

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

Thursday 5 February 2026 at 5.00 pm
Neasden Hindu Temple, Pramukh Swami Road,
Neasden, London NW10 8HW

Members are asked to note that this is being held as an in person meeting at the Neasden Hindu Temple, Pramukh Swami Road, Neasden, London NW10 8HW.

The meeting is not therefore scheduled for live webcast.

Membership:

Chair: Bhupinder Bhasin

Vice Chair: To be confirmed

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

Arrangements for SACRE meeting to be held at Neasden Temple - 5 February 2026

The following arrangements have been confirmed for those members attending the SACRE meeting on Thursday 5 February 2025.

Meeting to be held in person at:

BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (Neasden Temple)
Pramukh Swami Road
NW10 8HW

Website: [BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir \(Neasden Temple\)](#)

Members are advised:

- Parking is available in the Shayona car park opposite the temple as you turn into Pramukhswami Road.
- Once you have parked your cars, please enter the temple complex through gate 4, where you will go through security.
- Upon arrival, Upasana or Kiritbhai will be at the entrance or you can ask for them.
- At the Neasden Temple, the dress code is to dress modestly. Given that this is a formal meeting, business casual attire would suffice.

Outline Schedule for the Evening

5.00 pm - Arrive and be shown around the mandir by Upasana and Kiritbhai

5.45 pm – SACRE Meeting

6.45 pm – Opportunity for SACRE members to join evening worship

7.15 pm – Invitation for SACRE members to dine at Shayona restaurant across the mandir

If you have not already done so, please could you ensure you advise Abby Shinhmar if planning to attend this meeting in order to confirm the number of people attending.

Agenda

Item	Page
1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence	
2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Actions	1 - 5
To consider and approve the minutes from the last SACRE meeting held on Thursday 9 October 2025 as well as any actions.	
3 Election of Vice Chair	
To undertake the election of the SACRE Vice Chair.	
Members are asked to note that in accordance with the SACRE Constitution:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The local authority has agreed not to exercise their right to appoint the Vice Chair, meaning the appointment will be a matter for SACRE to agree; and• The appointment of Vice Chair will be for a term of office covering the remainder of the 2025-26 academic year, with future elections to take place at the last SACRE meeting of each preceding academic year.	
4 Determinations	
There are no determinations to consider.	
5 SACRE Annual Report 2024-25	6 - 15
To consider the SACRE Annual Report 2024-25 provided by the SACRE Advisor.	
6 General RE Update	16 - 18
To receive an update from the SACRE Advisor on any general SACRE and RE related issues.	
7 NSACARE Update	19 - 22
To consider the NASACRE update provided by the SACRE Advisor.	

8 Any Other Business

8.1 Date of Future Meetings

SACRE is asked to note the date for the final meeting during the 2025-26 academic year as follows:

- Thursday 9 July 2026 at 5pm – to be undertaken online

SACRE are also asked to consider and comment on the draft programme of dates identified for meetings during the 2026-27 academic year, as follows:

- Thursday 8 October 2026 at 5pm
- Thursday 4 February 2027 at 5pm
- Thursday 8 July 2027 at 5pm

Following the discussion at the previous meeting, members are asked to consider if they would prefer to undertake one of these meetings in hybrid format or to keep them all online.

Date of the next meeting: Thursday 9 July 2026

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

Held as online meeting on Thursday 9 October 2025 at 5pm

Attendees (in remote attendance):

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>	Saghar Forouhi (Baha'i) Bhupinder Singh (Sikhism) - Chair Sally Strauss (Judaism) Michelle Goldsmith (Humanism) Nitin Palan (Hinduism)
GROUP B <i>(A committee of persons representing the Church of England)</i>	Kyriacos Papasavva
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>	Amira Ghalib
GROUP D <i>(A committee of persons representing the authority)</i>	Cllr Robert Johnson
In attendance:	Nadia Nadeem (SACRE/RE Advisor) Shirley Parks (Brent Council – Director Education Partnerships and Strategy) Helen Tyler (Brent Council – Lead Professional for School Effectiveness Service) Abby Shinhmar (Brent Council - Governance Team)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Helen Tulloch, Councillors Mahmood and Nerva, Amanda Whelan (Roman Catholic faith representative), Michelle Dawson Teaching Association representative) and Shaun Cremin.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matter Arising

It was **AGREED** to approve the minutes of the previous SACRE meeting held on Tuesday 22 July 2025.

Members were advised that following endorsement by representatives of the Teaching Association membership Group the determinations presented to the previous meeting had been confirmed as approved

3. Election of Vice Chair

As a result of the previous meeting not having been quorate, it was **AGREED** to confirm the appointment of Bhupinder Bhasin as new Chair of Brent SACRE.

The Chair informed SACRE that Ian Slade (Vice Chair) had unfortunately advised that due to competing commitments he would need to resign as a member of SACRE which had also created a vacancy as Vice-Chair. In thanking Ian Slade for his contribution towards SACRE during his time as a member, nominations were then sought to fill the vacancy as Vice-Chair. Following the submission of a nomination, it was **AGREED** that Kyriacos Papasavva be appointed to fill the vacancy as the new Vice Chair of Brent SACRE.

4. Determinations

No determinations were submitted for consideration at the meeting.

5. SACRE's Core Responsibilities

Helen Tyler, Lead Professional for School Effectiveness Service, Brent Council, drew member's attention to the "Role, Function and Good Practice for SACRE Members" document, which had been circulated with the agenda and had been supplemented by an additional document provided by Nadia Nadeem, SACRE Advisor, "Activist SACREs in 2024 35+ things a good SACRE could do". Having introduced the documents, members were advised they had been provided to support a wider discussion and consideration of the role of SACRE and its members and how this could be developed in Brent.

Following this the Chair welcomed questions and comments from members of SACRE with the following noted:

- Sally Strauss highlighted that following the well-publicised attack on the Manchester synagogue and also mosques, RE was crucial in the current climate. The recently distributed RE Newsletter had been very beneficial and it was positive that the Chair was offering visits to the Sikh Temple (gurudwara). As a result, the suggestion was made that a Sub-Group be set up to review the scope and current range of activities being offered through Brent SACRE and the role which members could play in support of developing levels of engagement with local schools, including visits by different religious groups.

This proposal was supported by other members of SACRE who felt it would provide a focus to make suggestions for improvements, raise awareness of Brent SACRE and its role in seeking to support and work with schools to

enhance the provision of RE and agreed syllabus. Shirley Parks highlighted the need to be clear about the purpose of school visits and role of SACRE, recognising that whilst it would be possible for SACRE to observe and contribute towards assemblies etc their members would not have a role in assessing the quality of teaching. As the Multi-Faith Forum already worked with schools, Shirley Parks suggested any sub-group should also seek to link with the Multi-Faith Forum to find a way forward as well as seeking to utilise existing links members had individually with schools and faith organisations with examples highlighted by Councillor Johnson and Nitin Patel of visits and education tours already offered by their faith organisations.

- Nitin Palan advised that he was a Trustee at the Neasden Temple and had been hosting school visits for over 20 years with an offer also extended to host members of SACRE for a visit. As it was Diwali in two weeks time, members of SACRE were invited to the temple for a visit. Nitin Palan had also worked with the Multi-Faith Forum previously as well as working with Christian organisations in order to support young people.

As other examples, reference was made to the Jewish Living Exhibition as well as the list of accredited speakers provided through the RE Hub who were available to visit schools, which included the Chair, Sally Strauss and Saghar Forouhi as SACRE members. Nadia Nadeem advised that any other members of SACRE interested in becoming accredited would be able to complete the necessary course.

Shirley Parks supported the idea of establishing a Working Group to consider the wider development of SACRE's role and links that could be developed with the Multi-Faith Forum given the work they were already involved in delivering within schools and structure it was felt this could provide in seeking to add positive value.

Using the content of the good practice document provided on the Role & Function of SACRE Members as a basis for development, it was therefore **AGREED**

- (1) to establish a SACRE Working Group to review and take the work forward with the Chair, Saghar Forouhi, Nitin Palan and Sally Strauss appointed as members on behalf of SACRE.
- (2) to receive an update on progress made by the Working Group at the next SACRE meeting in February 2026.

6. **General RE Update**

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

- A review of the National Curriculum was underway with the Curriculum and Assessment Review interim report (March 2025) highlighting the need for a refreshed, inclusive, and balanced curriculum, including RE. This had been supported by the Religious Education Council (REC) who had called for a National Content Standard for RE as well as elevating RE to National Curriculum status.

- The proposal within the Education (Assemblies) Bill to remove the requirement for collective worship in schools without a religious character, replacing it with inclusive assemblies.
- The ongoing push for RE to gain stronger status and accountability given the trend towards a 'religion & world views' approach. Some people did not practice a religion or practices varied and due to a range of lived experience with a world view therefore deemed appropriate and the equity and quality of RE provision remaining a major concern combined with the decline in A-level RS uptake in 2025.
- SACRE members could access free webinars on the RE Hub as well as see the roles of SACRE and ways to be an effective network with the development of positive links to the Multi-Faith Forum also welcomed.

With no further issues raised, SACRE **AGREED** to note the update provided.

7. **NASACRE Update**

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

- On 11 March 2025, NASACRE had been registered as a charity with a new constitution in the process of being adopted. In addition, NASACRE had released an updated Handbook which aimed to clarify the distinction between statutory obligations and advisory guidance whilst also incorporating guidance on the inclusion of non-religious worldview representation and NASACRE engaged in debates on representation of non-religious worldviews in SACREs.
- Details were also provided on the NASACRE 2025 Conference & Workshops Theme as well as Workshops on RE Quality Mark (REQM), controversial issues, interfaith dialogue with an analysis of annual SACRE reports by Dr David Hampshire). This was supported by a focus on evaluation of SACRE functions via REQM and in encouraging SACREs to engage with contentious issues and equitable membership.
- The ongoing support & training offer available to SACREs and Members. Members were also reminded they could access free webinars on the RE Hub as well as see the roles of SACRE and ways to create an effective network with the development of positive links to the Multi-Faith Forum also welcomed.
- In terms of upcoming issues, NASACREs role in advocating for statutory changes or elevation of RE's status was highlighted alongside the provision of guidance on non-religious worldview inclusion and equity and offer of toolkits for monitoring/evaluating RE quality and expanded professional development for SACREs, which it was felt also linked with the work being taken forward through the Working Group which had been established.

The Chair thanked the SACRE Advisor for her reports and the RE Newsletter. In noting that the Interfaith Network had now closed details were sought on the provision

of a calendar for all upcoming key religious festivals, which Nadia Nadeem advised continued to be available in the SHAP calendar.

With no further issues raised, SACRE **AGREED** to note the update provided.

8. **Any Other Business**

It was agreed for the next SACRE meeting to be held in Neasden Temple as a way of learning about different faiths. Nitin Palan also extended a welcome to all SACRE members to the Diwali event at Neasden Temple.

9. **Dates of Future Meetings**

SACRE NOTED the remaining date identified for meetings during the 2025-26 academic year, as follows:

- Thursday 5 February 2025 at 5pm

As a result of the offer extended during the meeting and members preference to reintroduce at least one in person meeting per year it was **AGREED** that the February 2026 meeting be held at Neasden Temple.

The meeting closed at 7:52pm

Bhupinder Bhasin
Chair

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

LB BRENT STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

January 2026

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 2024-25

Draft to be finalised.

Bhupinder Singh Bhasin

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:

[Committee details - Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education \(SACRE\)](#)

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

[Browse meetings - Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education \(SACRE\)](#)

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.

After undergoing a rigorous process of review and revision, 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://www.brent.gov.uk/-/media/files/resident-documents/education-documents/brent-agreed-syllabus-2023.pdf?rev=6939ad5ddb374c81bb0ebaa9fd0276ef>

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 2024-25, 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, Schools and places of worship, in order to support teachers and schools collectively. Training opportunities available for members of Brent's SACRE. 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 have been benefiting from the RE advisor (Nadia Nadeem) issuing newsletters for schools on a half termly basis. The newsletters have provided additional support and guidance for schools and teachers, in delivering a high quality, rich and inclusive RE curriculum. These newsletters will also be shared with SACRE members too from September 2025.

- To provide additional support and guidance for schools and teachers the RE advisor (Nadia Nadeem) will be leading the 'Good Practice Network' from September 2025. This will provide SACRE with an insight into how schools are leading RE and Collective Worship from the perspective of RE Leads.
- 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 2024-25 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 2024-25, were held via virtual platforms.

- **November 2024**
- **March 2025**
- **June 2025**

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 2024-25 in relation to Religious Education.

SACRE has received no reports of pupils being withdrawn from Religious Education in 2024-25.

3. Collective Worship Statutory Responsibilities

3.1. Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship

During 2024-25 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 2024-25:

- Fryent Primary School
- Roe Green Junior School
- Leopold Primary School
- Wykeham Primary School
- Kingsbury Green Primary School
- Park Lane Primary 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 2024-25 in relation to Collective Worship.

SACRE has received no reports of pupils being withdrawn from Collective Worship in 2024-25.

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 2025 NASACRE Conference and AGM was held face to face on Monday 19th May 2025, at Stratford Town Hall, London. The SACRE advisor (Nadia Nadeem) attended the conference and provided verbal and written feedback at SACRE's summer term meeting. This formed the basis for discussion and reflection by members. Full details and copies of the relevant paperwork from the 2025 Conference can be found at: <https://nasacre.org.uk/conference-and-agm/2025-sacres-taking-a-stand-positive-responses-to-controversial-issues/>

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 2024-25

The SACRE met on the following two occasions in 2024-25:

- 6th February 2025
- 22nd July 2025

The SACRE conducted virtual meetings.

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 | Bhupinder Singh Bhasin (Group A) |
| • Vice Chair of the SACRE | Kyriacos Papasavva (Group B) |
| • Clerk to the SACRE | Abby Shinhmar |
| • Local Authority Contact | Jen Heskeu |
| • Adviser to SACRE | Nadia Nadeem (RE Advisor) |

6.4 Membership, Representation and Recruitment

During the year, SACRE was pleased to be able to welcome Kyriacos Papasavva as a CofE representative, in October 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 February SACRE meeting in 2024-25 was 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 2024-25

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.

ANNEX A

London Borough of Brent SACRE membership 2024/25

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

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

Group B: Church of England

Graham	Marriner
Kyriacos	Papasavva

Group C: Associations Representing Teachers

Andrew	Bate
Ian	Slade
John	Roche
Kim	Wilson
Stephanie	Enas

Group D:

LA Representatives

Cllr Neil	Nerva
Cllr Robert	Johnson
Cllr Arshad	Mahmood

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

RE Updates

1. National Curriculum Reform (England & Wales) - RE Proposed for Inclusion

Summary:

In **November 2025**, the *independent Curriculum and Assessment Review* — commissioned by the Department for Education — recommended that **Religious Education (RE) be formally added to the National Curriculum for the first time**. Historically, RE has been compulsory in state-funded schools but *not* part of the National Curriculum, with syllabus content decided locally via SACREs and agreed syllabus conferences.

Key points:

- The Review identifies RE's current standing as insufficiently reflected in curriculum status and inconsistent in quality and delivery across regions.
- It recommends a “*staged approach*” to reform, including establishing a **national task-and-finish group** to draft a national curriculum for RE, drawing on expertise from faith communities, secular organisations, teachers, and academics.
- Government response materials confirm that further consultation and sector consensus will inform potential legislative changes and task group outputs.

Implications for SACREs:

- SACREs will continue to advise on agreed syllabus development during the transition, but potential national standards may reduce local variance over time.
- SACREs may be invited to contribute to consultation exercises on draft national RE curriculum content.

2. Legal Ruling on RE & Collective Worship (Northern Ireland)

Summary:

On **19 November 2025**, the *UK Supreme Court* ruled that the provision of Christian-focused RE and collective worship, as delivered under the existing core syllabus in Northern Ireland schools, **breaches the rights of pupils and parents under Article 2 of Protocol 1 and Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)** because it is not conveyed in an *objective, critical and pluralistic* manner.

Legal context:

- The case (often referred to as *JR87*) was brought by a family whose philosophical convictions did not align with a curriculum framed predominantly around Christian doctrine.
- The Supreme Court held that the statutory right of parental withdrawal was insufficient to address the *lack of pluralism* in RE and collective worship, contributing to a breach of human rights protections.

The JR87 Judgment: Key Points

JR87 concerned a Northern Irish school but the Supreme Court applied ECHR principles as binding across the UK. The Court found that the school's RE and worship breached pupils' rights because they were:

- Confessional rather than educational,
- Presented Christianity as absolute truth,
- Lacked sufficient information about other religions or non-religious beliefs, and
- Required parents to rely on a withdrawal mechanism that imposed risk of stigma and undue burden.

The Supreme Court reaffirmed that where the State provides teaching in religion or belief, it must be:

“Objective, critical and pluralistic.”

Teaching that does not meet these standard risks amounting to indoctrination, which is prohibited. Crucially, the Court confirmed that:

- The right to withdraw is not an adequate safeguard where the core teaching itself breaches the pluralism requirement.

Implications for Schools in England

The judgment does not change legislation in England, but it strengthens expectations around how RE and worship must be delivered in non-faith schools.

Schools should now ensure that:

A. RE is educational, not confessional

- Teaching must explore multiple religions and non-religious worldviews, taught in a balanced and respectful way.
- Faith claims should be presented as beliefs, not facts.
- Classroom activities should never encourage pupils to adopt a religious commitment.

B. Assemblies are inclusive and non-coercive

- While collective worship must be “broadly Christian”, it should not resemble evangelism or require pupils to adopt a religious identity.
- Values-based assemblies, incorporating a range of religious and secular perspectives, are entirely compatible with the law.

C. Withdrawal is not the only safeguard

- Schools should aim for RE and assemblies that all pupils can attend without feeling pressured or marginalised.
- Where withdrawal is requested, arrangements must avoid stigma and ensure meaningful alternative activity.

Summary

JR87 does not remove RE or collective worship from schools, nor does it prevent schools from teaching Christianity as part of a balanced curriculum. It does, however, require schools to ensure that all teaching relating to religion or belief is **inclusive, educational and non-indoctrinatory**, and that reliance on withdrawal is not used to compensate for unlawful provision.

Brief Overview

Policy Area	Development	Practical Impact
National Curriculum Reform (England)	RE recommended to be added to the National Curriculum.	SACREs will likely engage in consultation and transition planning; future national standards may inform agreed syllabuses.
NI Legal Ruling on RE	Supreme Court finds existing RE & collective worship practices breach human rights.	Schools and SACREs in Northern Ireland face potential short- to medium-term review of syllabus content to ensure pluralism.
Sector Debate	Wide stakeholder engagement on both reform and tradition in RE provision.	SACREs may need to respond to consultations and support balanced implementation.

NASACRE – Recent National Developments in Religious Education (UK)

Briefing for SACRE Distribution | Updated: January 2026

Purpose of this Briefing

This paper provides a concise update on recent developments and statements from the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE), for information and discussion at SACRE meetings.

1. NASACRE Statement on the Curriculum and Assessment Review (November 2025)

Following publication of the independent Curriculum and Assessment Review, NASACRE issued a formal statement welcoming the recognition given to Religious Education and reaffirming the continuing importance of SACREs in any future curriculum reform.

- NASACRE welcomed the Review's acknowledgement of the educational value of RE.
- The statement highlights ongoing inconsistency in RE provision across schools.
- NASACRE supports a staged approach to potential inclusion of RE in the National Curriculum, with SACRE involvement safeguarded.
- NASACRE has committed to active engagement in national discussions and consultations.

2. NASACRE Communications and Publications

NASACRE continues to publish regular NASACRE News and SACRE Briefings, providing updates on national policy, research, training opportunities and sector developments relevant to SACREs.

- Termly NASACRE News issues available in printable PDF format.
- Briefings designed for direct inclusion in SACRE agendas and reports.

3. NASACRE Noticeboard – Key National Issues

The NASACRE Noticeboard highlights significant national developments, including responses to Ofsted publications and wider sector initiatives.

- NASACRE statement supporting 'deep and meaningful' Religious Education.
- Links to the Ofsted Religious Education subject report.
- Updates on NASACRE organisational development and charitable status.

4. NASACRE Support for SACRE Development

NASACRE continues to support SACRE effectiveness through training, guidance and shared resources.

- Training webinars and induction materials for SACRE members.
- Guidance on SACRE governance and effective practice.
- Subscriber access to additional publications and archived materials.

5. Points for SACRE Consideration

- Note NASACRE's engagement with national curriculum reform discussions.
- Consider use of NASACRE News and Briefings in SACRE planning and reporting.
- Identify opportunities for SACRE members to engage in NASACRE training and support.

Key Reference Links

NASACRE website: <https://nasacre.org.uk/>

NASACRE News and SACRE Briefings: <https://nasacre.org.uk/sacre-briefing/>

NASACRE Statement on Curriculum and Assessment Review (Nov 2025): https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s56596/Item_No_7_-_NASACRE-chairs-Statement-on-CaAR-11.25.pdf

NASACRE Updates

1. NASACRE Statement on the Curriculum and Assessment Review (Nov 2025)

Key Point:

Following publication of the *Curriculum and Assessment Review — Building a World-Class Curriculum for All* report, NASACRE issued a **formal statement welcoming the recognition given to RE** in the review and emphasising the continuing role of SACREs in shaping future curriculum developments.

Highlights from the Statement:

- NASACRE **welcomed the Review's findings** acknowledging the importance of RE in pupils' intellectual, personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The association noted the **recognition of inconsistency in the quality and provision** of RE across schools, particularly where Agreed Syllabi are not followed in many academy settings.
- NASACRE **supports the staged approach** proposed in the review toward potentially placing RE on the National Curriculum, while safeguarding the involvement of SACREs and representatives from religion/belief communities in the process.
- The statement emphasises NASACRE's intention to **actively engage in national discussions** on future curriculum content and implementation.

2. Upcoming Training Opportunities



22nd January 2026, 7-8pm, Chair/Vice-chair & LA link officer focus

How to ensure your SACRE is fit for purpose?

Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package

£25 for a subscribed SACRE and £35 for a non-subscribed SACRE



23rd February 2026, 7-8pm

Being an effective SACRE Clerk Pt. 4 (looking at nomination processes)

Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package

£25 for a subscribed SACRE and £35 for a non-subscribed SACRE



10th March 2026, 7-8pm

What might a SACRE want to use from the new OAK National Academy resources?

Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package

£25 for a subscribed SACRE and £35 for a non-subscribed SACRE



April 2026 (various), 6:30-8pm

NASACRE in Conversation (regions)

Free session for any SACREs to attend

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

Webinar Programme

SACREs who have bought their 2025-26 NASACRE subscription may pay an additional £60 to get unlimited access for all their members to attend the webinar programme



17th September 2025, 6:30-8pm & repeated on 25th June 2026

So, you've joined your local SACRE...

Free session for any SACREs to attend specifically for new members of SACRE



20th October 2025, 7-8pm

How can SACREs make strategic use of the New Oak National Curriculum?

Free to SACREs who have bought the annual webinar package

£25 for a subscribed SACRE and £35 for a non-subscribed SACRE



November 2025 (various), 6:30-8pm:

NASACRE in Conversation (regions)

Free session for all SACREs to attend - but specifically for Chairs, Vice-Chairs, SACRE consultants and LA link officers



4th December 2025, 4-5:30pm

Supporting your SACRE as a Professional Advisor

Free to SACREs who have bought the annual webinar package

£25 for a subscribed SACRE and £35 for a non-subscribed SACRE



22nd January 2026, 7-8pm, Chair/Vice-chair & LA link officer focus

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