



Constitution
Composition of SACRE
Vision and values
Code of conduct

Updated May 2021

Constitution

1. *Introduction*

The Council shall be called the Ealing SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education). It is established under Sections 390 – 397 of the Education Act 1996 as amended. The authority referred to in this document is Ealing Council.

SACRE is a statutory body established to advise the authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education and performs its functions in accordance with statutory requirements.

It is required by law that religious education (RE) is taught in schools to children up to the age of 18. RE is a local responsibility not part of the National Curriculum. SACRE oversees RE and collective worship in maintained schools on behalf of the authority. The funding agreement for an academy without a religious designation states that it must arrange for RE to be given to all pupils in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses that are set out in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph (5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Academies can opt to use a locally agreed syllabus.

2. *Role and functions*

- i) To advise the authority upon matters connected with collective worship (reflection) in its schools.
- ii) To advise the authority upon the religious education to be given in its schools in accordance with an agreed syllabus.
- iii) To offer advice on the effective teaching of the agreed syllabus including methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.
- iv) To decide whether the authority's agreed syllabus should be reviewed. (Group D, the local authority group, cannot ask for such a revision). Each of the other representative groups has a single vote on the question of whether to require such a review. The agreed syllabus must in any case be reviewed and updated at least every 5 years. On receiving written notification of the requirement to review the syllabus the authority should cause a conference to be convened for the purpose of reconsidering any agreed syllabus to which the requirement relates.
- v) To review and determine the cases where, on application from a headteacher, the requirement for collective worship (reflection) in a school to be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" is not to apply.

- vi) To publish an annual report on its work which will
 - (a) specify any matters in respect of which the SACRE has given advice to the authority;
 - (b) broadly describe the nature of the advice given;
 - (c) where any such matter was not referred to the SACRE by the authority, give the SACRE's reasons for offering advice on that matter.

Copies of the report must be made available to the DfE, NASACRE, schools and the public.

For (i) and (ii) the authority may refer matters to the SACRE or the SACRE may decide its own areas of work.

- vii) At the discretion of the authority the SACRE may:
 - (a) monitor RE provision to inform their advice and reporting;
 - (b) be involved in the complaints procedure.

3. Membership

- i) There are two kinds of membership:
 - a. Those appointed by the authority as representative members of one of the four representative groups required (see below). The representative groups shall be named Group A, Group B, Group C and Group D and the composition of each group is set out in paragraph 3 ii)a-d
 - b. Those co-opted by representative members of SACRE
- ii) In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (Section 390(4)) members are allocated to one of four representative groups:
 - i. Group A - Christian denominations and other religions, denominations of such religions and non-religious beliefs including those that, in the opinion of the authority, will appropriately reflect the principal traditions in the area;
 - ii. Group B – persons who represent the Church of England;
 - iii. Group C - such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area;
 - iv. Group D – persons who represent the authority.
- iii) the authority has to take all reasonable steps to assure itself that the persons appointed under (ii) are representative of the denominations or associations in question;

- iv) in accordance with section 390 (6) of the Education Act 1996 the authority must ensure that the number of representative members appointed to any subgroup of the group referred to in 3 ii) (a) above (other religions and denominations of religions) shall, so far as consistent with the efficient discharge of the group's functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area;
- v) all members of the SACRE are required to uphold the SACRE Code of Conduct (Appendix 3 p12-13) and the Ealing Council Code of Conduct for Members;
- vi) the authority may remove a member of the SACRE if in the opinion of the authority that member ceases to be representative of the denomination or association which he/she was appointed to represent;
- vii) The number of members in each group is listed in Appendix 1 p9.

4. *Deputies*

Any member unable to attend a meeting of the SACRE may arrange for a named deputy to attend to represent the same organisation as that member. The deputy shall have the same voting powers as the member whose place they attend. Named deputies should be notified to the clerk and the chair in advance of the meeting.

5. *Co-opted members*

The SACRE may co-opt further members for particular purposes and such length of time as representative groups on the SACRE shall decide. SACRE will decide co-options following nominations from members of SACRE or representative groups. SACRE should consider the following when co-options are decided. Candidates should:

- a. have some experience as religious educators;
- b. have an inclusive view of the aims of religious education and collective worship;
- c. where possible be representative of specific education phases, to provide a balanced spread across various phases.

Co-opted members shall hold office on such terms as may be determined at the time of co-option by the SACRE members. This may be for a fixed-term project, or for term of four years. SACRE shall agree through a vote if a replacement co-opted member is required and fulfils the stipulations set out above.

Co-opted members may participate fully in the discussion of the SACRE but may not vote or participate in the co-option of others.

6. *Term of office of members*

The terms of office for appointed members in Groups A-C shall be for the period between the elections of the authority (Ealing Council). Members are appointed at the authority (Ealing Council) meeting following the election. Members appointed to fill a vacancy shall hold office for the unexpired term of office and will be appointed at the earliest available authority meeting. Members in Group D are appointed annually by the authority.

7. *End of membership*

The membership of a member from any representative group will terminate if:

- a. They reach the end of their term of appointment and have not been re-nominated.
- b. They write to the chair or clerk of SACRE tendering their resignation.
- c. They were appointed to the SACRE by virtue of holding a particular office and they no longer hold that office.
- d. They do not attend 3 consecutive meetings without providing a satisfactory reason (and are not represented by a named deputy). SACRE will decide whether their reason is satisfactory.
- e. Their representative group (in Groups A-C) states, in writing to the chair or clerk of SACRE, that one of their nominated members should no longer act as its representatives on the SACRE.
- f. The authority does not re-appoint a member of Group D to SACRE.
- g. The authority determines, on reasonable grounds and in discussion with the chair and vice chair, that a member is unable, unwilling or an unsuitable person to be a member of SACRE.

The authority may remove a member of the SACRE if, in the opinion of the authority, that member has failed to comply with the standards set out in the SACRE Code of Conduct for members or the Ealing Council Code of Conduct for Members, and a member of SACRE who is so removed shall not be eligible for re-appointment.

8. *Vacancies*

In the event of a vacancy the authority shall:

- Advise the representative group of the vacancy and invite them to nominate a replacement
- Receive a completed application form from the potential appointed member

The SACRE clerk shall:

- Notify the next authority meeting of the vacancy
- Refer any nomination for approval and appointment at the next authority meeting
- If there is more than one nomination the authority will decide from the completed application form which applicant to appoint. The other applicant(s) may be considered for the position(s) of co-opted member(s) as outlined in (5) above.
- Confirm that nominee's appointment as a SACRE member once approval and appointment at the authority meeting has taken place.

In the absence of nominees from a representative group the authority, following discussion with

the chair and vice chair, may nominate and appoint any person that it considers to be representative of that group and deems appropriate to fill the vacancy.

9. *Chair and vice-chair*

- i. The chair shall be a member of Group D and be appointed by the authority
- ii. The vice-chair shall be elected by the SACRE in the first meeting after the appointment of the chair. If there is a tied vote then the chair would be asked to decide which of the nominees should be vice-chair.

The chair will be responsible for:

- the management of meetings;
- representing the SACRE to other bodies;
- such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.

The vice-chair will be responsible for:

- deputising for the chair as required;
- representing the SACRE to other bodies in the absence of the chair or in agreement with the chair;
- such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.

10. *Local authority officers*

SACRE will be supported by officers from the office of the chief executive and from Ealing children and adults' directorate (Ealing Learning Partnership) in the following roles:

i) *Clerk*

The office of the chief executive will appoint, fund, supervise and support a clerk who will:

- attend the full meetings of SACRE, any agenda-setting meeting and agreed syllabus conference meetings;
- take appropriate minutes and notes at meetings;
- maintain and update the records of SACRE and its meetings;
- keep membership records and with the local authority adviser, follow up on membership appointments and changes as outlined in (6-8) above;
- notify the authority to arrange an agreed syllabus conference to be convened (2iv)
- provide a copy of the minutes and papers of meeting to the members of SACRE and LA;

ii) *Local authority adviser*

The children and adults' directorate (Ealing Learning Partnership) will appoint, fund, supervise advisory support. This role may be covered by more than one person. They will:

- attend the full meetings of SACRE, any agenda-setting meeting and agreed syllabus conference meetings;

- provide professional advice and support to SACRE in relation to the roles and functions of SACRE as set out in (2) above.
- advise on the convening of the agreed syllabus conference in liaison with the SACRE Chair;
- represent the views of the authority at the meetings;
- advise the authority on the funding needed to enable SACRE to perform its required functions.

iii) Other administrative support

The Children and adults' directorate (Ealing Learning Partnership) will appoint, fund, supervise further administrative support. This role may be covered by more than one person. They will:

- perform any other necessary administrative duties, including those required by this Constitution in relation to the roles and functions of SACRE

11. Voting

- i. On any question to be decided by the SACRE only the representative groups on the SACRE shall be entitled to vote and each group shall have a single vote. Decisions made within each group require a majority vote as do decisions made by the SACRE. Each group can agree its own procedure to address a tied vote within the group.
- ii. Each representative group has a single vote on the question of whether to require a review of the authority's agreed syllabus except Group D, the authority group that cannot vote on the matter. [see 1 (iv)].

12. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of at least one third of the whole number of the SACRE (excluding vacancies), and will include representatives from three out of the four groups as follows:

- i. Group A: two representatives (one Christian and one non-Christian)
- ii. Group B: one representative
- iii. Group C: one representative
- iv. Group D: one representative

13. Frequency of meetings

The SACRE shall normally meet at least once in every school term. The four groups may meet beforehand or on an ad hoc basis outside the full SACRE if they wish.

14. Notice of meetings

At least seven clear days before each meeting of the SACRE the clerk shall send notices to every member setting out the business to be transacted. Items for the agenda may be submitted by any of the four groups, and such items should be sent

to the clerk and at the same time to the executive director for children, adults and public health not less than 14 days before a meeting.

15. Meetings of four groups

Each of the committees of the SACRE may hold its own meetings, and shall make its own arrangements to appoint a chair and vice-chair.

16. Sub-committees

The SACRE may constitute sub-committees to deal with particular matters as and when it sees fit. Seven clear days-notice of meetings of any such sub-committees should be given to the members thereof.

17. Minutes

Minutes of each meeting shall be sent by the clerk to each member as soon as practicable after a meeting. The minutes shall be confirmed and signed at the next meeting.

18. Availability of papers to the public

- i. All papers of the SACRE shall be available to the public, except in relation to any information defined as confidential in regulation 9 of the Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994.
- ii. All meetings of the SACRE and of any sub-committee of the SACRE, including the four groups which constitute the SACRE, shall be open to the public, except that the public may be excluded from any meeting during an item of business whenever it is likely that, if members of the public were present, confidential information as defined in regulation 9 of the Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994 would be disclosed.

19. Review of the constitution

The constitution should be reviewed if there is a change in legislation or of the religious demographics of the area.

It is also good practice to review the constitution every four years given the term of appointment for members. The review should be undertaken in partnership with the authority's legal services.

Any review of the constitution will include a review of the membership numbers and representative groups as appropriate, and in each group.

All four representative groups that constitute SACRE must agree to the changes.

Approved by education committee 18th April 1989. Amended by education committee 3rd July 1990, 31st January 1995, 30th October 1996, 1st July 1998, cabinet 6th March 2001. Amended by SACRE 26 September 2011. Amended by SACRE June 2021

Appendix 1: Composition of Ealing SACRE

A	Group representing religious denominations other than the Church of England	
	Christian	4
	African Caribbean Church (1) (currently vacant)	
	Free Church Federal Council (1) (currently vacant)	
	Roman Catholic (1)	
	United Reform Church (1)	
	Baha'i	1
	Buddhist	1
	Hindu	2
	Humanist	2
	Humanists UK (1)	
	West London Humanists and Secularists (1)	
	Islam	4
	"Discover Islam" (1)	
	Sunni (2) (1 currently vacant)	
	Shi'a (1)	
	Jewish	2
	Orthodox Jewish (1)	
	Liberal Jewish (1)	
	Ravidassia and Sikh	4
	Ramgarhia Sabha (2)	
	Sikh Missionary Society	
	Shri Guru Ravi Dass Sabha (1) (currently vacant)	
B	Church of England Group (2 currently vacant)	6
C	Teachers' Associations' Group (1 currently vacant)	
	5 members with at least 3 groups represented:	
	Association of School and College Leaders	
	National Association of Headteachers	
	National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	
	National Education Union (formerly NUT and ATL)	
	Ealing Learning Partnership	5
D	Local authority group	9
	Total membership	40

Approved by Education Committee 22nd November 1988. Amended by Council 7th March 1989. Further amended by Education Committee 3rd July 1990, 31st January 1995, 30th October 1996, 1st July 1998. Amended 26 September 2011 by Ealing SACRE. Amended June 2021 by Ealing SACRE.

Appendix 2: Vision and values

The members of Ealing SACRE seek to ensure that all pupils in our schools are encouraged to develop spiritually, academically, emotionally and morally in a way that enables them to understand themselves and others and to cope with the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of living in a rapidly changing world.

Our vision is:

for schools to be able to:

- provide challenging, compelling and inclusive learning experiences through the RE curriculum;
- promote an ethos of aspiration through inspirational, meaningful and engaging assemblies and reflection; and
- contribute to cohesion by engaging the wider school community in an exploration of identity and belonging in the local, national and global context.

for the local authority to:

- place a high priority on the role of RE and collective worship (reflection) in schools;
- provide sufficient resources to support schools in the above;
- work in partnership with SACRE to build links between schools and local communities.

for SACRE members to:

- represent their constituents in the spirit of promoting educational RE and collective worship (reflection) that is also inclusive;
- represent fairly the views of their constituents as far as this is possible;
- work with other members of SACRE to model and promote respect for—and understanding of—different beliefs and lifestyles, and to acknowledge that humans seek meaning in a multitude of ways.

Education at its best is a process that engages the whole person. It is not just about the attainment of academic standards; it is also about achievement across a range of skills, as well as the development of ethical values. Religious education must be open to all pupils and so has to be taught in the context of this understanding. It cannot promote any particular religion or philosophy. Rather it must enable pupils to understand their own world-view—religious or non-religious—and to learn from the study of other perspectives.

In view of this, members of SACRE work together to promote the following aims:

- 1 The promotion of pupils' self-esteem.
- 2 The cultivation of understanding and tolerance in a diverse society.

- 3 The development of understanding of—and respect for—the influence of Christianity in British and European history, literature, law and institutions.
- 4 The facilitation of pupils' spiritual and moral development
- 5 To enable pupils to develop thinking skills, including critical and evaluative skills and the capacity for understanding situations from the perspective of others.

Appendix 3: SACRE Code of conduct

All representatives should:

- attend the meetings of SACRE and take part in the deliberations and work of SACRE;
- participate in and review the work of SACRE for the benefit of the whole community;
- actively challenge and resist stereotyping;
- assume at all times that other members of SACRE are honourable and concerned with the best interests of SACRE;
- state views and opinions honestly – and, where appropriate, forcefully – but at all times politely;
- respect the rights of other members to disagree with your point of view.
- uphold the Ealing Council Code of Conduct for Members*

Faith/belief group representatives should:

- ensure that they are adequately qualified to represent their faith or belief community;
- be able to explain how they intend to inform and consult with their faith or belief community;
- feel a sense of responsibility not only to the children coming from their own faith or belief but also to all the children of Ealing;
- provide expertise – or assist in providing access to such expertise – in matters of fact, tradition, theology and practice relating to their own faith or belief for the benefit of the whole school population;
- represent to SACRE the interests and concerns of their own faith or belief community;
- endeavour to represent fairly the views and interests of the widest possible range of beliefs within their community (this is particularly relevant if they are the sole representative on SACRE for their particular belief);
- follow the guidelines for visits to schools (see below);
- recognise that stating a belief or religious tenet is not the same as advancing an argument for or against any proposal, although it may well be an overriding consideration;
- inform members of their belief community of the work of SACRE.

For school visits SACRE representatives should:

- only visit a school as a SACRE representative when invited;
- inform the clerk of SACRE of any invitation received and visits made;

- make absolutely clear that you are speaking from the perspective of the particular religion or belief system that you are representing, if that is the purpose of your visit;
- ensure that you do not say or do anything that could be viewed as denigrating any other religion or ethical belief system;
- at all times behave honourably in relation to your fellow SACRE members.

Teacher and teacher association representatives should:

- provide information and expertise in relation to teaching and the school environment;
- if appropriate provide information and expertise in relation to the teaching of religious education and the provision of reflection in schools;
- represent the interests and concerns of teachers, pupils and schools;
- consult with teaching colleagues and students;
- keep colleagues informed about the work of SACRE;
- ensure that the welfare and education of all the children in Ealing is SACRE's primary focus.

Local authority representatives should:

- represent the wider public interest;
- provide information and expertise to SACRE in their capacity as an elected member of Ealing Council;
- inform SACRE of concerns or issues known to the council relating to education and in particular the provision for SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development), teaching of religious education and the provision of collective worship (reflection) in schools;
- support the work of SACRE by representing its interests in Ealing Council;
- endeavour to ensure that SACRE is adequately funded and supported;
- ensure that legal requirements for the conduct of SACRE are observed, in particular in relation to the suitability and qualifications required to be a member of SACRE.

*Ealing Council Code of Conduct for Members can be found at:

https://www.ealing.gov.uk/downloads/download/921/council_constitution_part_5-codes_and_protocols