



The Surrey
Standing Advisory Council
on
Religious Education



Constitution

Revised: June 2020
Date of next revision: June 2022

Constitution of the Surrey Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

A Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education is a statutory body established by the Local Authority under the provisions of [Section 390-397](#) of the 1996 Education Act to perform statutory functions.

Section 1 - Composition

1.1 In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (Section 390(4)), the Surrey Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education ("SACRE") shall consist of representative members appointed by Surrey County Council ("the Local Authority") to represent respectively:

A: such Christian denominations and other religions or beliefs and denominations of such religions or beliefs as, in the opinion of the Local Authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions or beliefs in the area;

B: the Church of England;

C: such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the Local Authority, ought, having regard to the circumstances of the County, to be represented; and

D: the Local Authority

1.2 The composition of the groups of representative members ("the representative groups") shall be as follows:

Group A – other Christian denominations and other religions and beliefs

Members, representative of other Christian (not Church of England) denominations five (5), Hinduism one (1), Islam one (1), Judaism one (1), Baha'i one (1), Buddhism one (1), Sikh one (1), Humanism one (1).

Group B – The Church of England

Four (4) members, representing the Dioceses of Guildford, Southwark and London

Group C - Teachers

Six (6) members, representing Professional Associations and / or other nominated professionals

Group D - The Local Authority

Five (5) representatives

1.2.1 Representatives on SACRE should seek to represent the views and opinions of their nominating denomination, association or group. All members of SACRE are expected to work within the Code of Conduct. (see appendix A)

1.3 The Local Authority shall appoint an appropriately qualified person to advise and guide the SACRE, hereafter known as "the Advisory Officer" or "the Adviser".

1.4 The appointed adviser may speak on matters when requested or they see fit, but shall be independent of any representative group and have no right to vote.

1.5 SACRE may co-opt members on the nominations of any of the representative groups on the SACRE for such purposes and such length of time as the SACRE shall decide. Co-opted members may resign at any time and may be removed by the representative groups or the Local Authority at any time. Co-opted members may speak and fully participate in meetings, but have no right to vote.

1.6 A Chairman for each SACRE group shall be elected on an annual basis, from nominations from the representative groups, with election decided by a simple majority vote of members present at the

Autumn term meeting. Such nominations are to be submitted to the SACRE clerk 7 days prior to the date on which the meeting shall take place.

1.7 Substitutions for absent members

In the event of a member being unable to attend a meeting, their nominating body should notify SACRE that they will send a substitute. Only named substitutes may attend or vote in place of the absent member and should be fully briefed by them.

1.8 The composition of Surrey SACRE is attached as appendix B.

Section 2 – Duration of Membership

2.1 Members of SACRE shall be appointed for a period of four years. The term of office for members shall be from the Autumn term meeting following a Surrey County Council election year.

2.2 Any member of the SACRE may, at any time, resign from office.

2.3 A member of the SACRE may be removed from membership by the Local Authority at any time if, in the reasonable opinion of the Local Authority, the person ceases to be representative of either the denomination or association which he/she was appointed to represent on the SACRE.

2.4 Where a SACRE member fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the SACRE and is not represented at any of these meetings by a named substitute, s/he shall cease to be a member of the SACRE.

2.5 In the event of removal as contained in section 2.3 or 2.4 or resignation as in section 2.2, a vacancy shall arise and nominations from appropriately qualified persons shall be sought.

2.6 Any subsequent appointment shall be subject to the agreement of the Local Authority. It is incumbent upon the Local Authority to notify SACRE of any new appointment.

2.7 Subject to the conditions of paragraph 2.3, members of SACRE having served the full term are eligible for re-appointment.

Section 3 – Chairman and Vice-Chairman

3.1 The Local Authority shall appoint the SACRE Chairman in the Autumn term following Surrey County Council Elections, such appointment being independent from the representative groups and retained for four years.

3.2 The Vice-Chairman shall be elected on an annual basis, in the Autumn term meeting of Surrey SACRE following 31st of May, from nominations from the representative groups, with election decided by a simple majority vote of members present at the Autumn term meeting.

3.2.1 Nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman are to be submitted to the SACRE clerk 7 days prior to the date on which the meeting shall take place.

3.2.2 Persons continuing to be members of SACRE are eligible for re-appointment to the position of Vice-Chairman.

3.2.3 In the event of a joint election, the SACRE Chairman shall have a casting vote.

3.3 The Chairman of SACRE shall be responsible for convening and chairing the meetings of SACRE in accordance with the principles of this constitution and any appropriate guidance issued by the Local Authority.

3.4 The Chairman, or her/his delegate, shall be responsible for liaising on SACRE's behalf with appropriate bodies or representing SACRE at appropriate local or national level meetings, including those of NASACRE (Section 11.1)

Section 4 - Duties

4.1 The SACRE shall either at the request of the Local Authority or on its own initiative advise the Local Authority upon general matters connected with Religious Education to be given in accordance with the Surrey Agreed Syllabus and Collective Worship, and meeting the requirements of the law, including but not limited to advice upon:

- a) the choice of teaching materials for Religious Education
- b) aspects of continuing professional development for teachers of religious education
- c) teaching methods for Religious Education
- d) matters related to the conduct of collective worship in community schools

4.1.1 The SACRE shall work with the Local Authority and its nominated strategic partners, to monitor the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and the quality of provision for Religious Education in community and voluntary controlled Surrey Schools and of Collective Worship in community schools.

4.2 SACRE shall, at least every five years, convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to review and if appropriate re-publish the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The establishment of the Agreed Syllabus Conference shall be subject to the regulations governing the establishment of an ASC contained in [Schedule 31 of the 1996 Education Act](#).

4.2.1 The representative groups on the SACRE may, in addition to section 4.2, at any time request a review of the Agreed Syllabus. Such a request shall be subject to a vote following the usual procedures contained in Section 5 of this constitution.

4.3 Determinations

Upon receipt of an application (using the form attached as Appendix C) by a community or foundation school without a religious character, the SACRE shall determine whether the requirement for collective worship that is 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' should apply to that school or any class or description of pupils at that school. Application shall be determined and decisions shall be reviewed in accordance with [Section 394 of the Education Act 1996](#). Such determinations shall be reviewed by the SACRE no later than 5 years after the determination was granted.

4.4 Annual Report

The SACRE shall publish an annual report with respect to the exercise of its duties including matters on which it has advised the Authority, any determinations made on applications concerning collective worship requirements and any action taken by the representative groups in terms of a review of the Agreed Syllabus. The report shall be published before 31st March each year in respect of the preceding year.

4.5 The report shall be presented to the appropriate representative of the Secretary of State and circulated to relevant and interested persons, including members of SACRE, the Local Authority and schools within the Local Authority.

4.6 RE in Academies

The Local Authority recognises that academies may choose to adopt an agreed syllabus that is not their locally agreed syllabus, as long as it meets the legal requirements as above (4.2). Academies

choosing to use the Surrey Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education may be advised by the SACRE on matters relating to RE following the principles outlined in 4.1.

4.6.1 Determinations in academies

A SACRE cannot renew an academy's determination or grant a new one; any such renewal should be made directly to the Secretary of State via the Education Funding Agency, having first consulted with the school's governing body and parents.

Section 5 - Voting Procedures

5.1 On any question to be decided by SACRE by vote, all four groups A, B, C and D shall be entitled to vote, and each group shall have a single vote. Co-opted members are not permitted to vote.

5.2 Before any representative group casts its single vote on any issue to be decided by the SACRE, it shall meet to discuss the issue. The decision of the representative group shall be determined by a simple majority vote in which each member of the group has one vote.

5.3 In the event of a tied vote, the Chair, being independent of the representative groups, shall have a single casting vote.

5.4 The committees on an ASC (Agreed Syllabus Conference) must vote unanimously on the adoption of any new or revised agreed syllabus in accordance with the [1996 Education Act Schedule 31](#).

Section 6 - Quorum

6.1 Meetings of the SACRE shall be quorate if nine (9) or more representative members are present including at least one (1) representative member from each of the four (4) representative groups and at least one Group A member from a faith other than Christianity. If the meeting is not quorate business shall not be transacted.

Section 7 - Administrative Arrangements

7.1 The Local Authority shall make appropriate arrangements for a person to act as Clerk to the SACRE.

7.2 The *Director for Children, Schools and Families*, or anyone nominated by her/him, shall be entitled to be present throughout the proceedings of the SACRE and shall be entitled to give advice as she/he thinks appropriate. Such person shall have no membership of any representative group or right to vote on any matter.

7.3 The SACRE shall meet at least three times in each year and more often if it considers it necessary to do so.

7.4 The agenda for SACRE meetings will be determined by the Chairman and the Advisory Officer.

7.5 The agenda shall include matters arising in the course of the business of the SACRE and other matters required by statute or suggested by members of the SACRE before the agenda is set. Unless agreed otherwise by the SACRE, the agenda and reports for each meeting shall be circulated at least seven (7) days before the meeting to each member of the SACRE.

7.6 Minutes shall be circulated within fourteen (14) days after the meeting and formally approved at the next full SACRE meeting.

Section 8 – Inclusion, Diversity and Community Cohesion

8.1 The membership of SACRE shall seek, as far as is possible and within the bounds of statute, to represent the broad spectrum of faith and belief positions found within the County of Surrey.

8.2 The membership of SACRE shall be subject to review either at the request of existing members or the Local Authority. A current list of members is included as appendix B.

8.3 SACRE shall take reasonable steps to ensure that its meetings and communications are accessible to all members.

8.4 Meetings of SACRE shall be held in public, except where statutory obligations require otherwise.

8.5 The constitution of SACRE and the minutes of meetings shall be made available to interested persons on request from the Clerk or via links on the SACRE pages of the [Surrey County Council website](#).

Section 9 – Working Groups

9.1 SACRE may require the establishment of working groups to undertake work on its behalf.

9.2 The remit and constitution of such working groups shall be decided at a full meeting of SACRE.

9.3 Such working groups may seek advice and guidance from such appropriate sources as deemed necessary to fulfill their obligations to SACRE.

9.4 Working groups shall be dissolved following the completion of the task for which they were established, or at any time following their establishment at the request of SACRE or the Local Authority.

Section 10 – Youth SACRE

10.1 When personnel and sufficient support from schools allow, SACRE may convene a body to be known as "The Surrey Youth SACRE", hereafter referred to as "Youth SACRE". The membership of Surrey Youth SACRE should, wherever possible, represent the broad spectrum of faith and belief positions found within the County of Surrey.

10.2 When in operation, Youth SACRE shall be convened at least twice per year and on at least one of those occasions, shall meet with Surrey SACRE to represent the views and ideas of young people on issues relating to the teaching of Religious Education and provision of Collective Worship.

10.3 Youth SACRE shall have no voting rights when present at meetings of Surrey SACRE.

Section 11 – Affiliation

11.1 Surrey SACRE shall be affiliated to the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (NASACRE) and shall be represented at appropriate meetings.

11.2 The Advisory Officer to SACRE, appointed by the Local Authority, shall be a member of the Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC).

Section 12 – Accountability

12.1 Surrey SACRE shall be accountable to Surrey County Council.

12.2 Surrey County Council shall in turn provide such funding to SACRE as necessary to ensure the fulfillment of its statutory obligations and any additional requirements as may be contained within this constitution or may from time to time be requested by the appropriate legal authority.

Appendix A: Surrey SACRE Code of Conduct

Surrey SACRE encourages all its members to:

- *attend all SACRE meetings and take a full and active part in its work;*
- *participate in and review the work of SACRE for the benefit of the whole community;*
- *listen with respect to the views of other members and where a situation of disagreement occurs, disagree respectfully;*
- *express views and opinions openly, honestly and sensitively, always recognising others may have views different to one's own;*
- *assume at all times that other members of SACRE are honourable and concerned with the best interests of SACRE;*
- *seek reasoned consensus where views diverge and never disrespect the views of other SACRE members or seek to convert them to a different belief stance;*
- *actively consult with, and report back to, the membership body which they represent so that debate is fully informed;*
- *actively challenge and resist stereotyping;*
- *remember that the central aim for the SACRE is to improve the quality of provision in RE and collective worship for all pupils in Surrey.*

Visiting schools

From time to time, SACRE members may have the opportunity to visit schools. SACRE members should remember that it is a privilege to visit a school. They are there as invited guests, not to make judgements about the school or to "inspect" RE and collective worship. Members should:

- *only visit a school when invited;*
- *inform the Clerk of SACRE and the SACRE's RE adviser of any invitation received and visits made;*
- *ensure that you do not say or do anything, which could be viewed as denigrating any religion or ethical belief system;*
- *avoid being critical of others or imposing their own views;*
- *any confidential information disclosed should not be passed on but along with any possible concerns or confusions about what may have been seen should be discussed with the Chairman and RE adviser before being reported back to SACRE.*

Visiting schools as a representative of a faith community

Some faith community representatives may be more regular visitors to schools and invited to support RE and/or collective worship. In these cases, representatives should conduct themselves in accordance with the separate code of conduct set out in SACRE's guidance document 'Encounters with Faith', which state that:

members of belief communities taking part in the life of the school, including visits to places of worship, should:

- be willing to share their own experiences, beliefs and insights, but avoid:
 - i. criticising the experience and insights of others and
 - ii. imposing their views on pupils in any way
- be familiar with the school's aims, ethos and policies and plan their involvement in the light of the aims and curriculum at the school;
- seek to use engaging teaching and learning methods that involve the pupils actively, and to communicate at appropriate levels for the age group(s) concerned;
- be willing to respect and value the beliefs of any pupils and adults in the school when they are different from their own;
- develop ways of speaking to pupils that communicate their open approach, avoiding any hidden agenda to 'convert' or proselytise.

A key question to help visitors reflect on their approach – the 'golden rule' of the conduct:

'If a member of another religion or belief visited my child's school and contributed in the same way that I have done, would I, as a parent, be happy with the education given?'

The complete guidance document supporting visits & visitors to schools, called '**Encounters with Faith**', can be found using the hyperlink [here](#).

Appendix B: SACRE Membership (as at June 2020)

Chairman

Mrs Kay Hammond (SCC) *elected Oct 2017*

Committee A – Other faiths and beliefs (10 members, 2 vacancies)

Rev. Allan Taylor	Methodist
Peter Ward	Roman Catholic (Diocese of Westminster)
Rajendra Pandya	Hindu
Inderjeet Singh Rehncy	Sikh
Kauser Akhtar	Muslim
Sarah Harris	Jewish
Simon Mortimore	Baha'i
Jennie Johnson (Group Chairman)	Humanists UK
Rosslyn Doney	Baptist
Sarah Feist	Roman Catholic (Diocese of Arundel & Brighton)
Rana Mutsuddi	Buddhist (Woking Dhammakaya Temple)
<i>Vacancy</i>	URC

Committee B – The Church of England (4 members, 2 vacancies)

Shaun Burns	Diocese of Southwark
Jane Whittington (Group Chairman)	Diocese of Guildford
<i>Vacancy</i>	Diocese of Guildford
<i>Vacancy</i>	Diocese of London

Committee C – Teachers (6 members, 0 vacancies)

Deborah Drury (Group Chairman)	NEU (National Education Union, <i>formerly NUT & ATL</i>)
Gemma Savill	Primary Surrey RE Networks
Liz Esdon	NASUWT
Mariam L'Grindi	Secondary teacher rep.
Gemma Papworth	Secondary Academies representative
<i>Vacancy</i>	

Committee D – Local Authority (5 members, 0 vacancies)

Cllr Keith Taylor (Group Chairman)	SCC Member
Cllr Mike Goodman	SCC Member
Dr Zully Grant-Duff	SCC member (<i>appointed June 2020</i>)
Cllr Saj Hussain	SCC member (<i>appointed June 2020</i>)
Cllr Christopher Botten	SCC Member (<i>appointed June 2020</i>)

Officers in attendance

Rachel Boxer (Adviser)	Associate Consultant for Primary RE Diocese of Guildford
Kate Woodhouse	Clerk to SACRE Diocese of Guildford
Helen Kakouris	SAfE partnership representative
Mary Burguieres	Commissioning Officer, SCC

Appendix C: Application for a determination on Collective Worship

The governing body of a school seeking a determination under section 12 of the Education Reform Act, 1988 is required to complete this form and send it to the Clerk to the SACRE. As part of this process, the LA Adviser will usually arrange a visit to the school to observe an act of collective worship. The Headteacher and Chair of governors must also attend a SACRE meeting to put forward their case. The SACRE will then consider the application and contact the school regarding the decision on the determination.

1. Name and Address of School

DfE no:

2. Age range of school

3. Number on roll

3. Data related to religious diversity in the school (e.g. number of pupils of each faith as given on school application forms)

<i>Religion</i>	<i>Number of pupils</i>	<i>% pupils</i>
Buddhist		
Christian		
Hindu		
Jewish		
Muslim		
Sikh		
No religious affiliation		
Not known		
Others (specify if known)		

4. Current situation:

- a. **Is this application a continuation of present practice?** yes / no
- b. **Current number of pupils withdrawn from collective worship:**
- c. **Family religious backgrounds of withdrawn pupils:**

d. What currently happens to pupils who are withdrawn?

5. Is this determination being sought for:

- d. **All** pupils or **some** pupils?
- e. If **some**, actual number of pupils for whom alternative worship is being requested:
- If **some**, actual percentage of pupils for whom alternative worship is being requested: %
- Does this group include pupils already referred to in Q.4? If 'yes' please provide details:

6. Why are you applying for this determination?

You will need to include an explanation of why collective worship that is 'broadly Christian' is inappropriate in respect of the religious backgrounds of the pupils for whom alternative worship is being sought. If there is insufficient space below, please attach further information.

7. Date on which the Governing Body was consulted on this application

(Please enclose a copy of the relevant extract from the Governing Body's minutes with this application)

8. Who else has been consulted?

(Please attach documentation providing evidence of the consultation process e.g. relevant extracts from staff meeting or school council minutes; letters to parents, summary of parental responses etc.)

parents teachers pupils faith communities others

9. What will be the religious character of the alternative acts of worship?

10. What practical arrangements do you plan to make? (e.g. timing, location, who will organise and lead it?)

11. If there are any children not covered by the application, what arrangements do you plan to make for them?

12. Is there any other information you would like the SACRE to take into account?

This application is submitted by (Headteacher) Date:

This application is supported by (Chair of Governors) Date:

Please return this form by [date] to the Clerk to the SACRE, Kate Woodhouse, via email
kate.woodhouse@cofeguildford.org.uk

For SACRE use:

Determination granted: Yes / No

Date of decision: