determinations:

- (1) Anson Primary School
- (2) Brentfield Primary School
- (3) Mitchell Brook Primary School
- (4) Mount Stewart Federation & Mount Stewart Infants
- (5) Newfield Primary School
- (6) Northview Junior and Infant School

- 3.2 Following the decision made at the previous meeting, members were also advised that the Governing Body minutes in support of the determination application from Stonebridge School had now been received, with members noting the determination application had subsequently been approved.

4. **SACRE Membership Review**

James Kinsella (Brent Council – Governance Manager) advised that following the discussion at the previous meeting on 11 October 2024 the review of current SACRE membership had been completed. The review had sought to identify and seek replacements for any vacancies within the existing membership as well as remind members about the need to ensure they attend at least one SACRE meeting each academic year.

Members were advised that as a result of the review and vacancies reported at the last meeting, the following changes in membership had been approved by the Local Authority:

Group A: Faith Group representatives

- Amanda Wheelan had replaced Dawn Titus as the new Roman Catholic representative.
- Saghar Forouhi had replaced Sheralyn Snaith as the new Baha'i representative.

Group B: Church of England representatives

- Tim Wright had replaced Mark Newton as the new Church of England representative.

Group C: School & Teaching Association representatives

- Varsilla Bhudia (Oakington Manor) had filled one vacancy.

Members were advised that contact had also been made with the London Diocesan Board for Schools regarding the exiting vacancy in Church of England representation and need to replace Graham Marriner as an existing member on SACRE.

In relation to the School and Teaching Association (Group C) representation, SACRE noted that one vacancy remained with Ian Slade advising he was aware of a potential expression of interest from a primary school colleague that he would encourage to make the necessary contact to progress.

The Chair thanked officers and members for their hard work and ongoing contribution with SACRE noting the outcome of the membership review and welcoming the appointments made as a result. At this stage no further action was identified as required in relation to the membership review, with SACRE to be kept updated on any further appointments needing to be made.

5. **SACRE Annual Report 2022-23**

Nadia Nadeem (SACRE Advisor) introduced the item, which presented a final draft of the 2022-23 Annual Report.

In considering the report, members noted the detail provided in terms of the activities undertaken by SACRE to support schools in relation to delivery of their RE responsibilities, collective worship and determinations supported by the latest census data. Following on from the discussion earlier in the meeting, it was noted that no schools had indicated they had pupils who had been withdrawn from collective worship, which it was felt reflected the high quality of RE provision across the borough.

SACRE was advised that the report had been presented in final draft with members welcoming the update on implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and encouraged to submit any final comments they may have direct to Nadia Nadeem for incorporation in the final version of the Annual Report.

In highlighting the value of the work being undertaken by SACRE as detailed within the Annual Report, Shirley Parks (Brent Council – Director Safeguarding Performance and Strategy) took the opportunity to thank Nadia Nadeem for her work in preparing the report and SACRE **AGREED** to approve the final draft of the 2022-23 Annual Report, subject to any final comments submitted by members following the meeting.

6. **General RE Update**

SACRE received an update from Nadia Nadeem (SACRE Advisor) which covered the following issues:

- In July 2023 the RE Council had released a preliminary report on the new national content standard for RE. This report provided guidance on the quality of the RE education that needed to be provided with a further report available at the end of March 2024. The DfE were in support of this guidance.
- The publication of the Annual OFSTED report at the end of Autumn 2023, which had included reference to individual subjects including RE. The comments made had focussed on the way in which it appeared RE (despite being a statutory subject) appeared to be undervalued as a subject on the curriculum with a lack of clarity and support from the government making the position more complex. In highlighting a number of concerns the report had identified a need for co-ordinated effort amongst stakeholders to improve the quality of RE in schools including the provision of high quality professional development for RE teaching staff and clarity in terms of the breadth and depth of curriculum to be followed and government expectations regarding RE provision in schools.

SACRE noted that the findings reflected the views of NASACRE and a number of other RE organisations with the issues highlighted in relation to the recruitment, retention and professional development of RE teaching staff recognised as being of specific concern given the national shortage already identified across the sector and with SACRE keen to ensure the position and support available to schools across Brent remained under review. In terms of specific outcomes, it was agreed that arrangements should be made for the Ofsted report and any available supporting resources to be shared with schools, which Jen Haskew advised could be arranged

(in conjunction with Nadia Nadeem) via the Head Teacher School Bulletin. ACTION: Jen Haskew & Nadia Nadeem.

Details were also sought on the level of feedback received from schools who had implemented the new Local Agreed RE Syllabus. In response, Ian Slade advised that feedback from the RE Teachers Panel had been very positive which had also been supported by feedback from individual schools. SACRE advised they would be keen to explore how this feedback could be captured and reviewed in a more formal way, which Jen Haskew advised could be considered as an action moving forward. In terms of implementation of the new syllabus, SACRE were advised that whilst not an issue which fell under their direct remit, support continued to be provided to individual schools through Stacey Burman (RE Advisor), and the School Effectiveness Service.

As no further issues were raised the Chair thanked Nadia Nadeem for the update provided.

7. **NASACRE Update**

Having considered the report from the Ofsted Chief Inspector under the RE Update, SACRE received a further NASACRE update from Nadia Nadeem (SACRE Advisor) which covered the following issues:

- Details were provided on the NASACRE AGM and Annual Conference which was scheduled to take place on Monday 20 May 2024 in York. Members were advised that the theme of the conference would be how SACREs could support high quality RE & Collective Worship. The cost per delegate would be £120 excluding travel and accommodation. Whilst a small budget was held to cover the administration of SACRE meetings it was confirmed that should any members be interested in attending the conference, further funding support would need to be obtained to cover the cost of travel and accommodation. It was agreed that any members interested in attending the NASACRE Conference should contact Jen Haskew/Abby Shinhmar so further details could be provided and, if necessary, additional funding sought to cover the cost of attendance.
- Members noted the NASACRE Briefing (No.37) which had been circulated as an additional supporting document with the agenda.
- Members were reminded that Ramadan was due to commence in early March, with SACRE keen to ensure that appropriate guidance was issued to schools regarding the support needs of Muslim pupils and staff during the fasting period.
- The opportunity was also taken to remind members of the available training and professional development available through NASACRE for SACRE members including the training offer and information available through the RE Hub. This included a range of upcoming training available for those members of SACRE visiting schools, which Nadia Nadeem advised she had included details on with the update and could arrange to share further details on with any interested members. As an example of the development opportunities available Bhupinder Singh advised he had recently been accredited as a Sikh Advocate

and RE Advisor via the RE Hub and as a result was now delivering faith presentations to a range of schools.

- As a final update, SACRE members were advised of the opportunity currently available to stand for election to the NASACRE Executive. Members were asked to contact Abby Shinhmar or Nadia Nadeem should anyone be interested in being nominated for appointment.

As no further issues were raised the Chair thanked Nadia Nadeem for the update provided.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Members were advised about a range of upcoming activities and events, which included:

- A play and supporting talk that would be taking place on 19 February 2024, called 'Kindness' by Holocaust survivor Susan Pollock for which tickets could be made available for school representatives.
- The establishment of a Jewish living web-resource that would be available shortly to support teaching in relation to Judaism.
- Sally Straus had also gained accreditation to present at schools and act as an RE Advisor/Advocate on Judaism and would also be keen to share these details with schools. SACRE noted that Saghar Farouhi had also been accreditation through the RE Hub as an Advisor and Advocate for the Baha'i faith with SACRE keen to ensure that the list of accredited advocates and advisers available to support schools was updated on the RE Hub.
- Concern was expressed at a recent press article from the Trustees of the UK Board of the Inter-Faith Network which had advised that due to the withdrawal of Government funding the charity would need to consider closing. Members hoped it would be possible for a solution to be reached enabling the network to continue given the benefits the network had been able to provide over a number of years in sharing good practice and encouraging dialogue amongst representatives from different faiths.

8.2 Dates of Future Meetings

SACRE NOTED the date for their final meeting during the 2023-24 Academic Year as follows:

- Thursday 11 July 2024 at 5pm to be undertaken online.

The following dates were approved as the draft programme for meetings during the 2024-25 academic year:

- Wednesday 9 October 2024 at 5:30pm – it was agreed that, subject to sufficient interest being expressed, this meeting should be offered in hybrid format enabling members able to do so to attend in person.
- Thursday 6 February 2025 at 5pm – to be held online
- Thursday 10 July 2025 at 5pm – to be held online

The meeting closed at 6.01pm

Ian Slade
Chair

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

LB BRENT STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

January 2025

This LB Brent SACRE Annual Report is presented in the format developed by NASACRE in conjunction with the DfE for use from September 2021.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Foreword from the Chair of SACRE 2023-24

Brent is the UK's most diverse borough; and our SACRE embraces this fact in its composition, approach and philosophy. We are committed to ensuring that all schools in Brent are supported in terms of curriculum development, collective worship and the teaching of Religious Education.

Brent SACRE has always given advice based on an ethos of inclusion and harmony, with equity and inclusivity at the very heart of our approach. This has been greatly facilitated by the wealth of professional knowledge our representatives have as well as the breadth of their (non)religious affiliations.

I would also like to offer special thanks to our colleagues in Brent Council for their support and take great pleasure in recommending this report; and look forward to the privilege of continuing to work with colleagues in order to ensure that Brent SACRE's work grows from strength to strength.

Basma Elshayyal

1.2 Religion and Belief in LB Brent

The London Borough of Brent is one of the most diverse area(s) in the country in relation to religions and other world views and is also the most diverse locality in the UK by country of birth. The composition of its Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) and Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) reflects this. The following statistics which relate to religion and belief are from the latest 2021 National Census and illustrate the diversity of the Local Authority.

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| All Usual Residents | 339,817 |
| Christian | 131,914 |
| Buddhist | 3,117 |
| Hindu | 52,876 |
| Jewish | 3,723 |
| Muslim (Islam) | 72,574 |
| Sikh | 1,530 |
| Other religion: Total | 4,424 (of which 2,488 Jain) |
| No religion: Total | 46,153 |
| Religion not stated | 23,506 |

2. Religious Education Statutory Responsibilities

2.1 Background

The London Borough of Brent's Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is required, in accordance with Section 391(6) of the Education Act 1996, to publish an annual report on its activities. This report summarises its activities during the academic year 2023-24. Its current terms of reference, as laid down by the Education Reform Act 1998, are: "to advise the authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the authority

may refer to the council or as the council may see fit.”

In particular, the SACRE is charged with the following responsibilities:

- It can require the authority to review the Agreed Syllabus on Religious Education.
- It may determine, on application by the headteacher that the requirement for Collective Worship in community schools to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character shall not apply to the Collective Worship provided for some or all of its pupils in a particular school.
- With the authority, to review the support offered for RE teaching, the methods of teaching employed, and teachers’ in-service professional development.

In addition, the SACRE has a direct role in the consideration and disposal of complaints related to the RE curriculum or Collective Worship. The SACRE will be asked to advise where complaints relate to Religious Education given in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus or to Collective Worship in county – now called community – schools maintained by the LA.

Details of the work of the LB Brent SACRE can be found here:

https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/946362/Brent_SACRE.pdf

Agendas, minutes, and associated papers can be found via this link:

<https://democracy.brent.gov.uk/>

2.2 Locally Agreed Syllabus

By statute, every local authority is required to adopt a Locally Agreed Syllabus (LAS) for Religious Education and to review it every five years. The previous LB Brent LAS had been in place for some time, but in recent years had been undergoing a rigorous process of review and revision.

In 2021-22, this process was completed successfully and a new LAS for LB Brent was approved by the Agreed Syllabus Conference on 6th July 2023. The syllabus is successfully being implemented across schools within the local authority.

The new LB Brent Agreed Syllabus is available via this link:

https://legacy.brent.gov.uk/media/16420814/brent-agreed-syllabus-2023.pdf?_ga=2.150678833.648970909.1696840101-536669279.1614254673

2.3 Standards in RE

SACRE members consider the various national and local developments concerning the provision of RE. Their discussions are prompted by the information provided to the SACRE through the regular updates from teacher members, the SACRE Adviser and NASACRE briefings. During 2023-24, SACRE gave particular attention to:

- The embedment of the new Locally Agreed Syllabus and strategies to promote its implementation. As well as making it accessible to schools by promoting it through the Head Teachers bulletin.

- Exploring meaningful ways to engage with the RE Hubs website as a means to build bridges between Brent's SACRE and Brent's Multi Faith Forum, in order to support teachers and schools collectively. Training opportunities available for members of both Brent's SACRE and Brent's Multi Faith Forum. Empowering everyone to effectively engage with schools, thus providing purposeful experiences whereby pupils can engage with religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Monitoring RE Hubs and NASACRE training uptake and promoting this to SACRE members for the purpose of executing SACRE roles more efficiently.
- Schools benefiting from the RE advisor (Nadia Nadeem) issuing newsletters for schools on a half termly basis. The newsletters will provide additional support and guidance for schools and teachers, in delivering a high quality, rich and inclusive RE curriculum. These newsletters will be issued from September 2024.
- A need to improve the core RE in Brent. Especially in secondary schools. This will need to be reviewed in light of the evaluations from the LA's school advisors and the monitoring surveys of both primary and secondary schools.
- Actioning the reviews of the world religion summaries on the Brent website, to ensure that these are reflective of the diverse lived experiences of our members and local communities.

The key outcomes of these discussions have also been analysed and evaluated by members of the RE Networks and their implications for planning teaching and learning considered with care.

2.4 Teacher Training

A 'Good Practice Network', for community primary and secondary school subject leaders in RE, continued to run on a termly basis during the 2023-24 academic year. These sessions were led by Stacey Burnam, the RE Consultant supporting the work on the embedment of the agreed syllabus.

The RE subject leaders in both community primary and secondary schools have met three times this year. All the meetings in 2023-24, were held via virtual platforms.

- **9th November 2023**
- **7th March 2024**
- **5th June 2024**

The sessions focused on discussions relating to pedagogy in RE, deliberating the Ofsted report, as well as sharing examples of pupils learning.

The meetings have highlighted that teachers have continued to work in line with the current syllabus, and that pupils have been engaging with the curriculum; producing high quality learning, which is in line with the latest developments and Ofsted expectations for RE. Feedback from the surveys also indicates that these meetings are supportive in facilitating teachers in identifying next steps for their classrooms and their personal CPD.

2.5 Complaints and Withdrawals

There have been no complaints to SACRE in 2023-24 in relation to Religious Education.

SACRE has received no reports of pupils being withdrawn from Religious Education in 2023-24.

3. Collective Worship Statutory Responsibilities

3.1. Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship

During 2023-24 SACRE continued to share its Collective Worship guidance for schools. The document has been published online, and it can be accessed via this link:

https://www.brent.gov.uk/media/946260/collective_worship_model_approach.pdf

3.2 Determinations

The Adviser to SACRE regularly reminds members about the role, nature and purpose of determinations in relation to Collective Worship.

The following schools received a determination in relation to Collective Worship (or a renewal of the same) during 2023-24:

In the Autumn Term:

- The Stonebridge School

In the Spring Term:

- Chalkhill Primary School
- Oliver Goldsmith
- Phoenix Arch School
- Preston Park Primary School
- Anson Primary School,
- Brentfield Primary School,
- Mitchell Brook Primary School,
- Mount Stewart Federation & Mount Stewart Infants,
- Newfield Primary School
- Northview Junior and Infant School

Guidance on applying for a determination (or a renewal of the same) can be found with the relevant application forms in the LB Brent SACRE document referenced above (under 3.1).

The Adviser to SACRE can offer support with this process on request.

A list of all LA maintained schools with determinations in LB Brent can be found in Appendix *

3.3 Other Information

There have been no complaints to SACRE in 2023-24 in relation to Collective Worship.

SACRE has received no reports of pupils being withdrawn from Collective Worship in 2023-24.

4. Links with other Bodies

LB Brent SACRE is affiliated to The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) and notes and discusses key points from its regular briefings.

See this link for more details: www.nasacre.org. Login details for the NASACRE website can be obtained from the SACRE Clerk.

The 2024 NASACRE Conference and AGM was held face to face on Monday, 20 May 2024, at Hilton, York. Verbal and written feedback on the NASACRE Conference was provided to the SACRE by the SACRE advisor (Nadia Nadeem) at its summer term meeting and formed the basis for discussion and reflection by members. Full details and copies of the relevant paperwork from the 2024 Conference can be found at: <https://nasacre.org.uk/conference-and-agm/2024-how-can-sacres-support-high-quality-re-collective-worship/>

The Adviser to SACRE is a member of NASACRE and is also a member of many other RE professional bodies and shares information from them at SACRE Meetings.

5. SACRE Involvement Locally

LB Brent SACRE has developed links with various local groups and initiatives. During this academic year, we have encouraged our faith leaders to complete the training with RE Hubs to gain accreditation that will enable them to work alongside local schools by going into schools and sharing their faiths and lived experiences with pupils. Thus, bridging the gap between schools and local communities.

5.1 National Census 2021

The importance of the census, from a SACRE perspective was noted, in terms of the updated data that has been provided around demographic changes across LB Brent and as a means of ensuring that the membership of SACRE remained as representative as possible.

Thus, as suggested by the SACRE, the 2021 National Census, included an option to self-identify with regards to religion: with the question remaining voluntary.

The information provided by the National Census 2021 has been used by a range of groups, including SACRE to plan and deliver services.

6. SACRE Arrangements

6.1 Meetings in 2023-24

The SACRE met on the following occasions in 2023-24:

- 11th October 2023
- 8th February 2024
- 11th July 2024 – *cancelled due to being inquorate*

The SACRE conducted hybrid meetings, with the option to attend at the Brent Civic Centre or join virtually.

6.2 Professional and Administrative Support

Secretarial assistance and a budget for the discharge of the SACRE's duties is provided by the LB Brent. The key areas of this support include the following:

- Provision of a Clerk
- Support of a Local Authority Adviser
- Commissioning of an RE Consultant and Adviser to the SACRE
- Commissioning of an RE Consultant to work on the review of the agreed syllabus
- Funding of the NASACRE annual membership
- Funding for at least one SACRE member to attend NASACRE's annual Conference and AGM
- Costs relating to establishing and reviewing a Locally Agreed Syllabus.

The SACRE is grateful to the LB Brent for making this support available.

6.3 Key Contacts

- Chair of the SACRE Basma Elshayyal (Group B)
- Vice Chair of the SACRE Ian Slade (Group C)
- Clerk to the SACRE Abby Shinhmar
- Local Authority Contact Jen Haskew
- Adviser to SACRE Nadia Nadeem (RE Advisor)

6.4 Membership, Representation and Recruitment

During the year, SACRE was pleased to be able to welcome Elizabeth Sims as the new Baptist representative from September 2024.

As required within the SACRE constitution, SACRE has undertaken a review to ensure membership remains representative of the current breakdown of religion and faith groups across the borough.

A full list of SACRE members is included in the Appendices.

6.5 Attendance

The October and February SACRE meetings in 2023-24 were quorate. The July meeting was not.

6.6 Attendance Records

Full details of attendance are available at:

[Browse meetings - Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education \(SACRE\) \(brent.gov.uk\)](https://www.brent.gov.uk/brent-re/sacres/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education)

6.6 Training for SACRE Members

SACRE members are encouraged to attend training provided by NASACRE. School based SACRE members or those with other links to education also attend local and national RE training including Diocesan training.

6.7 Finance given to SACRE for its Work

The London Borough of Brent continues to provide SACRE with administrative support and to cover the running costs of the SACRE, the work of the RE Consultant, and other costs such as membership of NASACRE, and attendance at the NASACRE Conference etc.

7. Appendices

7.1. SACRE Membership 2023-24

7.2. List of Schools with a Determination

7.3 Circulation Details for the SACRE Annual Report

This Annual Report is shared with the Director of Education for LB Brent and sent to NASACRE.

London Borough of Brent SACRE membership 2023/24

Group A: Christian and other religious denominations reflecting the principal religious traditions in the area.

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Baha'i | Saghar | Forouhi |
| Buddhism | Rupa | Monerawela |
| Hinduism (Brent Hindu Samaj) | Deva | Samaroo |
| Hinduism (Saiva Siddanta) | | |
| Islam (Shi'a) | Andleeb | Naqvi |
| Islam (Shi'a) | Basma | El Shayyal |
| Jainism | Manhar | Mehta |
| Judaism | Sally | Strauss |
| Roman Catholicism | Amanda | Wheelan |
| Christina Orthodox | | |
| Pentecostal Churches | Sarah | Cawte |
| Sikhism | Bhupinder | Singh |
| Zoroastrianism | Malcolm | Deboo |
| Zoroastrianism | Yazad | Bhadha |
| Humanism | Michelle Suzan | Goldsmith Tokan (sub) |

Group B: Church of England

| | |
|--------|----------|
| Graham | Marriner |
| Steve | Taylor |
| Andrew | Teather |
| Tim | Wright |

Group C: Associations Representing Teachers

| | |
|-----------|--------|
| Varsilla | Bhudia |
| Andrew | Bate |
| Ian | Slade |
| John | Roche |
| Kim | Wilson |
| Stephanie | Enas |

Group D:

LA Representatives

| | |
|-------------|--------|
| Cllr Neil | Nerva |
| Cllr Tariq | Dar |
| Cllr Orleen | Hylton |

List of Schools with a Determination

| |
|--|
| Anson Primary School |
| Barham Primary School |
| Brentfield Primary School |
| Carlton Vale Infant School |
| Chalkhill Primary School |
| Elsley Primary School |
| Harlesden Primary School |
| Lyon Park Schools |
| Malorees Infants School Mitchell Brook Primary |
| Mora Primary School |
| Mount Stewart Inf School |
| Mount Stewart Junior School |
| Newfield Primary School |
| Northview Primary School |
| Park Lane Primary School |
| Phoenix Arch School |
| Preston Park Primary School |
| Roe Green Infant School |
| Roe Green Junior School |
| Stonebridge Primary School |
| Wembley Primary School |

UPDATES

- NATRE Survey on the provision for RE in Primary Schools (Autumn 2024) has identified that fewer schools are meeting their statutory duty to teach RE to all pupils. In 2022, almost all schools (96%) reported that all pupils were being taught religious education but by 2024, this figure had fallen to 87%.
- In contrast, leaders of RE in primary schools are now more likely to be more experienced teachers than in the past and fewer adults other than teacher now deliver RE which is now mainly taught by classroom teachers.
- The greatest concern is that too many primary teachers are not adequately prepared to teach Religious education – either in their initial teacher training or as part of their continuing professional development. Consequently, they report a lack of confidence in delivering some aspects of the curriculum.
- This needs to be addressed urgently by the Department for Education as part of a National Plan for RE.
- NATRE executive member, Greg Parekh makes the case for more opportunities to study Religious Studies at A level in FE News. Teachers of RE who would like to explore a range of arguments for an A level offer in their school, will find this article useful. Greg Parekh is an experienced teacher of A level and shares his experience of pupils' appreciation of the subject. Read the full article on the FE news website.

UPDATES CONTINUED

- Stacey Burman our RE Consultant for Brent has highlighted that Teachers have done a lot of work in line with the current syllabus, and the pupils are engaging superbly with the distinct pedagogical model in it, producing high quality learning which is in line with the latest developments and Ofsted expectations in the subject. Teacher's feedback is that they do not want the syllabus to change, and Stacey is happy to continue to support SACRE/RE Advisor and the teachers/schools, who actually helped develop this syllabus themselves to continue delivering high-quality RE. Stacey has also said that she would be more than happy to support Brent's syllabus review when the need arises.
- Naomi Franks, a Volunteer at Willesden Jewish Cemetery, which is an Orthodox cemetery. Wanted to make SACRE and schools aware that the cemetery offers a range of activities for both Jewish and non-Jewish schools. They would like to make contact and offer twilight sessions to Brent teachers to explain how we can teach about Judaism, as well as offer relevant activities through the RE, English, History and RSHE curricula. They support all Key Stages.
They have twilight sessions for teachers and education workshops for anyone interested. Further information can be found here:
<https://www.willesdenjewishcemetery.org.uk/schools#:~:text=All%20our%20sessions%20are%20designed,hands%2Don%20workshop%20in%20school>
- Sally Strauss wanted to share a new resource 'Jewish Living Online'. A digital education initiative jointly produced by the Board of Deputies and the Anti Defamation League: <https://jlo.org.uk>
- Anna Silver has shared an invitation from the Faith and Belief Forum to help shape the future of Inter Faith Week! Inter Faith Week has been a cornerstone of interfaith engagement in the UK since 2009. Following the closure of The Inter Faith Network in Spring 2024, The Faith & Belief Forum is now launching a nationwide consultation in England to ensure the future of Inter Faith Week is shaped by the people on the ground. The **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government** intends to fund this nationwide consultation, taking place in January and February 2025. F&BF is inviting **everyone** – interfaith organisations, practitioners, and enthusiasts – to share their views and be part of the process. Further details can be found here: <https://mailchi.mp/faithbeliefforum.org/interfaith-week-2024-incoming-10977808?e=8931b374d4> To register for a workshop or ask any questions, email Sophie Mitchell at sophie.mitchell@faithbeliefforum.org

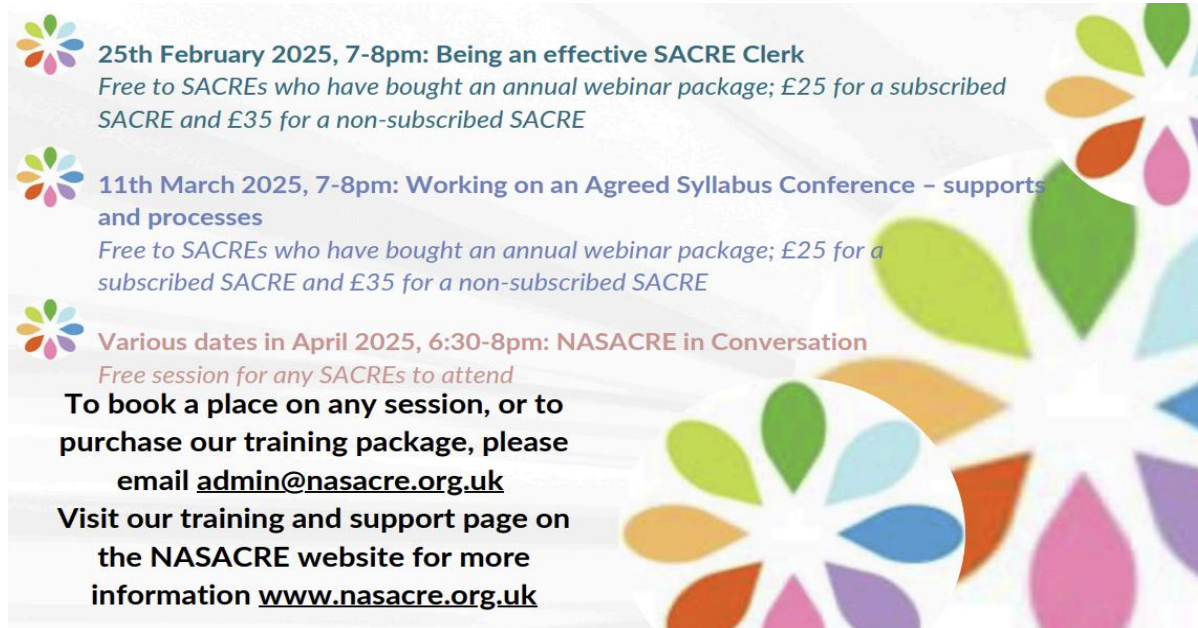
TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES


- 1. Places of Interest / School Speaker Training 2024-25 This is our third year of POI/SS training offered once again for free to participants. The comprehensive training is held online and lasts for 1.5 hours. It is an opportunity to develop knowledge about hosting schools in a place of worship/interest or going into a school to speak to pupils. It is also a time to meet other people who offer a similar service and share their ideas, practice and experience. The training is valid for two years, and participants who complete the online training receive the RE Hubs Kitemark. This is a recognised kitemark in the education community. It also allows the participant or their organisation to be registered on the RE Hubs directory for schools to contact them. You can

take a look using the links below: <https://www.re-hubs.uk/get-involved/places-of-interest/>
<https://www.re-hubs.uk/get-involved/school-speakers/> Sessions run monthly from September to July each year. They are timed to help participants find a convenient slot to suit them. Over the year, there will be several morning, afternoon or early evening dates. To find out more click on the link – <https://www.re-hubs.uk/about/re-hubs-kitemark-training/> Or to book a place use the link: <https://www.re-hubs.uk/get-involved/register-as-a-place-of-interest/>


- 2. NATRE run ECT webinars for free for subject knowledge monthly. For more details: <https://www.natre.org.uk/membership/early-careers-teachers/ect-free-monthly-webinar/>

NASACRE Training Events:



 **25th February 2025, 7-8pm: Being an effective SACRE Clerk**
Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package; £25 for a subscribed SACRE and £35 for a non-subscribed SACRE

 **11th March 2025, 7-8pm: Working on an Agreed Syllabus Conference – supports and processes**
Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package; £25 for a subscribed SACRE and £35 for a non-subscribed SACRE

 **Various dates in April 2025, 6:30-8pm: NASACRE in Conversation**
Free session for any SACREs to attend

To book a place on any session, or to purchase our training package, please email admin@nasacre.org.uk

Visit our training and support page on the NASACRE website for more information www.nasacre.org.uk

NASACRE Training Programme

<https://nasacre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Virtual-training-programme-24-25.pdf>

NASACRE In conversation Event 20th March 2025 6:30 – 8pm: Further Details -

<https://nasacre.org.uk/training-and-support/>

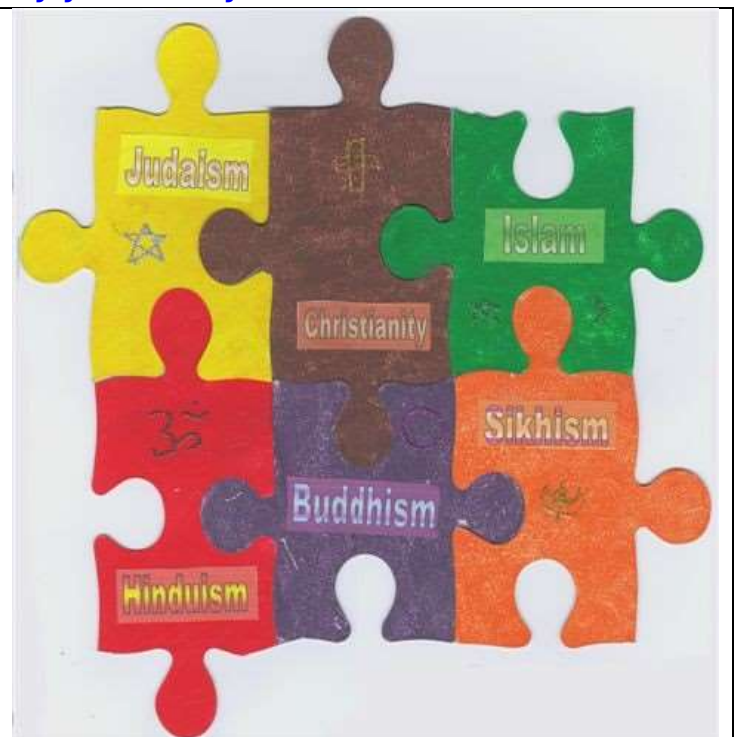
Activist SACREs in 2024

35+ things a good SACRE can do!

Any SACRE could be passive and reactive -some are - but this is a plea for activism from SACREs. I hold the view that any SACRE, large or small, expert or developing, should consider how to take action in pursuit of its mission to guard and develop standards in RE. NATRE has a very strong interest in SACRE effectiveness and is pleased to support our many teacher members who serve on SACREs.

We think that SACREs are more powerful than we have yet seen – statutory bodies, in all local authorities, with representation from religion, professionalism and democratic structure are powerful, but often don't notice their powers. Both dependent upon the LA, and independent of it, the SACREs that do most for RE are powerful indeed.

I like the idea of activism, because it represents the capacity of the SACRE to make a difference, rather than merely maintain itself. Perhaps a rule of thumb for activism might be 'does this SACRE innovate at least one project every year?' Is yours an activist SACRE?



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35+ things a good SACRE can do: teacher representatives can initiate any or all of these.

Flexing the activists' muscles.

- 1. Ask the LA for money – or offer to raise money for your work by being entrepreneurial.** Tackle the question of the SACRE's own funding needs. I think NASACRE has an important role here, to disseminate best practice in funding SACREs. Some SACREs manage without anyone to pay the cost of stamps or web updates, and others can find tens of thousands of pounds of local authority money from a core services budget for working parties and agreed syllabus work. Connecting the work of SACRE with citizenship and community cohesion is a route some have taken here. This is, for some SACREs, the essential first step to becoming activist.

seek to find at least three schools in each key stage that are 'beacons' for quality RE ~ then spread the word about them.
- 2. Monitor and praise.** Monitoring schools' performance through reading OFSTED reports (this data not as good as it was, so needs supplementing by GCSE and provision data from Secondary schools and any possible sources from Primary schools, especially with regard to self evaluation in schools (the 'Watchsted' website is searchable for RE comments.). Will MATs be able to give us some data as their work unfolds? ASK them!! Celebrate success, and
- 3. Information on provision.** Send out questionnaires to schools, or to pupils, (named or even anonymous?) to support teachers in the endless 'status skirmishing' required of RE subject leaders in their battle for more of the buns, rather than just the crumbs. Information is power here – can your schools say 'we know we need to improve, because of what SACRE say'? Can they say that they know how to improve because of their SACRE's advice? If schools ask SACRE for help do they get it? *If not, what's the point?*
- 4. Offer professional development.** Providing or organising CPD and INSET for teachers, with faith communities to the fore (using the expertise of SACRE members?), running conferences for a day, to bring SACRE members, teachers and governors together, or doing courses on new syllabuses, guidance, schemes of work or planning. Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Gloucestershire and Plymouth are just a few examples who do this, along with many others. The training offer should be on every SACRE's agenda, and every SACRE's events

on 'RE Hubs'. Work collaboratively with other local SACREs – good practice in South Yorkshire could be a model.

5. **Inspect the inspectors.**

Monitoring OFSTED inspection performance and complaining to the office of HMCI. (Could we do that 21st century Biblical contextualisation activity, where students write up 'the parable of the good OFSTED inspector'?) Why don't they mention RE even if its non-compliant, or if its excellent? This needs challenging locally and nationally. Join in with NATRE's program here, thanks to the indomitable Deborah Weston. SACREs might take this up with inspection contractors or regional commissioners.

6. **Try a resource project.** Activist SACREs offer local religions chances to resource RE in local, authentic and contemporary ways. Make a booklet, website or video of photos, contacts, teaching and learning activities related to a dozen places of worship in the Local Authority area, as Leicestershire, Somerset, Blackburn and Coventry have done. This makes schools grateful to SACREs – and can even attract a grant or produce some revenue!

7. **Give authentic faith community voices an audience among teachers.** Write from faith to school: Redbridge's excellent briefing papers on Sikh dress,

observing Ramadan, Jehovah's Witnesses and RE, and other topics are all good models. And it doesn't have to be written: Video, web, photopack or visiting speaker work even better. Tackle the issues

8. **Tell parents.** Publishing a parents' leaflet, to highlight the value of community involvement in RE. Show off some pupils work! (Barnsley once did this with their SACRE annual report) This could significantly shift one of RE's perennial problems, that parental attitudes always seem at least a generation out of date. DFE's contribution here was nice, but could be bettered! Can NASACRE make your work national?

9. **Gather information.** Monitoring standards and examination results, time for RE, subject leadership and other aspects of provision. Information is power in this context, and local authorities can reasonably be asked to provide information to the SACRE. Northamptonshire's approach is exemplary, among many others. Leicestershire and North Yorkshire did surveys that led to improved budgets for syllabus revision. Easy to use survey software and thus gather all important email addresses for your data sheets and contact listings (*you do have these, don't you?*)

10. **Exemplification.** Get together some pupils' work that exemplifies standards in RE with reference to the local syllabus, at levels 1-8. The exemplification is important to establish standards, and such projects have a powerful impact, specially for those new to an area or new to a syllabus. As for example Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Leicester and Hertfordshire local authorities have all done this, to the great benefit of their teachers.
11. **Run a local parliament of religions** for 14-18 year olds. Can we think of a better way of helping young citizens see the place of faith in the 21st century? Inter faith projects model the best of RE and are always exciting. Prince-now-king Charles did one – make him your role model! Dozens of SACREs including Thurrock, Islington, Stoke, Bradford and Lancashire have done these events with some grant funds available and some support from LA budgets for diversity and inclusion.
12. **Organise an arts competition:** RE improves where it gets more creative, and the linked curriculum models increasingly popular in primary schools can make this very useful. Design the cover for the new syllabus ~ as children in Gloucestershire, Lincoln and Hereford have done. Why not relate faith and spirituality to poetry, drama or creative writing too? NATRE's 'Art in Heaven' competition is a model and can be run with a local SACRE round, as Sandwell and Wakefield – who published a booklet of brilliant work and ran an art show in the Minster - have done recently (see www.NATRE.org.uk/spiritedarts)
13. **Help the SEND schools and teachers.** Some SACREs have used the LA's good offices to give particular support to SEND+ schools and practitioners for RE, and others have made a section of their Agreed Syllabus that addresses this clearly and helpfully. Training and CPD can go with this. Well done Wolverhampton, Doncaster and Lancashire for organising here.
14. **Facilitate some exhibitions.** In Croyden, Wakefield, Newham and Coventry, hundreds of children from dozens of schools attended and learned from exhibitions at the faith community buildings of several religions over a period of years. Copy that. Inter Faith Centres in, for example, Leicester, Kirklees, Lancashire, Derby City, co-ordinate visits and visitors to contribute to this purpose. Or invite the national faith community bodies to mount a 'Jewish Way of life' for your schools to visit. Or similar.

15. **Do an essay competition.** RE today and partners promoted an essay competition on the spiritual principles for life in conjunction with the Templeton Foundation. Thousands entered. A SACRE would be an ideal local partner for this. We may even be able to put you in touch with a grant to provide the money for prizes and administration.
16. **Book the stage.** Arrange a pupil performance, like those hundreds inspired by the long-ago RE Festival of 1997, or the JC 2000 millennium arts festival or the RE Council's more recent promotion. NATRE has a display which we hire out! Linking this to a syllabus launch, or an annual lecture is powerful, and involves the interaction of pupils and teachers with SACRE members.
17. **Get lecturers.** Set up an annual lecture series for all those interested in RE, as happens in Hounslow, Redbridge, Westminster or Kent for example. Link it to the publication of the annual SACRE report, and invite the director to preside: directors need to know about RE at its best. Hounslow get about 60 to theirs. *I can't imagine any reason why a SACRE wouldn't at least run an annual lecture.*
18. **Be the voice of religion in the Local Authority.** Contribute to civic inter faith work, e.g. in inter-faith forums with the local Catholic or Anglican Diocese or other faith and belief groups. Send and ask for representatives. Ask Leicester City about this. Wandsworth SACRE give multicultural and community cohesion guidance to the schools too. Some SACREs have even widened the net to advise the police or social workers about local religion and worldviews.
19. **Celebrate the grassroots.** Make a presentation to the Education Cabinet or Committee about the SACRE's grass roots work with pupils, teachers and schools. Make them proud of the religious and belief communities involved, and the sense of inclusion SACRE can create. Most LAs aspire to be more religiously inclusive than they are. *Be the solution to their perceived needs.*
20. **Smoke out the key voices.** Invite key people to speak to the SACRE's annual conference: would this invitation to speak help the Chair of the Education Committee or the new Education / Children's Services director to clarify his / her own thinking on RE? What about locally prominent religious leaders? Politicians? Nothing concentrates the mind like having to speak thoughtfully to a plural audience. Norfolk SACRE had a significant influence on Rt Hon Charles Clarke (a local MP in Norwich) when he was Secretary of State. Plymouth had a hotline to

the RE-committed Luke Pollard MP. The APPG for RE in Parliament has over 100 interested MPs – yours?

21. **Listen to teachers.** Ensure that serving RE teachers are heard every time SACRE meets: do the LA and Union seats get filled by people with RE expertise, or without? Can the SACRE arrange to have more in-touch voices present? Could half day cover be paid, or could it be a standard item on the agenda to hear a report of good practice from the classroom? *Some SACREs have a representative from NATRE on the Teachers' Committee. Yours? Why not?*
22. **Serve 16-19s.** Run an active learning day conference for post sixteen students, to model for schools great ways of providing RE for all in the sixth forms. Link it to tertiary college students as well, to show them what they're missing. Ask in Lancashire, Cumbria, Hertfordshire or Gloucester for experience. The 'dare2engage' initiative, hosted by Youthscape, a Christian agency, is a way to get started with this.
23. **Every year, innovate.** Make sure there's an annual working party of teachers and faith representatives on a key topic: current favourites might include special needs and RE, RE and adaptive learning, assessment, RE three to sevens, RE and PSHE /
- RSE, British Values, GCSEs and A levels or citizenship.
24. **Go visiting.** Arrange your meetings around the faith communities: Three meetings a year could enable six religions to host your SACRE over two years. Hospitality always develops community, as Westminster's SACRE might testify. Lancashire SACRE have met at a Hindu Temple and then at a Mosque.
25. **Get well advised.** Use the RE adviser, and if no adviser is available, explore the use of an RE consultant for briefing and supporting the SACRE and pursuing its business. Many SACREs from Tower Hamlets to Newcastle have done this and been pleased with the increased professionalism resulting. 15 days of real professional time is worth more than the cash it costs to the activist SACRE.
26. **Draw attention to yourself ~ be noisy!** If the local authority is being inspected, aim to get a paragraph in the report, praising the best of your work. Ask for an appointment with the inspectorate, and supply your SEF, development plan annual report and syllabus as required. Expect to be noticed in any other ways too: in any local government re-organisation SACREs must be recognised as a core service. Blowing the trumpet will help RE. If they ignore you, play a noisy attention seeking game.

27. **Be publicists.** Let schools and teachers know about prizes and awards for RE, e.g. fellowships from Farmington, science and religion awards from the Faraday Institute or the Templeton Foundation, the Church College Trusts or the Sandford St Martin Trust Award for media excellence in religion and belief. Or set one up of your own, and *ask some local firms, or the library service, to sponsor the prizes and exhibit the winners.*
28. **Tackle the GCSE / KS4 illegality in some schools, praise the provision in others.** Use Freedom of Information requests to get information about excellent and non-compliant schools (NATRE holds this from its FOI requests program). I'm interested currently to provide a planned course of 10 6 hour non-examined RE units for 14-16s. Quality costs – I am looking for SACREs who will invest a couple of thousand pounds in this together.
lat@retoday.org.uk
29. **Check RE on school websites.** Write to heads about the provision of RE described on their websites. Praise the good ones, and ask for more from the weaker examples. *Every school is required by law to specify its curriculum – obviously including RE – on its website.*
30. **Advice on withdrawal.** Draw attention to advice from e.g. NAHT and NATRE on withdrawal from RE, published in 2018 and supported by the DfE
31. **Support local groups.** NATRE has a link network of over 370 groups for teachers of RE. But many SACREs could really help these often small and struggling but professionally friendly groups. Can you grow one or more in your area? Can the Clerk to SACRE help just a little with publicity or administration? Have a joint SACRE / teachers' group meeting?
32. **Lobby nationally.** Every meeting of a SACRE could (should?) result in a letter to DFE! Or some other nationally powerful institutions (Unions? Faith community bodies?) which need (honestly) the benefit of your experience and grass roots local knowledge. *Activists propose such letters at SACRE meetings, and follow up the replies.*
33. **Tackle the teaching shortage.** Don't give up on teacher supply. If the SACRE asks the local authority who is teaching RE, or uses inspection reports to identify shortfalls in specialist teaching, then it can take action to improve the most intractable problem RE faces. Does the local ITT course or training school provider speak to the SACRE? Contact the University, and see if joint training is a good idea.

34. **Education Sunday:** this annual opportunity for faith to remember education could be taken up at the civic level and among inter faith groups much more than it is. Details are published annually by the Churches' Joint Education Policy Committee. Your chance to get involved? Other national marker days, such as for holocaust remembrance or inter faith week are suitable foci too.

35. **Check your own pulse.** Use the evaluation toolkit to work on yourselves as an effective SACRE. Audit the effectiveness of your own work, and seek to develop the role and influence of the SACRE every year. If this feels out of date, ask NASACRE to update...

Most of these ideas, in one form or another, are culled from my years of SACRE engagement and from RE Today's wide experience of working with SACREs. Therefore they are all already happening somewhere. Making more happen in more places is a definite possibility. It may suggest some new directions for some SACREs. Get active, all you SACRE members.

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From the NATRE Spirited Arts competition:



RE Today
Services

Isabelle, Charlotte and Astrid (all age 12) entered a group piece of artwork titled 'Mother Earth'.

The religions that inspired our work were Hinduism and Paganism. Hinduism inspired us because of the Hindu belief that Brahman, the Hindu God, is in everything and is. But the original idea of Mother Earth came from the Pagan religion, based on the worshipping of nature and that God is like a mother because she has given us life and continues to sustain us.

This work is spiritual because it may remind people that the earth is a gift to us, we belong it and should look after it. This, therefore, is very relevant at the moment because humans are at a stage in their existence in which they really need to start caring and putting the earth and others before their own desires.