

Introduction to Ealing SACRE



Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to give a brief introduction to Ealing SACRE for anyone with an interest in religious education and collective worship in the borough or who may be considering becoming a member of SACRE.

Background

SACREs (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) were established as permanent bodies legally constituted by local authorities by the Education Reform Act 1988.

The role of SACRE is to advise the local authority on religious education and collective worship in community, foundation and voluntary controlled schools without a religious designation;

In Ealing there are 60 maintained schools without a religious

designation; 48 primary schools, 6 special schools and 6 secondary schools. Ealing SACRE also works closely with academies and voluntary aided schools in the borough.

Who can sit on SACRE?

In England a SACRE has four groups which are detailed in the 1996 Education Act, Section 390 (4). The number of members in each group on the Ealing SACRE is shown in brackets.

- **Group A:** Christian denominations and other religions and belief systems that reflect the principal traditions in the area (20)
- **Group B:** the Church of England; (6)
- **Group C:** associations representing teachers (5)
- **Group D:** the local authority (9)

The local authority appoints members to each group on the recommendation of a sponsoring body. If the local authority

believes that the person no longer represents the sponsoring body it has the power to remove the person and ask for someone else to be nominated. SACRE may also appoint members who are referred to as 'co-opted'. Such members have the right to speak but not to vote.

Religions and belief systems represented in Group A in Ealing can be seen in the SACRE constitution document: www.egfl.org.uk/sacre

The list of SACRE members, meeting dates and documents for all SACRE meetings in Ealing can be found at: <https://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS/CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/19/Default.aspx>

Making a decision

For a SACRE to make a decision all four groups must be represented at the meeting by at least one member. Each group on SACRE has one vote.

How does SACRE fulfil its role?

In Ealing SACRE meets three times a year. All SACRE meetings and documents are open to the public. SACRE agendas, minutes and papers are published seven days before the meeting on the council website. SACRE discusses the issues set before it, considers evidence in the papers and then discusses whether to make any recommendations. All members are expected to attend and contribute to meetings and to take part in other working groups that may be set up.

Annual report

SACRE must produce an annual report each year setting out any advice given to the local authority, how the advice was acted upon or why the advice was rejected. SACRE must send its annual report to the Secretary of State for Education every year. Copies of recent annual reports can be found at: www.egfl.org.uk/sacre

Determinations

SACREs have a specific legal duty in relation to collective worship in maintained schools without a religious designation. A school may ask SACRE to modify the requirement to have collective worship 'which is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. The headteacher makes an application to SACRE in light of the school's intake and parental requests. Where a SACRE agrees to modify the requirement, this is called a 'determination'. The school still has to provide a daily act of collective worship under the terms agreed by SACRE in its determination. The process in



Ealing is described in a document that can be found at: www.egfl.org.uk/sacre

Other activities of SACRE

Activities may include:

- requesting a review of the Agreed Syllabus
- monitoring the provision for religious education and collective worship
- ensuring that there is sufficient training for teachers of religious education
- responding to complaints about religious education or collective worship,
- reviewing data on Religious Studies examinations
- reading Ofsted reports for comments on religious education, collective worship and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education (SMSC)
- visiting schools or organising events to promote good practice in religious education, collective worship or SMSC.
- publishing guidance to schools on religious education, collective worship or SMSC- these can be found at: www.egfl.org.uk/sacre

Agreed Syllabus

Each local authority has an Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education which must be taught in all maintained schools without a religious designation. This is reviewed every five years and is agreed by an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) which is constituted by the local authority. A syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.' As with SACREs, Agreed Syllabus Conferences have four groups which have the same titles as the groups for a SACRE. Each group has one vote and all groups must agree the syllabus.

A new Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2020-25: 'Religion and worldviews: Believing, Behaving and Belonging' was agreed in Ealing by the ASC in July 2020 and ratified by Cabinet in October 2020. The syllabus can be found at: <https://www.egfl.org.uk/religious-education>

Further information

Further information on SACRE, religious education and collective worship in Ealing can be found on the Ealing Grid for Learning: <https://www.egfl.org.uk/religious-education>

Further information on the wider work of SACREs can be found at: <https://www.nasacre.org.uk/>

To find out more about Ealing SACRE or becoming a member please email:

elp@ealing.gov.uk or DemocraticServices@ealing.gov.uk