

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

Thursday 8 October 2026 at 5.00 pm
To be held as an online meeting on MS Teams

Membership:

Chair: Bhupinder Bhasin (Chair)

Vice Chair: Dr. Koka Kavita

Adviser: Nadia Nadeem

Representatives of:

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

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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 Welcome and Apologies	
2 Election of Chair and Vice Chair	
To confirm Bhupinder Singh Bhasin as the SACRE Chair and Dr Karishma Koka Kavita as the SACRE Vice-Chair, following their appointment at the previous meeting.	
3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting	1 - 5
To consider and approve the minutes from the last SACRE meeting held on Monday 20 July 2026.	
4 Determinations	
4.1 Elsley Primary School	
Members are asked to review the determination application submitted by Elsley Primary School – <i>Application To Follow</i>	
5 SACRE Annual Report 2025-26	6
To review the arrangements for production of the 2025-26 Brent SACRE Annual Report.	
6 RE Update	7 - 11
To receive an update from the SACRE Advisor on any general SACRE and RE related issues.	
7 NSACRE Update	12 - 15
To consider the NASACRE update provided by the SACRE Advisor.	
8 Any Other Business	
To note the date of the upcoming SACRE meeting(s), which are scheduled to be held as follows:	

- Thursday 4 February 2027 at 5pm (to be held as an online meeting)

Date of the next meeting: Thursday 4 February 2027

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

Held as an online meeting on Monday 20 July 2026 at 5pm

Attendees:

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>	Manhar Mehta (Jainism) Saghar Forouhi (Baha'i) Bhupinder Singh (Sikhism) - Chair Michelle Goldsmith (Humanism) Upasana Chag Patel (Hinduism) Sally Strauss (Judaism) Amanda Whelan (Roman Catholic)
GROUP B <i>(A committee of persons representing the Church of England)</i>	Janice Trott
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>	None present
GROUP D <i>(A committee of persons representing the authority)</i>	Cllr Robert Johnson Cllr Arshad Mahmood
In attendance:	Nadia Nadeem (SACRE Advisor) Gareth Drawmer (Brent Council – Head of Education and Learning) Helen Tulloch (Brent Council – School Effectiveness Service) Abby Shinhmar & James Kinsella (Brent Council - Governance Team)

Given that not all Membership Groups were in attendance, it was confirmed that the meeting was not quorate. It was, however, agreed by those members present that the meeting should continue on the basis that any decisions would be subject to formal ratification at the next quorate meeting.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Amira Ghalib (Group C – Teaching representatives), Shaun Cremin (Associate Member) and Shirley Parks (Director Education Partnerships and Strategy, Brent Council).

2. **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Having sought nominations at the meeting it was **AGREED**:

- (1) that Bhupinder Singh be appointed to continue as the Chair of Brent SACRE for the 2026-27 academic year.
- (2) subject to confirmation of her willingness to continue in the role that Dr. Karishma Koka-Kavita be appointed to continue as Brent SACRE Vice Chair for the 2026-27 academic year.

Given the meeting was not quorate, members were advised that the above appointments would be subject to formal ratification at the next meeting.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Actions**

It was **AGREED** to approve the minutes of the previous SACRE meeting held on Thursday 5 February 2026.

4. **Determinations**

No determinations were submitted for consideration at the meeting.

5. **Membership Update**

James Kinsella (Governance & Scrutiny Manager, Brent Council) provided an update on the current membership of SACRE, which members were advised had been presented in accordance with the requirement under the SACRE Constitution to review membership following the Local Government Elections held on 7 May 2026.

Members noted the current membership list, as circulated with the agenda pack with the following issues and comments highlighted:

- attention was drawn to the current vacancies across the various membership groups with concern also highlighted regarding attendance and engagement from some faith representatives who had not attended a SACRE meeting for a considerable period and the associated impact on the ability for SACRE to achieve quoracy at future meetings.

Amongst the vacancies identified members whilst, welcoming Jancie Trott as the newly appointed CoE representative, were keen to encourage efforts to seek additional representation amongst the CoE and Teaching Association membership groups to enhance capacity as well to address the current position in relation to the Islam (Sunni) faith representative.

- Members were advised that approaches had already been made to the Diocese regarding additional Church of England representation and that further discussions would be undertaken to identify additional representatives from

Teacher Associations. Janice Trott advised that she would seek to make enquiries through her own networks regarding potential Church of England representatives.

- Support was also expressed for efforts to recruit new or alternative representatives from faith communities where attendance had previously been limited with it suggested that the Brent Multi Faith Forum may provide an opportunity to identify potential new members.

In welcoming the approach outlined the Chair thanked members for their suggestions and it was **AGREED**, having noted the membership update to support ongoing efforts to recruit additional representatives where vacancies or attendance issues had been identified including an approach to the Multi Faith Forum, engagement with headteachers.

6. RE Update

SACRE received an update from Nadia Nadeem (SACRE Advisor) regarding national developments relating to Religious Education (RE) and the continuing role of SACRE. In presenting the update the following issues were highlighted:

- Confirmation was provided of the DfE intention to include Religious Education in the National Curriculum for the first time, after consensus among religious, belief and education representative with the aim to develop a stronger national entitlement and less variation in what pupils received, while keeping scope for schools to build on the requirements. All schools including faith schools, were expected to meet the national entitlement although it was confirmed that faith schools would retain freedom to add depth according to ethos.
- Whilst the content had not yet been published, further consultation was planned for September 2026 and first teaching of the revised curriculum anticipated from September 2028. Members were advised that qualifications reform would follow at a later date, with GCSE changes expected from 2029/30 and A Level reforms from 2031/32.
- In terms of SACREs, these were expected to continue playing an important role during the transition period, including providing local advice, supporting collective worship, maintaining community links, producing annual reports and assisting schools with delivery of RE.
- Schools were being encouraged not to wait for the introduction of the new curriculum before reviewing current provision with members advised that schools should already be undertaking curriculum audits, reviewing Teacher subject knowledge and considering Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring schools were delivering the recommended allocation of RE curriculum time and broadening coverage to include both religious and non-religious worldviews.
- In acknowledging issues highlighted relating to teacher confidence and subject knowledge, the importance of the cross-phase RE network meetings in

supporting curriculum leaders was highlighted with the SACRE Advisor keen to encourage wider engagement across the borough.

Issues raised in response the update were as follows:

- Clarification was sought regarding opportunities for faith communities to contribute to the forthcoming national curriculum consultation process. The SACRE Advisor confirmed that consultation opportunities had previously been made available and agreed to seek further information regarding any future opportunities for SACRE members and faith communities to contribute. **ACTION:** The SACRE Advisor to provide members with information regarding opportunities to contribute to the forthcoming national RE curriculum consultation process.
- The opportunities available to strengthen links between schools and local faith communities were also highlighted with the SACRE Advisor highlighting the success of recent school engagement activity involving faith representatives which had included the opportunity to support social cohesion and bring lived religious experience into the classroom. The work outlined was commended by members as an example that could be explored in more detail.
- In response to a request made for an update regarding the SACRE Sub-Group and the proposed Inter Faith Roadshow initiative, Gareth Drawmer (Head of Education and Learning, Brent Council) updated on proposals to enable further engagement with the Brent Multi Faith Forum to consider how closer working arrangements could be developed with SACRE and future initiatives could be progressed.
- As a further issue, members were keen to explore the potential need to develop an agreed protocol governing visits to schools by SACRE members. Whilst recognising that some engagement had taken place through the RE Hubs network rather than SACRE itself, it was considered important that clear arrangements be established to distinguish between the statutory role of SACRE and the role of individual faith representatives visiting schools. **ACTION:** Consideration to be given to the development of a protocol governing school visits by SACRE members (Gareth Drawmer)

In concluding discussion, members recognised the important role SACRE would continue to play in supporting schools during implementation of future curriculum reforms and in promoting community cohesion through high quality RE provision and with no further issues raised, it was **AGREED** to note the update provided.

7. NASACRE Update

Nadia Nadeem (SACRE Advisor) introduced the NASACRE update and provided feedback from the NASACRE Annual Conference 2026, held in Liverpool under the theme of “SACREs – Bringing Communities Together”.

Members were advised that a key theme running throughout the conference had been the important role SACREs could play in promoting social harmony, community cohesion and understanding between different faith and belief groups. Speakers had

emphasised the value of high quality RE in helping to develop religious literacy, empathy and respect for diversity.

Attention was also drawn to ongoing developments relating to national curriculum reform and the importance of ensuring any future changes were implemented in a way that appropriately recognised the continuing role of SACREs, Local Authorities, schools and faith communities. Members heard that conference discussions had highlighted the need to balance curriculum reform with workforce capacity, training requirements and support for schools.

In considering the update, members noted and supported the view expressed at the NASACRE Conference that SACREs should increasingly be seen as community connectors rather than solely statutory committees, with a key role in supporting schools to develop belonging, religious literacy and respectful dialogue. It was also noted that Inter Faith Week 2026 would take place between 8-15 November 2026.

The emphasis being placed on social cohesion was also welcomed with members having recognised the opportunities available locally through partnership working with schools, the Brent Multi Faith Forum and community groups. Members felt this aligned closely with the wider ambitions already being pursued through SACRE activity in Brent.

As a final update, Nadia Nadeem (as SACRE Advisor) also highlighted the Dangoor Awards, which recognised innovative interfaith and RE initiatives. Members were provided with examples of successful projects involving pupils from different schools working collaboratively on shared themes and participating in conferences promoting interfaith understanding. It was suggested that, as work progressed on the proposed Inter Faith Roadshow and other community cohesion initiatives, SACRE may wish to consider opportunities to develop projects that could be eligible for future recognition through the awards programme.

Having thanked Nadia Nadeem for presenting the item and with no further issues raised, it was **AGREED** to note the update provided.

8. **Any Other Business**

None.

9. **Dates of Future Meetings**

SACRE noted the dates of future meetings, which are scheduled to be held as follows:

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

The meeting closed at 5:46pm

Bhupinder Singh
Chair

Brent SACRE Annual Report 2025 to 2026 Evidence Request

For the SACRE meeting on 8 October 2026

Please agree the contributors and approval route at this meeting. The report covers 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026 and is due to the Department for Education by 30 December 2026. Send concise evidence, figures and links to the RE Adviser by Friday 13 November. If information is unavailable, please say so; do not estimate it.

Decisions needed on 8 October

- Confirm the revised national framework, the 30 December deadline and a target submission by 18 December.
- Agree who will draft, check and approve the final report before submission, including how approval can occur between meetings.
- Confirm who sends the approved report to the Secretary of State for Education, shares it with NASACRE and arranges local publication.

What each contributor should provide

Contributor	Please send
Education and data officers	School totals and Agreed Syllabus use, including academies; 2025 GCSE and A level RS entries/results and cohort proportions; available school workforce and RE monitoring evidence; any REQM awards.
Governance and clerk	2025–26 meeting dates, attendance and quoracy; membership, vacancies and constitution review; determinations current at 31 August 2026 and applications/outcomes during the year; member training; recorded advice to the LA and response.
Finance and LA officers	Adviser days/hours and clerking provision; identifiable expenditure and support in kind; how resources supported SACRE work.
Chair and members	Chair's foreword; 2025–26 local and community work, representative group activity, partnerships, training and feedback; examples of impact or challenges.
RE Adviser	Network CPD, newsletters, school advice, Interfaith Week links, RE Hubs speaker training encouragement, professional updates, monitoring findings and next priorities. NASACRE/RE Hubs training – who attended? When?

A short evidence note is enough

For each item, give the date or period, what happened, who or how many were reached, what was learned, any response or outcome, and a source such as minutes, attendance records or feedback. Please distinguish work completed by 31 August 2026 from plans made afterwards.

The RE Adviser will assemble the draft in late November. The Chair, clerk and LA should arrange comments and final approval in early to mid December. The February 2027 meeting can receive the published report and review resulting priorities.

RE Updates – 8th October 2026

RE curriculum consultation

The July announcement promised a September consultation on draft RE content.

By 27th September, no published RE draft or consultation launch has been verified.

The 11th September ministerial answer confirmed a future public consultation but gave no launch date.

How the proposed RE content was developed

The Curriculum and Assessment Review recommended a phased move towards National Curriculum RE.

A DfE commissioned group led by Dr Vanessa Ogden drafted programmes of study and national standards.

It included education professionals and religious and non-religious organisations. The proposals are not final.

How Brent SACRE can contribute

Group A and other SACRE members, including non-religious representatives, to identify what pupils should understand about their traditions and lived experiences.

Teacher members and RE leads what content is teachable with depth and appropriate progression at each key stage

We can record views that are both in agreement and differing.

When DfE publishes the draft and consultation, submit a Brent SACRE response through its official route. Members' organisations can also consider responding in their own names.

This will give Brent's religious representatives a genuine opportunity to shape Brent's response once the proposed content is visible.

Surrey SACRE has likewise said it intends to take part in the public consultation.

New evidence on RE staffing

NATRE's 3 September analysis uses the School Workforce Census.

Nearly six in ten qualified teachers teaching some RE have no recorded relevant post A level qualification.

At KS3, more than one third of RE teaching hours are delivered by teachers without that qualification.

NASACRE Updates – 8th October 2026

NASACRE training and next steps

20th October 7-8 pm: SACRE Annual Reports, updates to content and opportunities. Free.

November: regional NASACRE in Conversation sessions for chairs, vice chairs, advisers and LA links.

4th November 7-8 pm: applying for a NASACRE Westhill Award. Free.

SACRE annual report framework

The revised framework now asks SACREs to explain findings, impact and next steps, including community cohesion.

The 2025-26 report is due to DfE by 30 December 2026. NASACRE should also receive it.

It asks for evidence on RE and Collective Worship monitoring, syllabus use, workforce, withdrawals and resources.

2026-2027 Webinar Programme

All webinars are Free to all subscribed SACRE members



17th September 2026, 6:30-8pm & repeated on 24th June 2027

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

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



20th October 2026, 7-8pm

SACRE Annual Reports: Updates to the content and opportunities

Free session for all SACREs to attend - specifically for those completing Annual Reports



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

NASACRE in Conversation (taking place in regions)

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



4th November 2026 7-8pm:

Applying for as a SACRE for a NASACRE/Westhill Award

Free session for all SACREs to attend



3rd December 2026, 4-5:30pm

Supporting your SACRE as an LA Officer

£35 for a non-subscribed SACRE - but specifically for Chairs, Vice-Chairs & LA officers



21st January 2027, 7-8pm, Chair/Vice-chair & LA link officer focus

How to use your development plan and budget to apply for funding

£35 for a non-subscribed SACRE



25th February 2027, 7-8pm

Being an effective SACRE Clerk Pt. 5 (Your website & communication processes)

£35 for a non-subscribed SACRE

18th March 2027, 7-8pm

Collective Worship: What should SACREs advice be to schools & LA?

£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