

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/standing-advisory-council-for-religious-education-sacre)

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