



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL



A Meeting of the **SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)** will be held in Teams - Remote Meeting on **MONDAY 14 JUNE 2021 AT 6.15 PM**

Note: The Council has made arrangements under the Coronavirus Act 2020 to hold this meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams. The meeting can be watched live using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqGnv5SYIXo>

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 4 June 2021

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)

Group A

Christine Morgan	Free Church
Catherine Jinkerson	Free Church
Beth Rowland	Free Church
Anju Sharma	Hinduism
Shira Solomons	Judaism
Sukhdev Bansal	Sikhism
Shahid Younis	Islam

Group B

Lisa Cornwell	Church of England
Linda Galpin	Church of England
Rev Philip Hobday	Church of England

Group C

Stephen Vegh	Chairperson Secondary RS Teacher
Julie Easton	Primary RE Teacher
Louisa Gurney	Primary Headteacher
Paris Finnegan	Primary RE Teacher
Philippa Chan	Primary Headteacher

Group D

David Hare	Wokingham Borough Councillor
Graham Howe	Wokingham Borough Councillor

Clerk to the SACRE

Catharine Newport

LA Link / RE Advisor

Angela Hill

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES The Chairman will welcome members, guests and new members. The clerk will extend apologies received. Stephen/Catharine (2mins)	
2	MINUTES To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 1 st March 2021	5 - 12
3	MATTERS ARISING	
3a	Members to let Catherine know of links with places of worship	
3b	Membership (Stephen)	
3c	Stephen to take resources platform idea to the hub meeting for discussion (Stephen)	
3d	Stephen and Angela to suggest to Hub idea of a list for schools to 'visit' via online places of worship	

- (Stephen / Angela)
3e Members to suggest how to spend surplus budget money
- 4 SUMMER TERM 2021: HOW ARE THINGS FOR WOKINGHAM SCHOOLS?**
(Emily)
- 5 DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND BUDGET** **13 - 20**
(Angela / Emily)
- 6 FEEDBACK FROM TEACHER NETWORKS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**
(Angela)
- 7 SACRE PROJECTS**
- 8 BERKSHIRE SACRES HUB UPDATE - FEEDBACK FROM HUB MEETINGS**
- 9 NATIONAL UPDATES RELATING TO EDUCATION AND RE** **21 - 26**
(Angela)
- 10 NASACRE UPDATES** **27 - 36**
(Angela)
- 11 FEEDBACK FROM NASACRE CONFERENCE/AGM**
- 12 AOB**
- 13 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**
Monday 8th November 2021 tbc; Monday 7th March 2022 tbc

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Agenda Item 2

SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 1 MARCH 2021 AT 6.15 PM

Committee Members Present

Group A

Christine Morgan	Free Church
Catherine Jinkerson	Free Church
Beth Rowland	Free Church
Anju Sharma	Hinduism
Shira Solomons	Judaism

Group B

Lisa Cornwell	Church of England
Linda Galpin	Church of England

Group C

Stephen Vegh	Chairperson Secondary RS Teacher
Julie Easton	Primary RE Teacher
Philippa Chan	Primary Headteacher

Group D

David Hare	Wokingham Borough Councillor
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Clerk to Sacre

Catharine Newport

LA Link / RE Advisor

Angela Hill

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Welcome to Catharine Newport – our new clerk since Anne Coffey retired last year.

Apologies were received from Philip Hobday and Paris Finnegan

Michael Freeman has sadly resigned after many years of chairing and being an active member of SACRE. We are so grateful for his commitment and all he has contributed to SACRE moving it forward during his years of service and making it a much easier transition for Stephen to take on the role of chair from him. He will be missed.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 9th November 2021 were approved, proposed by David and seconded by Christine

3 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Members to let Catherine know of links with places of worship.

Action ongoing

4 CATHERINE TO INVESTIGATE LINKS ON MINDFULNESS, CBT ETC.

Catherine shared the information below:

Lots of appropriate links in the following:

<https://www.annafreud.org/>

thenationalcollege.co.uk

Good CPD in various areas across education, including health & wellbeing. Schools need to sign up.

OLT - found in the Wokingham directory, link below. (I've recently completed a 12 week Mental Health course)

<https://directory.wokingham.gov.uk/kb5/wokingham/directory/service.page?id=A2ksTY-dsjE>

5 MEMBERSHIP

Stephen to follow up NQT interest; Beth and Philip to approach contacts

Due to pandemic it is a difficult time to get in contact with potential members and they are also less likely to have time to commit. Action ongoing

6 STEPHEN TO TAKE RESOURCES PLATFORM IDEA TO THE HUB MEETING FOR DISCUSSION

Action ongoing

7 MEMBERS TO SEND INFORMATION TO BETH REGARDING IT PROVISION FOR PUPILS

Beth has not received anything. She understands things are getting better but there are still many pupils without IT access. As a Trustee of United Charities in Wokingham she advised that they are in discussion with schools at the moment regarding putting a fund together to meet the need.

8 MEMBERS TO LET EMILY KNOW IF THEY HAVE ANY IDEAS TO CONTRIBUTE TO, OR WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED IN, THE PROJECT KEY CONCEPTS FOR RE

This comes up later in item 7 of the agenda

9 SPRING TERM 2021: HOW ARE THINGS FOR WOKINGHAM SCHOOLS?

January was a very difficult start to the term because schools thought they were opening after the Christmas break and then there was a government announcement on first day of school that children would not be returning to school and that learning had to be done remotely. This meant that schools had to rapidly adapt and set up this provision and Emily believes that their response and the quality of the provision has been amazing in many cases. The additional challenge is that schools have had 2 systems going on with some children coming into school such as the vulnerable and those of key workers and for some schools this has been a very high number, with schools having to run a mixture of remote learning and provision in school. Most schools had some element of live interaction with children, and teachers were working incredibly hard to ensure that the provision was of the highest standard with many having to spend some time coming into school to be with the

pupils whilst also providing remote provision for the other students. All whilst some staff and pupils were testing positive for the virus with schools having to do the contact tracing and arranging for the appropriate children and bubbles to isolate.

Schools are now preparing to fully reopen from 8th March 2021. All primary children will be expected to return to school full-time on this date. Secondary students meanwhile have to be tested 3 times in school a few days apart before they can attend school full-time. After that there will be twice weekly testing for secondary school children and all school staff at home and it has recently been announced that families of school going children can also be tested. This will result in schools being informed of test results and managing the outcomes with respect to contact tracing etc. There will still, therefore, be a need for remote learning, perhaps for individual children at times or for bubbles.

As with the arrangements for the Autumn term, children and staff will be working in bubbles in school. Schools will be implementing strategies around ventilation, teaching in a socially distanced manner, staggered starts and ends to the school day and lunchtimes to avoid crowding, enhanced cleaning, remote staff meetings.

Staff will be concentrating on identifying gaps in learning as well as being mindful of well-being of both staff and children.

There will be no exams but lots of teacher assessments to identify gaps and assess where the children have got to by the end of the school year. Teachers will be providing grades to exam boards for GCSEs and A levels.

Generally, schools will be a long way from running normally and it will be a long time before things are completely back to normal. Although there will be much gladness amongst pupils and staff to be getting back there will also be some anxieties.

Regarding visitors in schools – in the Autumn term schools could have visitors although they did want to minimise the number and visits had to be done inline with school risk assessments. The Wokingham Schools Improvement team are thinking they will probably not visit schools until September. It is unlikely that visits from SACRE members will be considered until well into the Autumn term.

Catherine suggested it would be really nice if places of worship were able to be proactive in seeking ways to offer support and asked how and when SACRE could communicate with them. This would take the pressure off schools to invite places of worship to come in and instead have the offer sent to them. Catherine can put together a list of contacts and draft an email. Julie suggested that the email could suggest 'visiting' the school online or by recording, as physical visits are still not possible. Stephen suggested that this might be something the Hub would like to do as it could benefit the whole of Berkshire

ACTION: Stephen and Angela to bring suggestion to the Hub

10 DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND BUDGET

Angela – The SACRE managed to achieve nearly everything we intended to this year with just a few exceptions due to the pandemic-

- The federation secondary INSET day did not go ahead this year.
- Members were getting ready to go and visit schools but this came to an abrupt halt.

- Support for secondary schools – The SACRE normally contributes financially to the secondary federation inset day so that they can book speakers for their inset day. But this was cancelled this year. It has also been cancelled for next year so we need to bear this in mind when planning support for secondary schools for the coming financial year.

Membership – see document in agenda pack indicating vacancies

We have tried to recruit a Buddhist to group A but have not been successful. Let us know if you know anyone.

2 teacher association memberships to fill, now that Michael is standing down
We would like another secondary teacher and primary teacher.

Already engaged with Julian Bushell to try to recruit a secondary teacher but no success so far.

Please note, members of Group C don't have to be directly teaching RE

Development plan for the coming year – also see later item.

Conceptual understanding project– primary and secondary – see later item.

We will need to consider how we can offer remote support to schools. There is no guarantee that schools will be happy to have visitors from September so how can we make best use of the online platforms and technology that we have at our disposal? How can we best support schools and how can we encourage schools to support SACRE and be more aware of what is going on in RE?

Budget update

After expenses expected to be incurred during this month, we have a surplus of around £2000 for this financial year. Angela explained that possibilities for spending this, in terms of what RE Today can offer, are:

- Training on a resource called 'Understanding Christianity'
- Anti-racist RE – could be cross-phase training
- RE Today offer various membership packages to schools which could be subsidised

Emily stated that

- This money cannot be easily carried over to the new financial year. We would have to put a case forward to commit the money now for an event in the future which could be a difficult process.
- If we do not use the money it should not impact on the amount we receive next year.

Beth stated that the Hub has been making some films and there may be some further costs in this respect.

General discussion took place with ideas of how to best use this surplus. Ideas included:

- RE Today training and/or resources for schools
- The conceptual development project (only a little money required)
- Continuing the Hub project/ launch event

- A Muslim speaker for schools
- Resources for schools - from RE Today/ an artefacts library (does the Bracknell Forest library still exist?)
- Training for SACRE members

ACTION: This money cannot be easily carried over. We would have to utilise this surplus; we need to have a purchase order raised before 31st March 2021. Members are invited to please forward suggestions of how best to spend this money as soon as possible to Stephen and Beth, Angela and Emily, who will meet soon to further discuss this

11 FEEDBACK FROM TEACHER NETWORKS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

3 events to update SACRE on –

- 16th November 2020 - GCSE training. Only 4 teachers attended but gave very positive feedback. Disappointingly low number of attendance possibly due to the fact that there was a CPD event run by one of the exam boards the same week. We are therefore considering possibly offering the course again in the summer term
- 1st December 2020 RE Network Meeting for Primary Teachers – 15 attended with positive feedback
- 21st January 2021 Re Subject Leaders training – really well attended with 20 delegates and very positive feedback

Need to improve on numbers of delegates providing constructive feedback so measures will be put in place to encourage this.

12 SACRE PROJECTS

A booklet was produced in Wokingham last academic year, on key concepts in the foundation subjects. RE is not currently included. A project took place which brought together Primary and Secondary teachers to discuss what are the key concepts that children need to understand by the end of year 6 in order to be ready to make the most of the curriculum at key stage 3 in that subject. The purpose is to make transition seamless and avoid the dip in achievement that often happens between Primary and Secondary. The aim of the project was that Primary teaching staff would be better able to plan their curriculum if everyone is agreed that these are the ‘big ideas’ that children need to understand by the end of year 6, and secondary schools would have a really clear idea of where the children are starting at the beginning of the key stage 3 curriculum. So, the booklet was produced with a page for each foundation subject with information on what the national curriculum states that children have to learn and what are the big ideas, the concepts, that we in Wokingham have agreed children need to understand by the end of year 6.

As RE is missing from this, we are planning to work on this at the coming RE Primary Network meeting on 23rd March, which SACRE members are welcome to join. We have invited Secondary School teachers to join as well and plan to work on a page to add to that booklet on RE. This will relate of course to the local syllabus rather than the national curriculum, but the process will be the same as for the other subjects. Angela will take away a draft page from the meeting and after working on it will share a draft which we hope to finalise at the summer term network meeting. It would be great to have SACRE

members contribute to that meeting. If you would like to attend, it will be held at 4pm on 23rd March, please email either Schools.Teams@wokingham.gov.uk or catharine.newport@wokingham.gov.uk for a TEAMS link.

Anju asked whether there would be any expense for this as we still have money to be spent this financial year. Emily could only think that a relatively small amount would go to Angela for her time.

13 BERKSHIRE SACRES HUB UPDATE - FEEDBACK FROM HUB MEETINGS

Has met regularly throughout lockdown producing films and guidance.

The films produced so far are a useful tool for Primary colleagues. The hub is looking to secure further funding to produce more films potentially for Secondary schools

The hub also has surplus funding and are approaching a catholic church in Windsor and possibly other places of worship in this respect.

Future plans

The hub is looking to host the film resources on the NATRE website, alongside other good teaching materials for RE such as Anti bullying resources.

The hub has been asked to present on the West Hill Project at the NASACRE conference 24th May 2021.

Virtual launch of videos will be held online on 28th April at 4.00pm – 5.30pm assuming copyrights and other legal issues with the films have been resolved.

14 FINAL ANNUAL REPORT ON PREVIOUS ACADEMIC YEAR

Everyone was emailed the financial report in December. If anyone did not receive it, it is available on the Schools Hub on the SACRE page.

15 NATIONAL UPDATES RELATING TO EDUCATION AND RE

Updates are in the agenda pack.

It has been confirmed that subject knowledge enhancement funding will be made available from government for RE. This will assist teachers who wish to teach RE with confidence in schools but are non-specialists.

24 hour residential symposium proposed for the Autumn term, next academic year. Only 25 places available requiring a high level of commitment for anyone applying and there will be pre-event tasks set.

Art in Heaven competition is continuing and proving very popular

New NATRE chair appointment confirmed

Katie Freeman – Primary School Teacher will be stepping up as chair. Ben Wood – Secondary Teacher is outgoing chair.

Joanne Harris – Secondary vice-chair

Naomi Anstice – Primary vice-chair

RE Today and NATRE are continuing to produce distance learning and home learning resources on website.

The Culham St Gabriel's RE Leadership programme continues.

Inspiring RE (£60 per delegate) is still set to go ahead on 21st April –Sarah Payne the regional ambassador is keen for it to happen face-to-face, but we will have to wait and see if that can go ahead or if it will need to be postponed.

16 NASACRE UPDATES

Updates are in the agenda pack

EGM minutes will be sent out to members

AGM will be held online on 24th May. SACRE members who wish to attend please email Emily or Catharine. Funding is available for places for all who wish to attend.

17 DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR COMING FINANCIAL YEAR

We will continue to deliver our standard work such as Primary Network meetings. As the Federation inset day is not happening, we need to consider more support for Secondary Schools. Angela has offered to do the GCSE training in the summer term when there is no exam board training. It would be good to consider who SACRE can support in a remote way. Ideas are welcome.

18 RE GCSE PROVISION IN WOKINGHAM SCHOOLS

A brief confidential discussion took place about provision for RS at KS4 in Wokingham secondary schools. Stephen is to consider this further and will perhaps draft a communication to schools.

19 AOB

Meeting finished at 7.53pm

20 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Summer term meeting – Monday 14th June 2021 tbc (Depending on WBC meetings); Monday 8th November 2021 tbc; Monday 7th March 2022 tbc

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Wokingham SACRE action plan April 2021-March 2022

(See budget sheet for costings)

Aim	Actions	Timescales	People Responsible	Summer 2021	Autumn 2021	Spring 2022
<p>A. CORE BUSINESS</p> <p>To be a supportive and proactive SACRE enjoying full and well-informed membership</p>	<p>1. Fill membership vacancies if/when they arise</p> <p>Work proactively with SACRE members, faith communities and other partners to ensure representation on all SACRE committees.</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>SACRE Chair SACRE Clerk SACRE members</p>			
	<p>2. SACRE members attend termly SACRE meetings (3 per year) and, when possible, teacher termly network meetings and training events e.g. annual SACRE conference</p>	<p>Termly SACRE meetings: Summer 2021 Autumn 2021 Spring 2022</p> <p>Termly teacher network meetings and occasional training events</p>	<p>SACRE Chair/SACRE Adviser SACRE members SACRE Clerk</p>	<p>Meeting</p>	<p>Meeting</p>	<p>Meeting</p>
	<p>3. Encourage SACRE members who are not involved directly in schools to visit a school or schools and, where possible, to observe RE in</p>	<p>Aim for one person to visit a school by the end of the 2019-20 academic year, and one each term thereafter</p>	<p>SACRE Chair SACRE Clerk SACRE members RE teachers and school leaders</p>	<p>1 visit</p>	<p>2 visits in total</p>	<p>3 visits in total</p>

	action and feed back to SACRE					
	4. Produce annual SACRE Report	Summer Term 2021	SACRE Adviser and clerk		Present draft for members' approval to Autumn 2021 meeting Submit report by 30 th December 2021	Present final, submitted report at Spring meeting and to Councillors on Date tbc
	5. Review the action plan at each meeting and update for next year	At each SACRE meeting	SACRE Adviser and SACRE	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting
	6. Subscribe to NASACRE Representation at annual NASACRE conference, NASACRE AGM	Ongoing	1 SACRE member and SACRE Adviser to attend annual AGM. SACRE adviser to provide updates on NASACRE business at meetings and, where appropriate, through the SACRE clerk via email	This year's conference and AGM will take place online on 24 th May 2021 Pan Berks Hub will present the Real People: Real Faith NASACRE Westhill project at this meeting.		
B. To support teachers of RE to continually improve RE	1. Provide a termly primary RE network meeting for Wokingham	Ongoing, a primary network meeting each term plus feedback at each	SACRE Adviser	Network meeting on a Tuesday near the	Network meeting on a Tuesday near the beginning of each term	Network meeting on a Tuesday near the

learning in their school, ensuring that the agreed Pan-Berkshire syllabus is understood, and teachers are equipped to deliver it effectively	<p>teachers, 4-5.30 hosted by schools.</p> <p>Feedback to SACRE</p> <p>SACRE members are welcome to attend these meetings</p>	termly SACRE meeting		<p>beginning of each term</p> <p>Online or face-to-face</p>	<p>Hopefully, a face-to-face meeting may be possible for the first meeting of the academic year 2021-2022</p>	<p>beginning of each term</p> <p>Online or face-to-face</p>
	<p>2. Primary Subject Leader Training x 1 half-day sessions (joint with Reading or Bracknell)</p>	<p>Autumn term 2021 October date tba 1-3.30pm or shorter twilight session Venue: tba</p>	SACRE Adviser	<p>To be advertised in the summer term and booking to be made available</p>	Deliver	Feedback to SACRE
	<p>3. Provide annual CPD session for secondary RE teachers/heads of RE Provide at least one twilight secondary CPD. (NB secondary federation INSET day not happening this year, so funds usually allocated to this can be spent on other forms of support for secondary schools)</p>	<p>Autumn term secondary training – offer to schools across Berkshire for payment?</p>	SACRE Adviser	<p>To be advertised in the Summer term and booking to be made available</p>	Deliver	Feedback to SACRE

C. Pan-Berkshire Hub	Consolidate and develop the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub.	Ongoing	SACRE members SACRE advisers and the 6 Chairs from all Berkshire SACREs	The Real People: Real Faith Project is nearing completion. An online conference to showcase this work is planned for 28 th April 2021	Work with Hub to aid any final steps towards completion of NASACRE Westhill Project Liaise with SACRE members and Hub to consider the feasibility of further projects	Report to SACRE members/Hub on regarding plans for further project work with the Hub
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SACRE budget plan April 2021- March 2022 - DRAFT

CORE COSTS	
Professional fees	
- NASACRE subscription	105
- Attendance at NASACRE conference (RE advisor + members)	60
IT support for webcasting SACRE meetings OR meeting refreshments	100
Annual report design/ printing	150
LA link/RE advisor – 4 days:	2,500
- 3 x SACRE meetings (preparation and attendance)	
- Annual report writing	
- Attendance at NASACRE conference/ AGM	
Travel expenses (RE advisor) x 2 SACRE meetings?	150
Sub-total budget core costs	£3,065
PROJECT COSTS	
Consultancy:	
- 3 x primary network meetings	750
- Half day primary subject leader training – 1 day advisor time	500
- Twilight secondary training	250
- Attendance at termly hub meetings	750
- Travel costs (2 x network meetings; SL training; 2 x hub meetings)	400
Updating of SACRE leaflet – design and printing	100
Refreshments for subject leader training	20
Sub-total budget Wokingham project costs	£2,770
BERKSHIRE SACRES HUB ACTIVITIES	
- Termly Hub meetings (Hub managers’ prep and attendance)	
- Hub manager travel costs	
- Hub activities:	
Completion of Westhill ‘Real People: Real Faith’ Project	Wokingham contribution: 900
RE advisor time to support hub activities	250
Sub-total budget Hub activities costs	£1,150
Total budget plan	£6,985
Budget allocation	£6,800
+ funds carried forward from 2020-21	£2,800
<u>TOTAL funds available</u>	<u>£9,600</u>
Funds still to be budgeted for	£2,615

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SACRE budget April 2020- March 2021

BUDGET PLAN	Spending Apr-June 20	Spending July-Oct 20	Spending Nov 20- Feb 21	Spending March 21
CORE COSTS Planned spending = £2,465 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional fees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NASACRE subscription <i>(Refreshments for SACRE meetings N/A)</i> IT support for webcasting virtual SACRE meetings Annual report design/ printing LA link/RE advisor – 4 days: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 x SACRE meetings (preparation and attendance) - Annual report writing - <i>(Travel expenses (RE advisor) N/A)</i> 	NASACRE subscription £105 Annual report design (2018-19 report) £72 Webcasting June SACRE meeting £42 Angela prep and attendance June SACRE meeting £250	Angela preparation of annual report £500	Webcasting November SACRE meeting £28.74 Angela prep and attendance November SACRE meeting £250 Annual report design (2019-20 report) £104.40 Anne Coffey retirement gifts, card and postage £59.77	Webcasting March SACRE meeting £30 Angela prep and attendance March SACRE meeting £250
PROJECT COSTS Planned spending = £3,020 <p>19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultancy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 x primary network meetings - Half day primary subject leader training – 1 day advisor time - Twilight secondary training - Attendance at termly hub meetings - <i>(Travel costs (2 x network meetings; SL training; 2 x hub meetings) – N/A)</i> <i>(Contribution to RE programme on secondary federation INSET day – N/A)</i> Updating of SACRE leaflet – design and printing <i>(Refreshments for subject leader training – N/A)</i> 	Angela attendance April hub meeting £125 Angela preparation of materials in lieu of spring term primary network meeting £250	Angela attendance July hub meeting + viewing of Westhill videos £250 Angela prep and hosting July virtual primary network meeting £125 Angela emails, phone calls, virtual meetings £250	Angela prep and hosting December virtual primary network meeting £125 Angela prep and delivery November GCSE training £250 Angela prep and delivery January subject leader training £250 Angela attendance February hub meeting £125	Angela prep and hosting March virtual primary network meeting £125 Angela follow up work from primary network meeting – conceptual understanding document £250
BERKSHIRE SACRE HUB ACTIVITIES Planned spending = £900 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Termly Hub meetings (Hub managers’ prep and attendance) Hub manager travel costs Hub activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of Westhill ‘Real People: Real Faith’ Project 				Angela NASACRE presentation planning with Anne Andrews £125
Total planned spending = £6,385 Budget allocation = £6,800	Total spends to June: £844	Total spends to Oct: £1,969	Total spends to Feb: £3,161.91	Total spends for year: £3,941.91 Funds remaining: £2,858.09

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National RE Updates for SACREs Summer 2021

Ofsted publishes research review on religious education

The latest review, published on 12th May 2021 draws on the education inspection framework (EIF) and other religious education (RE) literature to identify what contributes to high-quality RE.

Read the [RE research review](#) here.

Brief Summary

The review recognises that there is no single way of constructing and teaching a high-quality RE curriculum, but identifies some common features:

- The curriculum should cover substantive content and concepts collectively (or 'collectively enough'), rather than covering excessive amounts of content superficially. Content is sufficient for pupils to grasp a bigger picture about the place of religion and non-religion in the world.
- What is taught and learned in RE is grounded in what is known about religion or non-religion from academic study. This helps prevent pupils from developing misconceptions about religion and non-religion.
- Pupils study certain areas of the RE curriculum in depth and acquire a range of detailed knowledge of different concepts and ideas, which they remember long term. Drawing on this prior knowledge enables them to consider more complex ideas about religion. Leaders and teachers select this 'depth of study' from contrasting religious and/or non-religious traditions so that pupils avoid developing misrepresentations.
- The curriculum is well sequenced to ensure that pupils learn the knowledge they need for later topics.
- There is a consideration of when pupils should relate the content to their own personal knowledge (for example, their own prior assumptions).
- How the curriculum is taught and assessed focuses pupils' attention squarely on the knowledge they need to learn.
- Adequate curriculum time is given to RE, so that leaders can deliver an ambitious curriculum.
- There is sufficient training and professional development so that teachers have appropriate subject professional knowledge.

The review refers to 3 different types of subject-specific knowledge that pupils learn in RE. Each of these is powerful and should not be confused with 'mere facts'. The first is 'substantive' knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions. The second type is 'ways of knowing', where pupils learn 'how to know' about religion and non-religion. The third type is 'personal knowledge', where pupils build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about what they study. The review suggests that improvement in RE at both primary and secondary level includes knowing more of these 'pillars of progression'. This prepares pupils to engage in a complex, multi-religious and multi-secular world.

In the spring term of 2022, Ofsted will publish a report on the quality of RE curriculums taught in schools, gathering evidence through 'deep dives'.

How can SACRE encourage schools to engage with Ofsted's findings?

NASACRE Report on SACRE funding in England

NASACRE has published its research report on SACRE funding following a freedom of information request to local authorities. The report reveals the startling statistic that only 8% of Local Authorities provide NASACRE's recommended level of funding for their SACREs. The 2% benchmark represents the proportion of the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) government funding that is deemed necessary

to fulfil the statutory functions of a SACRE and an Agreed Syllabus Conference. The full report can be viewed here: [1-376-nasacre-report-on-sacre-funding-in-england-2021.pdf](https://www.nasacre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/1-376-nasacre-report-on-sacre-funding-in-england-2021.pdf)

What can our SACRE learn from this report?

Spirited Arts 2021 – Still time to enter!

Entries for this year's Spirited Arts competition are still welcome up until the deadline of 31st July. Click here to watch Lat Blaylock, RE Today editor and National RE Adviser, explain you everything you need to know about this year's competition: [Spirited Arts & Poetry Competition 2021 - YouTube](#)

How can SACRE encourage schools to enter this competition?

Research for RE

RE:online has had a bit of a refresh. Access some of the latest research online, including the 'Research of the Month' featuring a different piece of research each month: [Research of the Month - RE:ONLINE \(reonline.org.uk\)](https://reonline.org.uk)

How can SACRE encourage teachers of RE to keep up to date with current research?

RE Today recruits a new adviser

RE Today are delighted to announce the appointment of Adam Robertson as National RE Adviser. Adam is an experienced primary teacher and subject leader for RE. In addition, he worked as a schools adviser for the Diocese of Bristol for four years Adam has been a member of the NATRE Executive since 2018. He has also served as a SACRE adviser and led RE Hub groups in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

“Learning to Listen” report

The recent APPG (All-Party Parliamentary Group) report on Religion in the Media aimed at ‘working with parliamentarians, industry leaders, journalists, academics and faith communities to improve religious literacy in broadcast and print media’ draws attention to the importance of education in religion and worldviews. The full report can be viewed here: [APPG+Learning+to+Listen+12+04+21+\(2\).pdf \(squarespace.com\)](https://www.squarespace.com/files/2021/04/12/APPG+Learning+to+Listen+12+04+21+(2).pdf)

Katie Freeman, Chair of NATRE: “Understanding people and their unique perspective on the world is a vital skill for us all, especially young people. Good religious education plays a vital role in that, helping create a more cohesive society, ensures young people receive a balanced education, and supports a vibrant economy by preparing employees and future business leaders for the globalised workplace and that includes roles in the media”

How can SACRE bring this important report to the attention of school leaders in our local authority?

NATRE call to action: Time for the government to address the consequences of their neglect of RE teachers

NATRE's recent article claims that the demands of teaching Religious Education are generally poorly understood. A teacher of RE in modern Britain must not only understand the principal religious and non-religious worldviews, but also the diversity within and between those traditions, but many teachers are ill-equipped to do so effectively. The article can be read here: [Time for the government to address the consequences of their neglect of teachers of RE? \(natre.org.uk\)](https://www.natre.org.uk/time-for-the-government-to-address-the-consequences-of-their-neglect-of-teachers-of-re/)

How does this apply to schools in our local authority?

NATRE Curriculum Symposium: expression of interest

We are planning to hold a 24-hour residential curriculum symposium in the Autumn.

There will only be 25 places: if you are interested please complete the expression of interest form. The form can be accessed here: [NATRE Curriculum Symposium: expression of interest](#)

Understanding Christianity now in over 6,500 schools

Since its launch in May 2016, the substantial resource, Understanding Christianity: Text Impact Connections has made its way into RE classrooms in more than 6500 schools throughout the UK, helping to lay the foundations for excellent learning at 14+/GCSE and A Level.

Reforming RE Blog

Teachers and RE professionals can access the latest news and opinions on Religion and Worldview by reading the Reforming RE blog: [Reforming RE – A blogspace for a Worldviews Curriculum \(wordpress.com\)](#)

Blog competition winner: Why does an education in Religion and Worldviews matter?

This was the question that many teachers posed to their pupils last term for an inaugural Blog Competition.'

RE:online has all the blog entry winners. This is a great resource for inspiring classroom discussion and activities. Read winning entries here: [Blog - RE:ONLINE \(reonline.org.uk\)](#)

OARS Education End of Project Event 1 July

The Oxford Argumentation in Religion and Science (OARS) project team is hosting a public End of Project Event to share resources, research, and outcomes of the three-year project. More details can be found here: [OAR End of Project Event | OARS Education](#)

The RE Podcast: Decolonising RE

The next episode of the podcast is in collaboration with Ash Kundi, There will be a series of podcasts which look at how we might decolonise RE. Dr. Jasjit Singh will enlighten listeners about how we can be more authentic in teaching Sikhi. But the discussion goes so much deeper, exploring the representation of Sikhi in the media, the history of Sikhs in Britain and the contribution they have made to British culture. Dr. Singh is both knowledgeable and wise, and presents ideas that will change the teaching of Sikhi in RE. Listen here: [The RE Podcast: Season 3 Episode 4: The One About Sikhi on Apple Podcasts](#)

Humanist Heritage website launch

'To mark the 125th anniversary of Humanists UK, Understanding Humanism have launched a new, free online resource that will support teachers and students to explore the rich history and influence on the UK of humanist thought and action.' [Humanist Heritage - Exploring the rich history and influence of humanism in the UK \(humanists.uk\)](#)

Nobody stands nowhere

A new animated film by Emily Downe, created in partnership with Culham St Gabriel's Trust and Canterbury Christ Church University, unpacks the idea of worldviews and invites the viewer to consider how their own unique view of the world might co-exist with other vantage points held by those around them.' View the film here: [Nobody Stands Nowhere - Theos Think Tank - Understanding faith. Enriching society.](#)

Premier League footballer talks about his experience of Ramadan

Wolves defender Romain Saiss talks to the BBC's Match Of The Day about what it's like being a Premier League footballer and fasting during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Watch the video here: [MOTDx: Wolves' Romain Saiss on being a footballer during Ramadan - BBC Sport](#)

Bhaktivedanta Manor virtual visit

Every year thousands of teachers and students visit Bhaktivedanta Manor to learn about Hinduism and 'lived religion'. Because of lockdown schools have been unable to go on any educational visits. This short informative video can be shared with students. Watch the video here: [Temple Visit - YouTube](#)

BBC Being...

A new series from the BBC, showing British Sikhs, Hindus, Jewish people, Christians and Muslims celebrating some of life's biggest moments, from birth and coming of age to marriage and the end of life makes a great classroom resource. [BBC iPlayer - Being... - Series 1: 2. Sikh](#)

How Islam began in under 10 minutes

True Tube tells the turbulent tale against the clock, with all the names, dates and events on a timeline. Watch here: [How Islam Began - In Ten Minutes - TrueTube](#)

PRIMARY NEWS

Primary RE Facebook group

This group is intended to provide a supportive forum for teachers of Religious Education to Primary age children: [Primary RE - for everyone teaching RE in Primary Schools! | Facebook](#)

Teaching the Holy Trinity: Free Resource

Liz Johnson teaches at Our Lady of Pity Catholic Primary School on the Wirral. This PowerPoint sequence supports ideas from Summer 2021's REtoday magazine pages 24-25: [Religious education \(RE\) resources - FREE, KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4 \(natre.org.uk\)](#)

PRIMARY CPD

NEW! RE: Intent, Implementation and Impact

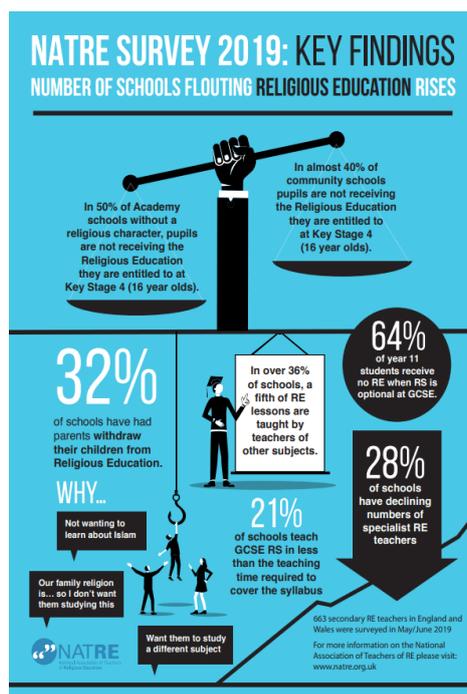
[Online \(Day course\) 22nd June](#)

SECONDARY NEWS

NATRE Secondary Survey 2021

NATRE is conducting its eighth secondary survey about the current state of RE in all types of schools. This helps the organisation to continue to support teachers in the classroom by raising awareness of the impact of government policy on RE. The deadline for participating in this survey is Friday 25th June and all teachers completing the survey will be entered into a prize draw. The survey can be found here: [NATRE Secondary Survey 2021 \(surveymonkey.co.uk\)](#)

You can see some of the findings from the 2019 survey in the infographic:



New blog launched for Key Stage 3 Buddhism

Dr Rachel Jackson-Royal has recently launched a new blog, entitled *Unity and Diversity: Exploring Buddhism in KS3*. Its aim is to help teachers towards a more authentic presentation of Buddhism in Key Stage 3 RE. The blog can be viewed here: [Unity and Diversity: Exploring Buddhism in KS3 – Reforming RE \(wordpress.com\)](https://www.natre.org.uk/blog/unity-and-diversity-exploring-buddhism-in-ks3-reforming-re)

WHS Essay Competition 2021

The Wesley Historical Society runs an annual essay competition, open to Sixth Formers, seeking short essays on religious history.

There is a prize of up to £250 and the deadline is 1 October. Enter here: [The Wesley Historical Society: Events](https://www.wesleyhistoricalsociety.org.uk/events)

Secondary CPD

Understanding Christianity training

This day course will provide you with an overview of the 'Understanding Christianity' approach, units of work strategies, activities and classroom resources to support learning through an extensive resource pack.

Next date: 12 July 2021

Autumn term: 28th September 2021

Community schools could save £150 on the course fee, and pay just £60!

The RE Update: a day course for every secondary RE teacher

Online (Day course), 2nd July 2021

NEW! Help! I'm a secondary non-specialist RE teacher

Online (Day course), 2nd July 2021

Click here to book a place: [Upcoming Courses & Events \(natre.org.uk\)](https://www.natre.org.uk/upcoming-courses-events)

Local Updates

Real People: Real Faith

The Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub recently launched its Real Faith: Real People project. The films were launched to teachers across Berkshire in an online event on 28th April and were showcased nationally at the NASACRE annual conference on 24th May. Funded by Westhill and hosted on the NATRE website, this is a series of interviews filmed in locations across Berkshire, featuring local faith communities answering questions about their faith. Two questions, specific to each key stage were asked across the range of venues and in most venues, several people answered each question. This allows pupils and teachers to explore some of the diversity both between and within faith communities. The same six communities were interviewed at each key stage. Each film has a page of notes outlining the key questions and concepts, with a brief summary of the answers and some suggested follow-on activities. The hub is planning more videos in the next academic year. The clips and accompanying notes can be found here: [Real People Real Faith \(natre.org.uk\)](http://Real People Real Faith (natre.org.uk))



Local networks and training for teachers

On 23rd March, secondary teachers joined in with the primary network meeting to contribute to the 'conceptual understanding' project. In this well-attended meeting, the knowledge and skills that pupils should acquire from studying the Pan Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for RE was discussed in depth. Based on the discussions, a page for RE will be produced and this will be reviewed at the summer meeting July, and we hope that secondary teachers will attend. The Real People: Real Faith project will also be discussed at the summer network meeting.

Inspiring RE Conference

NATRE Central South Teachers' Inspiring RE Conference, hosted by Sarah Payne, NATRE Local Ambassador for the Central South region is due to take place on Wednesday 13th October. The event has been re-scheduled several times due to the pandemic, but Sarah is planning a face-to-face conference at Milton Keynes Christian Centre Church, Strudwick Drive, Oldbrook, MK6 2TG.

Current price is £60 per delegate. Please contact Sarah Payne if you are interested in attending: sarah@natre.org.uk

SACRE funding in England



A Report from the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education

May 2021



Foreword

It is my pleasure, as current Chair of the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on RE, to introduce this report to our members, and to thank everyone involved in its production.

Levels of funding for SACREs have been a source of some concern and interest to the Association for some time. Discussions with the Department for Education during 2019 also demonstrated that advice on the levels and sources of funding was of interest to their teams, to ministers and to Members of Parliament. In 2019 NASACRE issued this advice:

'...having looked at the statutory expectations that could reasonably be expected to be funded from CSSB¹, set out a national recommendation that an LA should allocate at least 2% of the CSSB to SACRE in order that SACRE can carry out their statutory duties.'²

SACREs are in the main made up of volunteers, supported by LA officers. Despite inadequate funding and appropriate support structures in some local areas, many SACREs have continued to meet, provide a syllabus and training to schools, and to provide advice on the interface between education and religion and worldviews. SACREs have also continued this work online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Freedom of Information request underpinning this report emerged from another NASACRE and RE Council project on piloting 'Local Area Networks for Religion and Worldviews', as proposed by the Commission on Religious Education³. The FOI request was issued to LAs during the autumn of 2020. We cannot let the publication of the report go by without thanking all who responded, and all who helped FOI officers and SACRE Clerks find the answers during the Covid 19 pandemic, and its series of partial or complete lockdowns.

NASACRE is a non-statutory organisation supported mainly by volunteer executive committee members. The research and writing team gave freely of their own time and expertise to produce this summary of findings, and to offer some advice. The Department of Education has commented positively to NASACRE on this advice⁴, acknowledging that its officials might use NASACRE's estimate of a funding level of 2% of the CSSB to advise local authorities. However, authorities can, of course, determine their own budgets and where funding comes from to support SACREs.

NASACRE is likely to repeat this FOI request on a regular basis, and the executive committee is very happy to receive feedback on the process and the questions, and other areas we might focus on. Feedback has already shown us that the FOI request in itself helped SACRE officers and members to understand the challenges and complexities of current education funding levels. This report highlights the facts as submitted through LA data, and it shows that many SACREs deserve better support from their local authorities. As statutory bodies, SACREs have a right to raise questions about their levels of support, and to receive the funding that is needed to underpin their work.

We look forward to working with Chairs of SACREs, partner RE associations, politicians, and officials at the DfE on the next steps to achieving some parity of provision in terms of the financial and other resources. These are urgently needed to enable statutory bodies to achieve their obligations, operate efficiently within local democracy, and to promote excellent Religious Education and Collective Worship in schools.

I commend the report to you all.



Linda Rudge,

Chair

The National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on RE

¹ The CSSB (Central Services School Block) is funding allocated by central government (through the Education and Skills Funding Agency) to local authorities to carry out central functions on behalf of pupils in both maintained schools and academies in England.

² NASACRE (2019), SACRE Briefing 22, <https://mailchi.mp/8292b1171b7d/6g3v9uvmy6-1332313?e=da7db1e3e7>

³ Commission on Religious Education(2018) *Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward* Religious Education Council of England and Wales <https://www.commissiononre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Final-Report-of-the-Commission-on-RE.pdf>

⁴ DfE (2019) email to NASACRE, 18th March.

Headlines

The majority of SACREs in England do not get a sufficient share of the CSSB to enable them to carry out their duties well.

Only 12 Local Authorities in 2019-2020 stated that they used 2% or more of CSSB funds on SACRE business, meaning 92% of SACREs were allocated less than 2% of the CSSB.

25 Authorities (18%) claim to use no funding on SACRE business in contravention of statutory responsibilities.

Over a quarter (27%) of Authorities told us they allocate no funds to professional support for the SACRE.

More than half of LAs (42, 53%) disclosed that they do not use any funds to support RE in schools.

Due to lack of adequate support it is increasingly difficult for some SACREs to fulfil their statutory duties; 7 LAs told us that their Agreed Syllabus was over 6 years old. One syllabus was last reviewed in 2010.

Note: All percentages are based on data from those authorities that provided an answer to that question.

Context

In the 1988 Education Reform Act, all Local (Education) Authorities (LAs) were given a statutory duty to establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). In many areas they had existed prior to this date, to agree and support the local syllabus for RE. The latest guidance on RE confirms that “each LA must establish a permanent body called a standing advisory council on religious education”. The LA must also “establish an occasional body called an agreed syllabus conference (ASC) to review the agreed syllabus for RE adopted by the LA” and must “institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus within five years of the last review, and subsequently every five years after the completion of each further review”. “An LA should fund and support a SACRE and an ASC satisfactorily in line with the duty to constitute or convene each of these bodies and to enable them effectively to carry out their functions.”⁵

Local Authority funding has been reduced significantly in the last decade with, on average, a 21% real term fall between 2009 and 2019.⁶ Financially squeezed Local Authorities often appear to underfund the work of SACREs. The last Ofsted subject report into RE suggested that:

“Recent changes in education policy are having a negative impact on the provision for RE in some schools and on the capacity of local authorities and SACREs to carry out their statutory responsibilities to monitor and support it.”⁷

A survey of SACREs completed in 2017 confirmed that a major concern of many SACREs was indeed their capacity to carry out even their statutory duties due to underfunding⁸. When asked a parliamentary question about SACRE funding in March 2018, Schools Minister, Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP gave the following written answer:

The Government is continuing to provide local authorities with funding for Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) through the Central School Services Block from 2018/19 onwards. Local authorities are expected to ensure that SACREs are funded adequately to perform their duties. SACREs continue to play an important role in supporting schools to teach high-quality religious education.⁹

⁵ DCSF (2010) *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance*, pages 10-11. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf

⁶ Neil Amin Smith & David Phillips (2019) *English council funding: what's happened and what's next?*, IFS Briefing Note, Available from: <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14133>

⁷ Ofsted (2013) *Religious education: realising the potential*, Page 6

⁸ Paul Smalley (2019): *A critical policy analysis of local religious education in England*, *British Journal of Religious Education*.

⁹ HC Deb, 26 March 2018, cW, <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2018-03-21/133819>

In a letter dated 15th August 2019, Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Gavin Williamson MP stated “it is important that SACREs should be resourced sufficiently to be able to fulfil their statutory functions”¹⁰. NASACRE considers that an LA would need to allocate at least 2% of the CSSB to the SACRE to enable it to carry out its statutory duties, and significantly more in the year that the Agreed Syllabus is reviewed.

The following can reasonably be expected to be funded from the CSSB:

- a clerk
- a professional officer who has expertise in RE curriculum design
- a publicly accessible place to meet
- the reasonable expenses of members
- publishing the agreed syllabus and other SACRE materials (including agendas and minutes), most usually on the LA website
- NASACRE subscription and AGM attendance.

A small-scale survey carried out by NASACRE in 2019 suggested that many SACREs were being underfunded. This report, based on a much fuller data set, is intended to enable policymakers to make informed decisions about SACRE funding.

Research Methodology

A freedom of Information request was sent to all Local Authorities in England on the 6th November 2020 by the National Association of SACREs. Specifically, the questions were as follows:

1. How much funding was allocated to your local authority in the ‘ongoing commitments’ category of the CSSB (Central Schools Services Block)
2. How much of the funding specified in (1) above (as a raw figure and a percentage) was allocated to SACRE related spending and if relevant to ASC (Agreed Syllabus Conference) related spending?
3. How much money from the CSSB funding for 2019-2020 did you spend on:
 - (a) Democratic services to support SACRE meetings through 2019-2020 (e.g., a clerk)
 - (b) Professional support (A Religious Education specialist advisor or consultant to support the work of SACRE)
 - (c) Support for schools, including CPD and training specifically for Religious Education and or Collective Worship
 - (d) Other costs: please specify e.g., for separate clerking costs
4. How much money from other funds outside the CSSB fund (e.g., the community integration fund) was used to support RE in your local authority with schools?
5. When was your last agreed syllabus for RE revised, and how much did it cost to complete this revision? (i.e., to write it, develop it, publish it and launch it including initial training for your schools)
6. How/Where would a member of the public access your Agreed Syllabus for RE?
7. Who is the contact for SACRE business in your LA? (Name and email address)
8. Are there any barriers for providing funding to fulfil your statutory duties in relation to SACRE and/or the Agreed Syllabus Conference that you want to tell us about?
9. Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Responses were obtained from 136 LAs, with 15 not supplying answers by the end of March 2021.

Following an analysis of the data received, the following conclusions were reached:

¹⁰ Gavin Williamson (2019) private correspondence, 15th August. <http://www.nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/1-246-letter-from-gavin-williamson.pdf>

1. Total Authority spend on SACRE

Of the 111 local authorities that reported any spending on SACRE, 82% of the total, the mean spend was £11,000.46. The remaining 25 authorities, 18% of the total, reported allocating no funding to SACRE. The biggest spend by any authority was £93,574, whilst one Authority appeared to use only £105.

One explanation for the wide variance in spending could be the size of the LA, and the number of schools; an LA with few schools may be expected to use less money to fund RE provision in those schools. It would be tempting to assume that those LAs providing the most significant levels of professional support were the largest authorities. That is not the case. Figure 1 below, indicates that there appears no correlation between the number of state-funded secondary schools in an LA (a reasonable measure of the size of the authority) and the amount spent by the LA on SACRE.

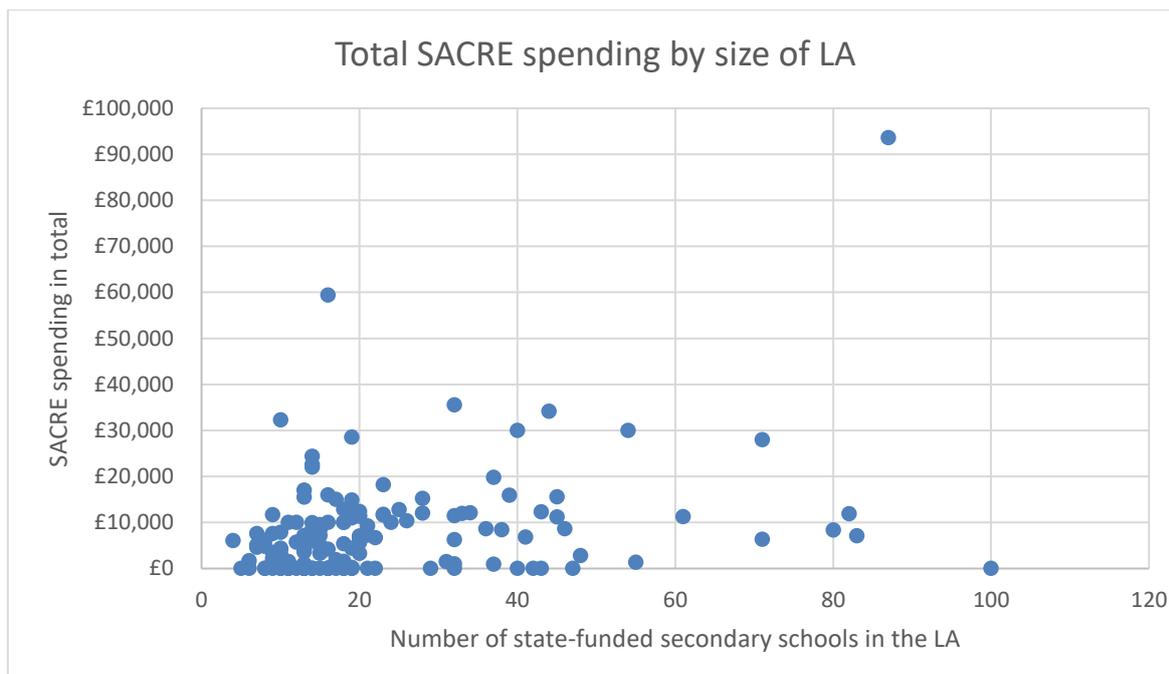


Figure 1

2. CSSB and Funding Sources for SACRE

The expectation of the Department for Education is that SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences are funded from the Central School Services Block (CSSB).

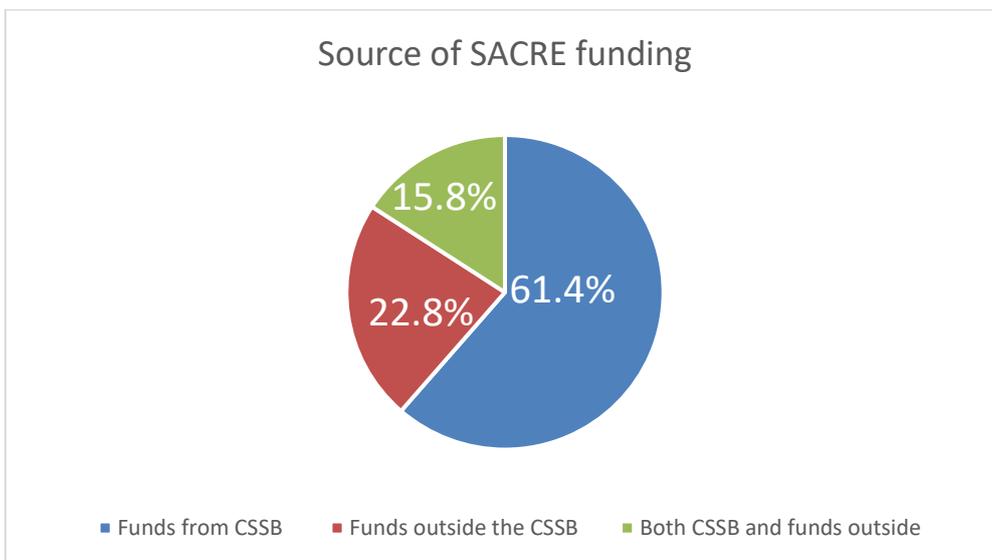


Figure 2

- 62 authorities (61.4% of the 101 that responded to this question) reported that they use funding for SACRE from the CSSB only
- 23 authorities (22.8% of the 101 that responded to this question) reported using funding from outside the CSSB only
- 16 authorities (15.8% of the 101 that responded to this question) reported using both sources.

The most well-funded SACRE received 6% of the CSSB from their LA in 2019/20. The average spending on a SACRE, Religious Education and Collective Worship, as a percentage of the allocated CSSB funding source (based on data from 136 LAs) was less than one percent, 0.72%.

Of the 136 SACREs who responded to the FOI, 79% (107) spent under 1% of CSSB fund or equivalent on SACRE, RE and Collective Worship in 2019/20. There is no correlation between the size of the LA and the proportion of CSSB that is used on SACRE business as the scattergram below shows.

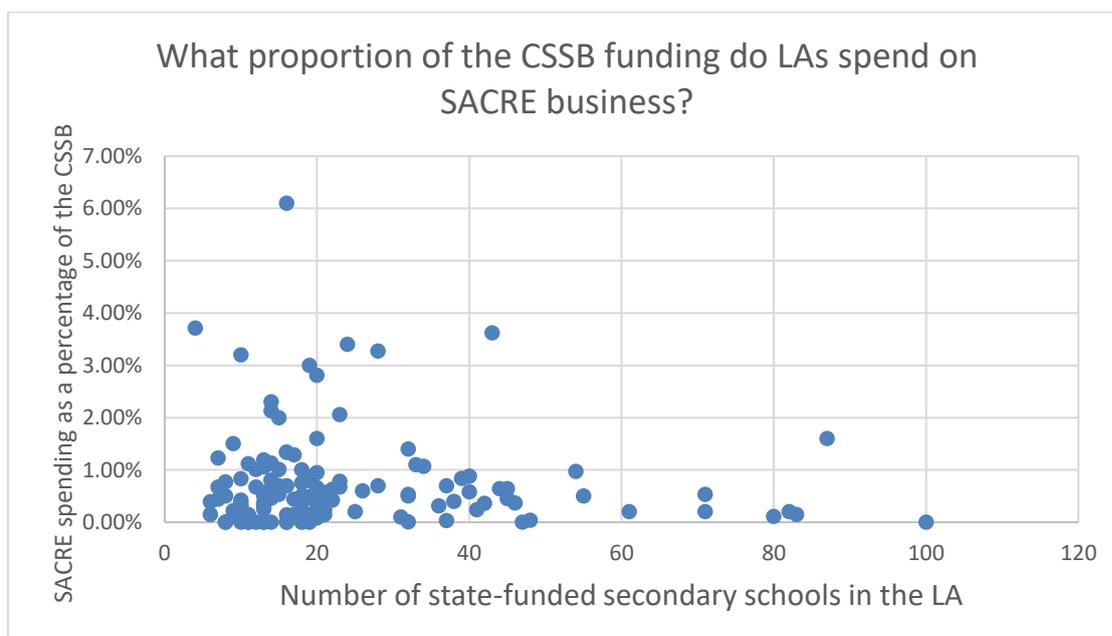


Figure 3

3. Spending on Specific Items

We asked LAs how much they allocated to **professional support** including advisers and consultants. 100 LAs answered this question. 27 reported that they allocated £0 of funding to professional support. The average spend on professional support by the 73 authorities that responded to say they allocate funding was £7,095.03. The responses ranged from £59,418 to £145.

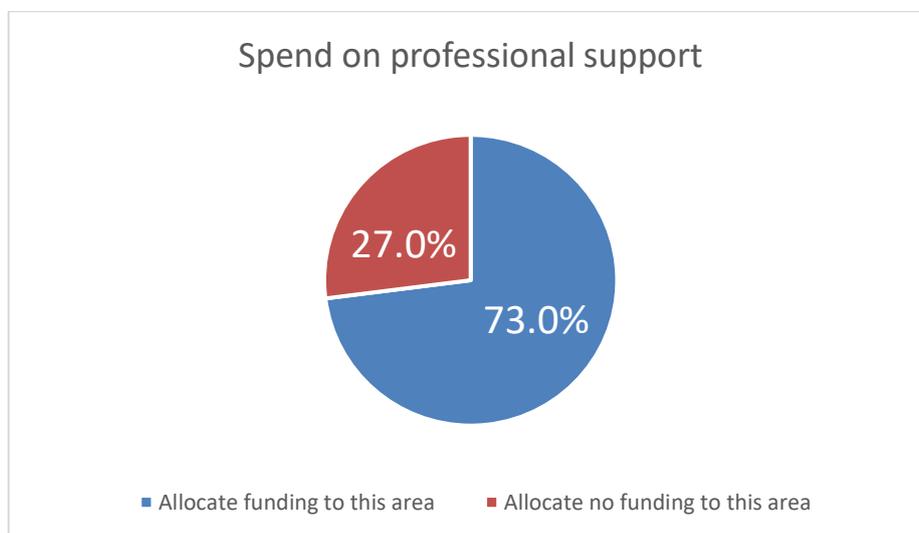


Figure 4

We asked LAs how much they allocated to **democratic services** (e.g. clerking). 49 authorities responded to this question. Seven authorities reported allocating £0. 42 authorities responded that they allocate some funds to this area and their mean spend on democratic services was £2648.18. The responses ranged from £25,574 to £200.

We asked LAs how much they allocated to **supporting RE in schools**. 80 authorities responded to this question. 42 authorities allocate £0. The mean spend for the 38 authorities who allocate funding to this area is £2529.07. The level of support ranges from £10,829 to £112.

It is difficult to see how a SACRE can be fulfilling its statutory duties, let alone performing well, if an LA does not allocate some budget to professional support, democratic services and support for schools.

4. The Agreed Syllabus

The LA must “institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus within five years of the last review, and subsequently every five years after the completion of each further review¹¹. When the FOI was sent in November 2020 this would mean that the oldest syllabus review should have been 2015. Seven LAs told us that their syllabus was last reviewed earlier than that, three in 2014, one in 2013, two in 2012 and one in 2010, making it 10 years old. This most fundamental duty of LAs is subject to difficulties due to underfunding. When we contacted those SACREs they did tell us that those very old syllabuses were at various stages of review.

81 LAs disclosed the cost of completing their last revision of the Agreed Syllabus, including writing, developing, publishing and launching it with initial training for schools. The mean reported cost was £8,452. The most expensive Agreed Syllabus review was almost £45,000, with five Authorities spending committing more than £20,000 of resource to the last syllabus review; of these five, four were locally produced and one was licenced from RE Today. Most syllabuses (30) cost between £5,000 and £10,000. Three LAs claimed to have spent less than £1,000 on the review, with one suggesting a total cost of £81.

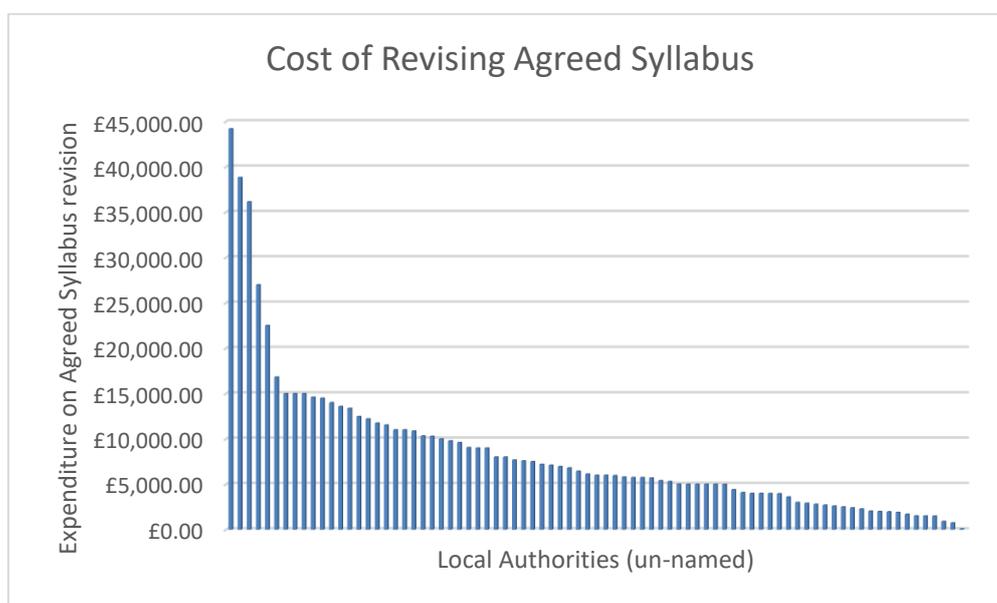


Figure 5

It is difficult to see how a syllabus can be properly reviewed without a significant spend. If minor changes are required, we would consider £5,000 to be a very bare minimum spend. We would expect a proper review process to cost in excess of £10,000.

¹¹ DCSF (2010) *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance*, Page 11.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf

5. Recommendations

A. SACREs

SACREs should consider offering formal advice to the local authority about the level of spend required for them to discharge their functions properly. They should share this report with their LA and ask for it to be noted. They should request from the LA their response to our FOI of November 2020 and then compare their local data with the national data in this report. This would provide many SACREs with a rich discussion to have with their LA. The Secretary of State himself has stated that the DfE “would investigate any complaint that statutory responsibilities were not being delivered to ensure that the LA took any necessary remedial action.”¹² SACREs should be able to set out ambitious work programmes without the fear of underfunding. Further clarification of the statutory responsibilities of LAs in respect of their SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences can be found in the 2010 guidance.¹³

B. Local Authorities

LAs must adequately fund SACREs to enable them to carry out their statutory duties and to support high quality RE and collective worship in schools.¹⁴ We consider 2% of CSSB to be a reasonable spend to enable this. LAs must set aside sufficient money to ensure the Agreed Syllabus Review can be effective every five years. We reiterate that as a minimum expectation, LAs must provide the following:

- a clerk
- a professional officer who has expertise in RE curriculum design;
- a publicly accessible place to meet;
- the reasonable expenses of members;
- publishing the agreed syllabus and other SACRE materials (including agendas and minutes), most usually on the LA website.
- NASACRE subscription and AGM attendance.

The minister for school standards; Nick Gibb MP included this statement in response to a parliamentary question from Stephen Timms MP. “If the Department is informed that an individual SACRE or ASC is experiencing difficulties in fulfilling its statutory duties, the Department will contact the local authority to remind them of their duty to support their activities satisfactorily.”¹⁵

C. The DfE

In line with the Secretary of State’s directive above, the department should write to LAs who have not published a timely Agreed Syllabus review and ask for an explanation and a project plan. They should also write to the 25 authorities who declared no spending on SACRE business and ask them how they can be expected to fulfil their statutory duties without using any funds.

D. Ministers

Finally, NASACRE recommends that government ministers should reiterate at every opportunity the expectation that Local Authorities will use a significant portion of their CSSB to adequately fund SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences to discharge their statutory duties.

Thanks

NASACRE would like to express gratitude to all those who give so much to ensure that SACREs do their very best to support high quality RE and Collective Worship in schools across the country. Thanks also to Claire Clinton, Marie Cooper, Paul Smalley and Deborah Weston for putting this report together.

Cover photograph of a SACRE meeting taken by P. Smalley.

¹² Gavin Williamson (2019) private correspondence, 15th August. <http://www.nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/1-246-letter-from-gavin-williamson.pdf>

¹³ DCSF (2010) *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance*, pages 10ff: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf

¹⁴ *ibid.*, page 11

¹⁵ HC Deb, 28 March 2018, cW <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2018-03-28/134697>

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