

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

The meeting will be held at **6.30pm** on **6 January 2021**

Due to government guidance on social-distancing and COVID-19 virus the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education on 6 January 2021 will be held virtually online. The press and public will be able to watch the meeting live online at the following link www.thurrock.gov.uk/webcast

Membership:

Committee A:

Mrs R Saul, Diocese of Brentwood, Roman Catholic Member
Mr J Hussein, Muslim Member
Ms H Kaur Takhtar, Sikh Member
Mr T Ojetola, Pentecostal Member
Mr A Kariyawasam, Buddhist Member
Ms S Perlmutter, Jewish Member
Vacancy, Hindu Member
Vacancy, Free Church Christian Member

Committee B:

Mr P Anderson, Church of England Member
Mrs L Fry, Church of England Member
Lola Olajide, Church of England Member
Vacancy, Church of England Member

Committee C:

Ms H Martins, Teachers' Associations
Ms J Culloty, Teachers' Associations
Ms A Jellicoe, Teachers' Associations
Ms D Webster, Teachers' Associations
Mrs C Pumfrey, Teachers' Associations
Vacancy, Teachers' Associations

Committee D:

Councillor G Collins
Councillor M Kerin
Vacancy, Local Authority

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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1 Apologies for Absence	
2 Minutes	5 - 10
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education meeting held on 4 November 2020.	
3 Items of Urgent Business	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
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6 Spirited Arts - Local and National Competition 2021	
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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Kenna Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **18 December 2020**

Information for members of the public and councillors

Access to Information and Meetings

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Members of the public have the right to see the agenda, which will be published no later than 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published.

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- You should connect to TBC-CIVIC
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

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To view any “exempt” information that may be included on the agenda for this meeting, Councillors should:

- Access the modern.gov app
- Enter your username and password

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services

3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Minutes of the Meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education held on 4 November 2020 at 6.30 pm

- Committee A:** Mrs S Lawson, Mr A Kariyawasam and Mr T Ojetola
- Committee B:** Mr A Anderson and Mrs L Fry
- Committee C:** Ms Jellicoe and Mrs Pumfrey
- Committee D:** Councillor Kerin
- Apologies:** Ms J Culloty, Mrs H Kaur, Ms Webster and Councillor Collins.
- In attendance:** Deborah Weston, Associate Advisor for Religious Education
Andrea Winstone, Strategic Lead for School Effectiveness and SEND
Kenna-Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer
-

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being live streamed to the Council's online webcast channel.

7. Minutes

The minutes of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education held on 3 June 2020 were approved as a correct record subject to noting the incorrect spelling of Mr Kariyawasam surname.

8. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

9. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

10. Monitoring Provision for RE in Thurrock Schools

The Associate Advisor for Religious Education introduced the report and in doing so explained that in order to discharge its legal duties SACRE monitored the provision for religious education within its local area, where Religious Education was delivered in accordance with the local agreed syllabus. She continued by stating that in the past it had been possible for SACRE to carry out its monitoring functions using a variety of methods such as school visits and analysis of data.

Members discussed the document in appendix 1 of the report commenting it was good news in relation to key stage three where provision appeared to be fairly consistent however the number of schools offering key stage four religious education seemed low. It was mentioned that schools needed to keep websites and information up to date, has it been brought to the associate advisors attention that the data reported by St Cleres school was not correct.

During discussions, the importance of schools ensuring data and information on the website being correct was raised. Members commented that perhaps SACRE could write to schools reminding them of their statutory duty to provide this information.

The teachers present commented that sometimes it could depend on the title of the subject on the school timetable as some schools would report their teaching hours under philosophy for example and therefore when data collecting would not receive all of the relevant data required as any system. The adviser explained that she had checked the philosophy data and did not find any Thurrock Schools reporting hours under that heading. The system used would not pick up on a different subject names so schools needed to be vigilant about this matter or risked misleading SACRE and others that use this data. SACRE Members heard how some schools were struggling to find time to teach key stage three and above in relation to Religious Education which was a shame as children who were taking the subject love the lessons and the schemes of work of which teachers followed.

Members moved on to discuss appendix 2 of the report which proposed a means of evaluating school websites for RE. It was commented that it was interesting to see the differences between the local primary schools' website descriptions of RE and the importance of following the syllabus it was stressed of the, one member who had looked at Aveley Primary School stated she felt it fell into the exceptional category set out on the table.

It was commented that headteachers would find this document useful and during discussions it was decided to include a document within the headteachers news bulletin and suggest that it might be used for self-evaluation and exemplifying good practice.

RESOLVED:

1.1 That SACRE considers

- **The school workforce data for 2019 in Appendix 1**
- **The task for reviewing primary school website in Appendix 2**

1.2 The SACRE consider any follow up action that might be warranted such as:

- **Where good practice is identified**
- **Where there is no evidence that the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus are met**

- **Where there looks to be limited or no provision.**

11. Work Plan Review and Update for 2020-2021

The work plan was presented by the Associate Advisor for Religious Education, who explains the work plan set out a list of objectives based on their responsibilities for SACRE as described in a non-statutory guidance. For each responsibility they were set of actions and success criteria listed.

It was enquired if monitoring of GCSE and A-level results could be included and if so how could SACRE insure there was a level playing field. The Associate Advisor explained the government published exam results data for GCSE and A-levels. The strategic lead for school effectiveness and SEND commented that no results would be published this year due to COVID-19, and therefore the last data published was that the previous academic year.

Members enquired as to where the invites to the youth Council could be included on the work plan for future meetings, as the Youth Council had been invited to previous meetings and their input was greatly received.

RESOLVED that SACRE review the workplan for 2019-2020 and consider the recommendations for work in 2020-21

12. Update on National Developments and Opportunities

The Associate Advisor for Religious Education addressed SACRE Members introducing the report which detailed the key national developments which impacted on Religious Education. Since the last meeting of SACRE a number of developments had taken place such as the publication of a report from Theos and decisions by the Department of Education, these were presented for consideration and comments by SACRE

Members discussed the spirited arts competition and suggested that SACRE promote the competition to all local schools and see what creative RE could be presented. The teachers on SACRE commented it was a great idea to circulate within schools and assured separate the beautiful pieces of work could be submitted by children. Chair commented he felt this was an excellent opportunity for SACRE to get in contact with schools and asked if this two could be included within the headteachers bulletin.

SACRE moved on to discuss the Farmington Scholarship, the Associate Advisor for Religious Education commented this had been very successful and she was keen to share with Thurrock local schools. She continued by explaining questions from schools were prepared ahead of the virtual meeting where the questions within answered for the children remotely. It was commented that St Cleres School had a very good teacher who taught the Islamic faith and was very keen to answer questions from students on the faith and regularly gave assemblies.

Discussions tend to Theo's latest report of worldviews in a religious education and the adviser to SACRE queried if members felt they had a sufficient understanding on the concept of worldviews and whether this subject should be on a future agenda. It was mentioned that out of the three meetings a year perhaps the understanding of worldviews within religious education should be added to the workplan and members of the youth cabinet invited to such a meeting so they could explain their own personal views.

RESOLVED that SACRE Members:

- **Review the information collected in Appendix 1**
- **Evaluate the relevance of each section for RE in Thurrock**
- **Consider the suggested actions**

The meeting finished at 8.03 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

Actions from Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 4 November 2020

Monitoring Provision for RE in Thurrock Schools

- A. Winstone asked investigate areas of under reporting within Thurrock Schools via meeting with school leaderships and to report back at the January meeting of SACRE.
- D.Weston to assist the Chair of SACRE to draft a letter to all schools in Thurrock, firstly to introduce himself as new SACRE Chair and secondly to highlight the issue of reporting and to seek their response on it.
- D.Weston to share Appendix 2 with the Schools via the Headteachers Bulletin.
- C.Pumfrey to discuss Appendix 2 with TAF
- Democratic Services to email all SACRE Members with a number of Schools and their websites, so to carry out research task

Update on National Developments and Opportunities

- D.Weston to find out the situation with Thurrock Schools and the cancellation of the RE Training Bursary.
- D.Weston asked if the information on free resources for children being home schooled be shared within the Headteachers bulletin, along with the Strictly RE Course.

Work Plan Review and Update for 2020-2021

- D.Weston to look at the logistics to holding virtual meetings with RE Leads within Schools and pupils. C.Pumfrey offered the schools that she worked with to trail such meeting.

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6 January 2021	ITEM: 5
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education	
Review of Thurrock SACRE Terms of Reference	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Report of: Kenna-Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills	
Accountable Director: Shelia Murphy, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is public.	

Executive Summary

Members of Thurrock SACRE requested to update the membership of the committee, in particular Committee D – The Local Authority.

Whilst considering amendments to the membership of the committee, it was found that parts of the constitution were out of date and therefore the decision was taken by officers to amend the terms of reference to bring them up to date.

1. Recommendations:

- 1.1 **That SACRE agree the revised Constitution of Thurrock SACRE as set out in Appendix 1.**

2 Introduction and Background:

- 2.1 There have been no legislative changes that have required the Thurrock SACRE constitution to be amended and / or updated. However Circular 1/94, Religious Education and Collective Worship issued in 1994 has since been replaced by Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory Guidance 2010 which replaced the elements of Circular 1/94 that related to RE.
- 2.2 The proposed revised terms of reference of Thurrock SACRE are attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Any Constitutional changes may be made at a meeting of a quorate SACRE. The Local Authority can also alter the terms of reference; however SACRE must be consulted upon before doing so.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options:

- 3.1 Members may wish to suggest amendments to the revised term of reference and this can be done at the meeting.

4. Reasons for Recommendation:

- 4.1 The composition of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education should reflect its prime purpose, to support, in the best way possible, the teaching and development of the Agreed Syllabus for RE in schools and the terms of reference should reflect this.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 None.

6. Impact on Corporate Policies, Priorities, Performance And Community Impact

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead Finance

There are no financial implications to this report

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 requires that the Local Authority constitutes a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education. Certain representative groups are required under section 4 of this provision. Other members may be co-opted.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager, Community Development

The proposed updated terms of reference, their administration including the appointment of representatives complies with all relevant legislative requirements including the Equality Act 2010.

7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

- None

8. **Background Papers Used In Preparing This Report (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):**

- None.

9. **Appendices to This Report:**

- Appendix 1 - Revised Thurrock SACRE Constitution with track changes.

Report Author Contact Details:

Kenna-Victoria Healey

Senior Democratic Services Officer

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**THURROCK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

(SACRE)

CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

THURROCK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

(SACRE)

CONSTITUTION

REVISED January 2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Education Act 1996 and circular 1/94, Religious Education and Collective Worship, the Local Authority (“LA”) has a duty to establish and set up a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (“SACRE”) and an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- 1.2 If there is a conflict between these Terms of Reference and the law, the SACRE shall comply with the law.

2. Functions and Responsibilities

- 2.1 To advise the Local Authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which do not have a religious character and the religious education to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus. This may include, in particular, methods of teaching, choice of teaching material and the provision of training for teachers.
- 2.2 To publish an annual report on its work specifying any matters on which it has advised the Local Authority, broadly describing the nature of that advice, and setting out the reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the Local Authority.
- 2.3 To publish its annual report by the end of the academic year and send to local schools and other persons and organisations it sees fit.
- 2.4 To encourage the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and in this regard to monitor the production of teaching resources and support material.
- 2.5 To support the Local Authority in reviewing provision for religious education and collective worship in schools within the Borough.
- 2.6 To disseminate an understanding of the educational role of religious education and collective worship and to encourage the active involvement of local religious groups and organisations.
- 2.7 To keep under review the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Agreed Syllabus until such time (and no later than 5 years after the publication of the last agreed syllabus) it decides to require the Local Authority to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to institute a formal review.

3. Membership and composition of SACRE

3.1 SACRE will comprise members of four representative groups appointed by the Local Authority as follows:

Group A Christian Denominations & other RE denominations

10 members

2 Free Church Christian members (nominated by the Free Church Federal Council)

1 Roman Catholic member (nominated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood)

1 Jewish member (nominated by the Board of Deputies of British Jews)

2 Muslim members (nominated by the Muslim Council of Britain)

1 Sikh member (nominated by the Local Gurdwara)

1 Hindu member (nominated by the National Council of Hindu Temples)

1 Pentecostal member (nominated by the Local King's Family Centre)

1 Buddhist member (nominated by the Buddhist Society)

Group B Church of England

4 members nominated by the Diocese of Chelmsford

Group C Teachers Associations

6 members nominated by the Professional Associations Group representing as far as is practicable, primary, secondary, special schools and academies.

Group D The Local Authority

4 members nominated by Council.

4 substitute members nominated by Council.

3.2 Co-Opted Members/Attendees

- 3.3. SACRE shall have the right to co-opt additional non-voting members who shall remain co-opted for as long as SACRE deems necessary or until such time as the co-opted member resigns.
- 3.4 Co-opted members may resign at any time and may be removed by the representative groups at any time or the LA.
- 3.5 It shall be open to SACRE to invite people of expertise or special interests to attend on an occasional basis.

4. Term of Office

- 4.1 Members of Committees A, B, C and D are appointed for a period of four years, but shall thereafter be eligible for re-nomination by their nominating bodies.
- 4.2 A member shall cease to be a member of SACRE if:
- a) They reach the end of their term of office
 - b) They write to the SACRE or the Clerk and tender their resignation;
 - c) They were appointed by virtue of being representative of the religion, denomination or associations which they were appointed to represent, but in the opinion of the LA, they cease to be such a representative, or to be representative of the authority;
 - d) The other members of their representative group notify the LA that the member should no longer act as one of its representatives on the SACRE and the LA agrees to their removal;
 - e) The LA determine, on reasonable grounds, that the member is unable, unwilling or an unsuitable person to continue these duties.
- 4.3 Any member of SACRE may at any time resign his/her office and a replacement be sought from the relevant nominating body.
- 4.4 The SACRE shall review the membership annually at their Autumn Term meeting.

5. Chair and Vice Chair

- 5.1 The Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE shall be appointed by Members in attendance at the first meeting of each Academic Year, or any meeting during the year when the position is vacant. The voting will be by a simple majority.
- 5.2 Each of the representative groups A, B, C and D shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair for the respective representative group. Each representative member having one vote. These chairs will be appointed annually at the Autumn Term meeting (or first meeting of the Academic Year).

- 5.3 In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson will take the chair and in the absence of both of these a member will be elected for one meeting.
- 5.4 The Chair will be responsible for:
- a) The management of meetings;
 - b) Representing the SACRE to other bodies;
 - c) Such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.
- 5.5 The Vice-Chair will be responsible for:
- a) Deputising for the Chair as required;
 - b) Representing the SACRE to other bodies in the absence of the Chair or by agreement with the Chair;
 - c) Such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.
- 5.6 The LA shall appoint a Clerk to:
- a) Attend the meetings of SACRE
 - b) Take appropriate minutes and notes at meetings;
 - c) Maintain and update the records of SACRE and its meetings;
 - d) Perform any other necessary administrative duties; and
 - e) Provide a copy of the minutes to the Members of the SACRE and LA.

6. Vacancies

- 6.1 In the event of a vacancy on the SACRE the Clerk shall:
- a. Advise the relevant appointing body of the vacancy;
 - b. Where appropriate, refer any nomination to the LA; and
 - c. Where such nominations are agreed, record the person as a member of SACRE.
- 6.2 In the absence of nominees from a representative group, the LA may nominate and appoint any person that it considers to be representative of that group and it deems appropriate, to fill the vacancy.

7. Arrangements for Meetings

- 7.1 Meetings will be convened by the Local Authority.
- 7.2 Special meetings may be called by the Chair and the Local Authority acting jointly.
- 7.3 There will be 3 meetings of SACRE held each academic year, normally one per academic term, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Chair.
- 7.4 Matters for the Agenda of any meeting shall be sent to the Clerk at least 21 days in advance of the meeting.

7.5 The draft minutes of the previous meeting shall be circulated to Members no later than one week before the next meeting takes place.

7.6 The Clerk will no later than 5 working days before the meeting, circulate the agenda and supporting papers to the SACRE members.

8. Attendance at meetings

8.1 The membership of any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without good cause will be considered to have resigned their position from SACRE and a replacement or reinstatement be sought from the nominating body.

9. Quorum

9.1 For the purposes of meetings, the SACRE will be deemed quorate when at least one member of the four representative groups are represented and not less than a third of the total membership are present.

9.2 If the meeting is not quorate, either business shall not be transacted or the meeting could continue but decisions would have to be ratified at the next SACRE meeting.

10. Voting Rights

10.1 Each representative group within SACRE shall have one vote. Groups are to determine their own internal voting arrangements. Decisions within a group about how that vote is to be cast do not require unanimity. Individual representative members cannot vote separately. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote. Each group is to regulate its own proceedings including provision for resolving deadlock.

10.2 A proposal shall not be deemed to be carried unless it has been approved by at least three of the representative groups unless otherwise required by law or guidance.

10.3 In the interests of achieving consensus SACRE should only take a vote of the four groups when it is necessary to make a formal record of a decision, or if there are opposing views.

11. Access to meetings and documents

11.1 Meetings of the SACRE will be held in public and members of the public will be encouraged to attend meetings as observers except where matters under discussion are considered by SACRE to be confidential. Members of the public cannot take part in discussions nor have any voting rights.

11.2 Copies of agendas and reports for meetings of SACRE will be made available for inspection on the Committee Management Information System found on the Local Authority's website.

12. Constitutional Change

12.1 The Local Authority can alter these terms of reference but must consult SACRE before doing so.

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6 January 2021		ITEM: 7
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education		
Update on National Developments and Opportunities		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills		
Accountable Director: Shelia Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report details the key national developments that impact on Religious Education with suggestions for actions by SACRE.

1. Recommendation(s):

1.1 That SACRE members

- Review the information collected (Appendix 1)
- Evaluate the relevance of each section for RE in Thurrock
- Consider the suggested actions

2. Introduction and Background

In the period since the last SACRE meeting, a number of developments have taken place such as the launch of a number of consultations by the government. These are presented to SACRE for consideration in support of the duties of SACRE and in accordance with the work plan.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Schools need to be informed about national developments and opportunities available to them but it is important not to overload them with information.

3.2 Likewise, SACRE needs to be aware of the national context for information they receive that applies just to Thurrock.

3.3 SACRE needs therefore to decide on which information to share with schools and which reports and national data is most relevant to the situation in Thurrock.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 According to the non-statutory guidance – RE in English Schools (2010), SACRE should provide advice and support on the effective teaching of RE. This advice and support includes keeping stakeholders include SACRE members and schools informed about current developments that impact on the subject.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Not applicable

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 The Local Authority reviews its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education on a regular basis;

- Publishes an Annual Report of its work;
- Offers guidance on resources and methods of teaching and in consultation with Thurrock Schools;
- Monitors the quality of provision for RE and Collective Acts of Worship in Thurrock.

This exercise falls under the third element of this programme.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead Finance, Corporate Finance

There are no financial implications to this report since the actions recommended in this report, if approved will be conducted by the Associate RE Adviser as part of her work

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

The legal duties on the advisory council are set out in s391 of the Education Act 1996. The main one is to advise the local authority on such matters connected with (1) the religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools without a religious character and (2) the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed or other syllabus, as the authority may refer to the advisory council, or as the council may see fit.

This report is for review and consideration. No decision is required.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
Community Engagement and Project
Monitoring Officer

The aim of this report is to provide information about issues that support the provision for RE in Thurrock, to address concerns and to celebrate success. Higher standards in the teaching of RE will help schools to fulfil their statutory duty to promote community cohesion and to encourage better respect and tolerance for those with different religions and beliefs.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

- Not applicable

8. Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Government launches review into Faith Engagement

Report Author:

Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for RE

Government launches review into Faith Engagement

From Gov.uk website:

On 10 October 2019, the government announced that Colin Bloom had been appointed as the Faith Engagement Adviser at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

As Faith Engagement Adviser, Colin is leading a review into how best the government should engage with faith groups in England. He will make recommendations to the Communities Secretary about how the government can best celebrate and support the contribution of faith groups, break down barriers and promote acceptance between faiths, and promote shared values while tackling cultures and practices that are harmful.

Colin Bloom's initial proposal is to structure the review around 4 main sections:

- the first section asks the question, "Are faith groups, places of worship and people of faith a force for good in society?"
- the second section explores the extent to which government and its agencies have sufficient faith literacy and considers the partnership between faith groups and the State
- the third section looks at some aspects where harm might be caused through religious or faith-based practices and a review of the government's role in tackling them
- the fourth and final section will be a set of recommendations for the government to consider and respond to

This survey closed on 11th December 2020 SACRE will receive an update on the next steps in due course.

Ofqual – consultation on proposed changes to GCSE and A level examinations 2021

Also before Christmas, Ofqual launched a consultation to seek views on proposed changes to GCSE and A level examinations. The introduction to this consultation explained that students' education had been disrupted this year by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. To make exams in 2021 less daunting for GCSE, AS and A level students, for many subjects it was proposed that they would be told in advance some of the topics that will or won't be on the papers, helping them to manage their revision.

For some subjects, students will be given support material in the exams, such as formulae and equations. The exact approach will vary by subject.

Independent Evaluation of the Understanding Christianity Resource

This report was published on 11th December. It presents findings and analysis from a study that examines the impact of Understanding Christianity in schools across England. The study, conducted by Dr Rachael Shillitoe at the University of Birmingham, seeks to evaluate the impact of RE Today's Understanding Christianity teaching resources amongst pupils and teachers across primary and secondary schools, with a particular focus on schools without a religious character.

This study aims to find out the extent to which the resource has 'made a difference' to teaching and learning about Christianity in RE.

The full report can be viewed on the [Understanding Christianity](#) website, [available here](#).

Conversations about religious literacy: creativity and the classroom

The Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education (LDBE) is curating and working with the support of Culham St Gabriel's to deliver a national arts and RE symposium to be held virtually on the **23 February 2021**.

The Symposium is the first of its kind in the UK to bring RE teachers, creatives and policy makers together to specifically focus on the potential impact of creative processes on the development of religious and worldviews literacy. It has at its heart the experiences of LDBE, whose devising and delivery of the [REConnecting Lincolnshire](#) project over the past four years resulted from the identified need to address significant concerns and frustrations from schools and their wider communities in relation to religious and worldview literacy.

Those engaged in research, teaching and supporting schools to deliver effective RE will have a voice as part of the discussions that will take place during the Symposium.

The details of the event can be found [here](#); Zoom login details will be sent through when you have confirmed your booking. Please do feel free to share this information with colleagues and within your networks.

If you are able to attend the Symposium, please emailing David Lambert at david@culturalsolutions.co.uk by the 5th February 2021. For any further information about the project and its impact, please email Gillian Georgiou at gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.

Subject knowledge Enhancement

Following the disappointing news that bursaries had been cut for most subjects including RE, it was really good news that Religious Education had been selected for funded subject knowledge enhancement courses. The funding will be available from April 2021 but hopefully will help support those people wishing to apply to teach RE who do not have a first degree in the subject. This decision follows intensive lobbying to make the point that about 84% of trainee secondary RE teachers do not have a degree in Theology or Religious Studies and therefore need support in developing their subject knowledge.

<https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/explore-my-options/teacher-training-routes/subject-knowledge-enhancement-ske-courses>

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6 January 2021	ITEM: 8
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education	
What do stakeholders say about RE in Thurrock?	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Report of: Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills	
Accountable Director: Shelia Murphy, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report invites SACRE members to consult with each other and with young people in relation to Religious Education in general and how it supports promotes positive community relations as well as tolerance and respect for people from different religions and beliefs.

- 1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE Members:**
 - 1.1 Engage in a discussion firstly with young people from the Youth Cabinet (starter questions are provided in appendix A) and then with each other about Religious Education in Thurrock and its links to promoting tolerance and respect.**
 - 1.2 Agree what other stakeholders it needs to consult as part of its monitoring work and to inform the revision of the Agreed Syllabus.**

2. Introduction and Background

The 2020-21 SCRE workplan sets out a list of objectives for SACRE based on the responsibilities for SACRE described in the non-statutory guidance. SACRE planned to make relationships with stakeholders a focus for the spring terms meeting with a view to exploring opportunities for sharing resources for RE in Thurrock. Two groups will be the focus of the discussion at the meeting:

- Thurrock Youth Cabinet
- Communities of Faith and Belief

Thurrock Youth Cabinet

Thurrock's Youth Cabinet is a group of 11 to 19 year-olds, who work to make Thurrock a better place for young people.

The Youth Cabinet was set up to give the young people of Thurrock a voice. Youth Cabinet members regularly meet with councillors, council officers and other decision makers to give their views on:

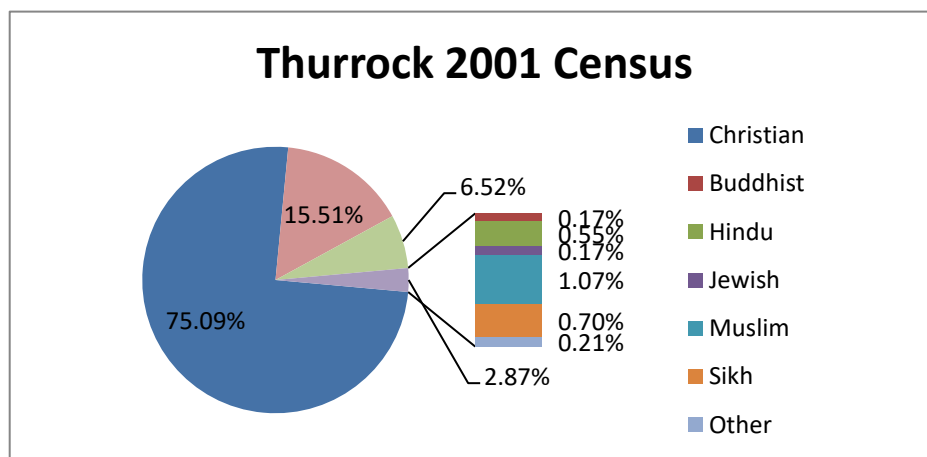
- public transport
- school curriculum
- youth activities
- police and community safety
- health
- careers

Thurrock's Youth Cabinet works by:

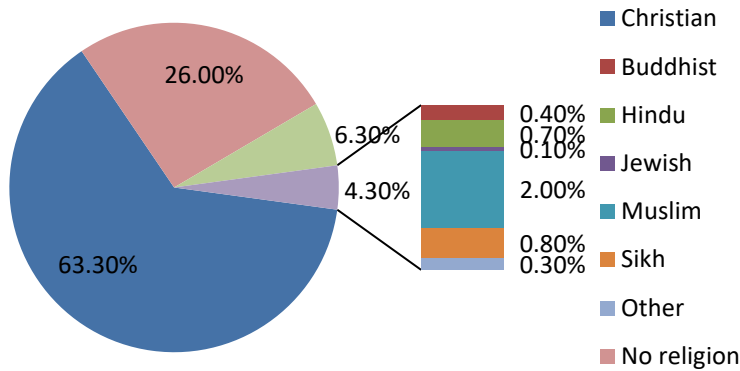
- holding monthly meetings with guest speakers covering different youth issues
- carrying out surveys to get young people's views
- campaigning on matters affecting youth
- attending and organising events

Communities of Faith and Belief in Thurrock

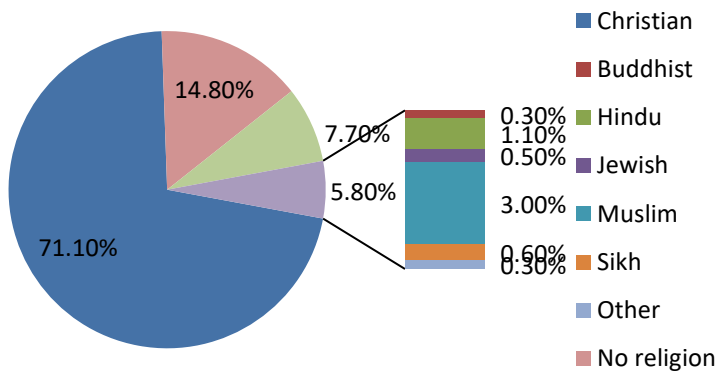
The population of Thurrock has become more religiously diverse over time. The graphs below compare the 2001 and 2011 census data for the borough.



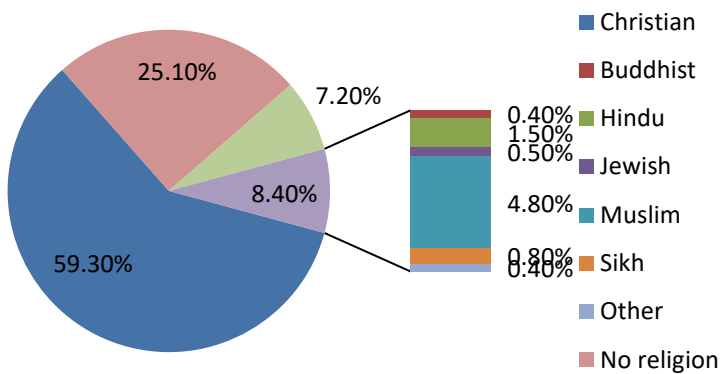
Thurrock 2011 census



UK 2001



UK 2011



Government Policy

Under the terms of section 78 of the Education Act 2002, schools are required to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and **tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs**. One aspect of this work involves:

“an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.”

The focus of this report is therefore to prompt a discussion between members about RE in Thurrock and particularly about the these requirements.

It should be noted that comprehensive academic research by Glasgow University¹ and others has shown that simply teaching RE does not necessarily help reduce prejudice and discrimination.

However, according to the All Party Parliamentary (APPG) report on RE and Positive Community relations²:

RE can be a strong contributor to good community relations through enabling students to:

- Acquire systematic knowledge and conceptual understanding of religions and worldviews
- Learn from visits and visitors through personal encounters
- Learn about religion and belief in local, national and global contexts
- Consider a range of viewpoints on religious, ethical and philosophical issues
- Articulate their own opinions while respecting the right of others to differ
- Develop their own beliefs, values and identities
- Participate with confidence and openness in dialogue
- Recognise and challenge ill-informed or prejudiced viewpoints, including those in the media
- Ask questions and address contentious issues in a safe space
- Explore reasons why misconceptions exist about some groups
- Evaluate attitudes and actions and how they impact on the community
- Be informed, active citizens and potential leaders.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Thurrock will begin the process of reviewing its Agreed Syllabus for RE later in 2021 and this discussion will inform that process.

3.2 This discussion will help members to agree the stakeholders it needs to consult to inform the Agreed Syllabus Review and to strengthen its monitoring role.

¹ Conroy, J et al, “Does RE Work” University of Glasgow, 2013.

² Miller, J et al https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/APPG_report_RE_and_good_community_re.pdf

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 Monitoring of provision for RE and reviewing the Agreed Syllabus are key elements of the remit of SACRE and its Agreed Syllabus Conference.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Not applicable

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 The Local Authority reviews its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education on a regular basis;

- publishes an Annual Report of its work;
- offers guidance on resources and methods of teaching and in consultation with Thurrock Schools;
- monitors the quality of provision for RE and Collective Acts of Worship in Thurrock.

This exercise falls under the third element of this programme.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Strategic Lead Finance

There are no financial implications to this report since the actions recommended in this report, if approved will be conducted by the Associate RE Adviser as part of her work

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

The legal duties on the advisory council are set out in section 391 Education Act 1996. The main one is to advise the local authority on such matters connected with the religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which do not have a religious character and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed or other syllabus as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit. This report initiates a discussion and asks for recommendation of stakeholders to consult. No other decision is required.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
Community Engagement and Project
Monitoring Officer

SACRE will continue to dedicate time for the discussion of the way in which religious education can help improve the level of community cohesion in Thurrock. The Agreed Syllabus is specific about the expected outcomes of teaching of religious education in this respect. The teaching of RE should help schools to fulfil their statutory duty to promote community cohesion and to encourage better respect and tolerance for those with different religions and beliefs.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

- Not applicable

8. Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Questions for SACRE Members and the Youth Cabinet.

Report Author:

Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for RE

Appendix 1

Questions for SACRE members to ask each other

- a) What links are there between schools and communities of religion and belief in Thurrock?
- b) What could *schools* do to be more engaged with communities of religion and belief?
- c) What could *communities of religion and belief* do to be more engaged with schools?
- d) What would you say are the main aims of RE?
- e) What is the role of school RE for children that come from families who are belong to a particular religious or non-religious tradition?
- f) How far do you recognise the religious or non-religious beliefs of your own family in the content of RE in Thurrock?
- g) Do you believe that Religious Education is comprehensive enough in Thurrock to provide a good understanding of different faiths and beliefs? Explain your answer.
- h) Do you believe that Religious Education is comprehensive enough in Thurrock to promote tolerance and respect for people from different faiths and beliefs? Explain your answer.

Questions for SACRE to ask Thurrock Youth Cabinet

1. How has your experience of RE differed between your primary and secondary school?
2. Describe your best and worst RE lesson
3. Does learning about beliefs that are different from yours change anything for you personally? If so how? If not, why?
4. What do you think the aims of RE should be?
5. The UK is becoming less religious, but the world is becoming more religious. Does that make any difference to the value of RE?
6. Has your learning in RE, complemented your learning in other subjects? If so how? If not, what should be changed?
7. In what jobs would you say, you could use your learning in RE?
8. To what extent do your religious or non-religious beliefs impact on your identity?
9. To what extent do you recognise the religious or non-religious beliefs of your own family in the teaching you receive in RE?
10. If you were in charge of the RE curriculum, what would you change?

Schedule 2020/21		
Date of meeting	Subject	Objective (note – objectives 1 and 2 apply to all meetings)
Autumn 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National developments - update • Monitoring provision via school workforce data • Review of membership and attendance • Evaluation of work plan • Review of provision via school website - proposed template 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 7 • 2 • 6 6
Spring 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring provision via GCSE and A level results • Annual report approval • Relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools and Academies ○ the Council ○ Governors ○ Communities of religion and belief ○ Thurrock work on Community Integration ○ NASACRE ○ Youth Cabinet ○ Regional Schools Commissioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 3 • 4+5
Summer 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards and Achievements in RE in schools • Review of SACRE website • Review of Collective Worship and right of withdrawal • Review of SACRE Youth Conference • Annual report including GCSE results • Ofsted Framework on RE – latest reports [postponed from autumn term] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 6 • 6 • 5 • 4 • 7

6 January 2021		ITEM: 9
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education		
Annual Report 2019-2020 Thurrock SACRE		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Deborah Weston, Associate Adviser for Religious Education		
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Learning Inclusion and Skills		
Accountable Director: Shelia Murphy, Corporate Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report presents the Annual Report to members of SACRE for approval

1. Recommendation(s):

- 1.1 That SACRE accept this report as an accurate record of its work for the period September 2019 – July 2020
- 1.2 Requests that the Assistant Director Education and Skills continues to include discussions about RE provision in the scheduled discussions with senior leadership teams
- 1.3 Requests that the school effectiveness team include a review of schools' provision for RE and Collective Worship as part of their annual conversations. Specifically, that they consider:
 - the impact on pupil outcomes of the combination of subjects such as RE, RSE, Citizenship and PSHE
 - the level of training provided to those teaching RE especially when they have no previous experience of teaching the subject
 - the impact on pupil attainment of pupils being entered for a GCSE at the end of year 10

- **whether or not the amount of time dedicated to RE on school timetables was sufficient for pupils to meet the aims of either the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus or, in the case of academy schools, either the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus or one that is ‘equally broad and ambitious’ as expected by the DfE and Ofsted**

2. Introduction and Background

It is a legal requirement that SACRE submit an annual report of its activities to the local authority.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

Members are requested to accept, amend or reject the report.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

In order that SACRE fulfils its statutory duty to publish an annual report and to advise the LA on RE given in accordance with the agreed syllabus, and on matters related to its functions, whether in response to a referral from the LA or as it sees fit.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

Not applicable

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

The Local Authority reviews its Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education on a regular basis;

- Publishes an Annual Report of its work;
- Offers guidance on resources and methods of teaching and in consultation with Thurrock Schools;
- Monitors the quality of provision for RE and Collective Acts of Worship in Thurrock.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Management Accountant DSG and Schools

There are no financial implications for this report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

SACRE is asked to accept, reject or amend the report. S391 of the Education Act 1996 requires SACRE to publish a report as to the exercise of its functions and any action taken by representative groups on the council during the last year. The section states that “The council’s report shall in particular—

- a) specify any matters in respect of which the council have given advice to the authority,
- b) broadly describe the nature of the advice given, and
- c) where any such matter was not referred to the council by the authority, give the council’s reasons for offering advice on that matter.”

The Committee is requested to accept the report, and also that it makes two decisions that are related to the report findings.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
Community Engagement and Project
Monitoring Officer

Although there are no direct diversity implications, the Annual Report demonstrates how the work of SACRE continues to promote an understanding of different religions in education therefore promoting cohesion.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

- Not applicable

8. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – Annual Report Of The Thurrock Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education (SACRE) For 2019 - 2020

Report Author:

Deborah Weston

Associate Adviser for RE

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE THURROCK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) FOR 2019 - 2020

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Introduction

Since 1988, it has been a requirement that every local authority (LA) has a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

Though legislation sets out both the structure and the remit of a local SACRE - principally, overseeing religious education (RE) and collective worship - in practice every SACRE has developed its own particular style and character.

Thurrock SACRE has over the years developed its own particular style and character as this report will testify.

It is a legislative requirement that each SACRE produces an annual report of its work and that this is published, sent to the local authority, to local schools and to other interested parties. One important element of the report is performance data and an analysis of the extent to which schools are meeting their legal duties in relation to RE. GCSE data, including the short course was not available until this month, hence the delay in the publication of the report. More recently, other datasets have been made available by the DfE, most significantly the school workforce data that supports the monitoring of the level of provision in secondary schools.

Foreword by the Chair of SACRE – Rev. John Guest

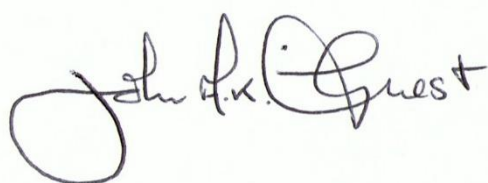
As I enter my fifth year of leading Thurrock SACRE, I am delighted to have been elected once again to serve the schools of our borough in guiding our group in its oversight of the provision of RE and collective worship. It was both moving and inspiring to attend the recent education awards at Blackshots to celebrate all that is good in our local schools and to showcase the achievements of our teachers and the advances made by our authority in improving our schools and learning institutions. I take this opportunity to pay my personal tribute to them now!

You will see from this report that, once again, our excellent adviser, Deborah Weston, has been hard at work serving our borough's schools and guiding and help helping me and my faith, education and Civic colleagues in the tasks of SACRE. I draw your attention to the concerns we have raised regarding the decline of RE provision and the recruitment and inadequate training of RE specialists. We also note significant challenges in the provision of Collective Worship, especially in secondary schools. This last has particular resonance for me and I commend it to your attention with the hope that 2019 will see significant improvement.

I am pleased to see the RE Quality Mark being applied for faith and community schools and academies with bronze silver and gold standards recognising levels of good practice. I congratulate Ockendon Academy and the Dilkes Academy on achieving a silver award.

Finally, we have been challenged and encourage by 3 members of our youth cabinet who made us a very stimulating presentation on the effect of RE and Collective Worship on their own appreciation of school life. it is good to hear from our young people and reminds us to reorder and focus away from what we are doing to who we are doing it for.

With very best wishes for 2019 and beyond.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John A. Guest". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a small 'A'.

Membership of Thurrock Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2019-2020						
Committee	Representing	Nominating Body	No. of Reps	Names of Reps.	Date Appointed	Date due for re-election
A	Christian Denominations & other RE Denominations		9			
A	Free Church Christian	Free Church Federal Council	2	Mrs S Lawson	June 2019	May 2023
A		Free Church Federal Council		Mr P Anderson	June 2019	May 2023
A	Roman Catholic	Diocese of Brentwood	1	Mrs M Shepherd	June 2019	May 2023
A	Muslim	Thurrock Islamic Education & Cultural Association	2	Mr J Hussein	October 2019	September 2023
A		Thurrock Islamic Education & Cultural Association		Miss A Ahmed	June 2019	May 2023
A	Sikh	Local Sikh Guru Gudwara Committee.	1	Ms H Kaur Takhtar	May 2018	June 2022
A	Pentecostal		1	Mr T Ojetola	July 2018	June 2022
A	Buddhist	Buddhist Society	1	Mr A Kariyawasam	June 2019	May 2023
A	Jewish	Board of Deputies of British Jews	1	Ms S Perlmutter	June 2019	May 2023
A	Hindu	Vacancy	1	Vacancy	Vacancy	Vacancy

Committee	Representing	Nominating Body	No. of Reps	Names of Reps.	Date Appointed	Date due for re-election
B	Church of England		4			
B	Church of England	Diocese of Chelmsford		Rev.J Guest	June 2017	May 2021
B	Church of England	Diocese of Chelmsford		Vacancy	Vacancy	Vacancy
B	Church of England	Diocese of Chelmsford		Vacancy	Vacancy	Vacancy
B	Church of England	Diocese of Chelmsford		Vacancy	Vacancy	Vacancy

Committee	Representing	Nominating Body	No. of Reps	Names of Reps.	Date Appointed	Date due for re-election
C	Teachers' Associations (pref. Primary, Secondary & Special Schools)		6			
C	Teachers' Associations Primary	Professional Associations Group		Mrs R Gedalovitch	September 2017	September 2021
C	Teachers' Associations, Primary	Professional Associations Group		Ms H Martins	May 2018	June 2022
C	Teachers' Associations, Secondary	Professional Associations Group		Ms A Harris	May 2018	June 2022
C	Teachers' Associations Secondary	Professional Associations Group		Ms J Culloty	May 2018	June 2022

C	Teachers' Associations	Professional Associations Group		Vacancy	Vacancy	Vacancy
C	Teachers' Associations	Professional Associations Group		Vacancy	Vacancy	Vacancy

Committee	Representing	Nominating Body	No. of Reps	Names of Reps.	Date Appointed	Date due for re-election
D	Local Education Authority		3			
D	Local Education Authority	Thurrock Council		Councillor M Kerin	May 2018	May 2022
D	Local Education Authority	Thurrock Council		Councillor G Collins	May 2019	May 2023
D	Local Education Authority	Thurrock Council		Vacancy	Vacancy	Vacancy

Committee	Representing	Nominating Body	No. of Reps	Names of Reps.	Date Appointed	Date due for re-election
(non-voting)	Co-opted Member		1			
	Vacancy	SACRE		Vacancy	Vacancy	Vacancy

SACRE Meetings Held

The following SACRE meetings were held during the reporting period:

6th November 2019

4th March 2020

3rd June 2020

All meetings were held at the Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Thurrock, Essex

Membership and attendance

Two of the three meetings of SACRE during the reporting period were inquorate. The constitution requires that at least one representative attends from each of the committees and for one meeting, no teacher was present and for one meeting no councillor was represented.

ADVICE:

SACRE wishes to advise the council that it is not possible for SACRE to discharge its legal duties if meetings are not quorate. SACRE has therefore requested that the changes to the terms of reference providing flexibility for elected members to substitute is noted. See appendix 1

Work Plan 2019-2020

The work plan for 2019-2020 is reported as appendix B

Monitoring and Evaluation

The responsibility of SACRE

According to government guidance¹, SACREs should monitor the provision and quality of RE taught according to its agreed syllabus, together with the overall effectiveness of the syllabus. Ofsted inspection reports do not systematically include information on RE so cannot be relied on as a source of information about provision in schools.

Thurrock SACRE offers both the syllabus and schemes of work free of charge to academies via a password protect section of the website. <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/religious-education/syllabus-for-religious-education>. This decision was made based upon the principle enshrined in law that all children in all types of school are entitled to receive religious education and to be prepared for life in modern Britain. School requests for the password to

¹ Religious Education in English Schools (2010) p12

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

these resources indicate that most academies use the syllabus. However, there is no mechanism by which to require academies to comply with the requirements of the syllabus since their funding agreement simply requires them to 'make provision for RE'.

Standards in Thurrock Schools.

SACRE undertakes a number of activities annually to fulfil its responsibilities including the monitoring of:

School websites

Schools are required to publish their curriculum for each subject for each school year. This includes Religious Education, even when it is called something else. SACRE investigated school websites in order to learn more about how RE, including the Thurrock Agreed Syllabus was being used. Some schools presented a comprehensive RE programme and were clearly using the Agreed Syllabus and accompanying scheme of work. Others failed to report on RE or reported a curriculum that did not appear to comply either with the Agreed Syllabus or, in the case of some academies, their funding agreement.

School Workforce Data (Secondary)

Schools complete the school workforce census every November and this allows SACRE to discuss the number of teaching hours each secondary school reports for RE. Unfortunately, not all schools appear to complete the census accurately, especially when the subject is combined with another on the timetable. SACRE has taken steps to encourage schools to report their provision for RE accurately.

Appendix C below sets out what schools reported.

GCSE Entries and Results

The Thurrock Agreed Syllabus requires that all students in all schools follow a course in Religious Education leading to a GCSE qualification. The publication of results therefore is another tool that helps us monitor levels and quality of provision. However, the DfE made a decision in the summer of 2020 that because qualifications such as GCSE and A were awarded based on school assessment, it would not be reasonable to use them in national performance tables. Data about the number of entries would be available, however. See appendix D

ADVICE

SACRE wishes to advise the council of its agreed view that where SACRE has identified strengths or areas for development in relation to Religious Education in specific schools, the subject should form part of the annual conversations conducted by the School Effectiveness Team. This we believe is consistent with School Support Strategy 2019 and

the aim that by 2022, there will be an effective process to 'challenge and support all schools to increase quality and standards of education'.²

² Thurrock Council Education Support Strategy 2019-2022

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/education-support-strategy-2019-v02.pdf>

GCSE provision awaiting data from data team

Two schools; Grays Convent and the Gateway offer GCSE for all pupils at Key Stage 4 and The Ockendon, Gable Hall, Harris Academy Chafford Hundred and the Hathaway all offer the subject as an option. Pupils at Grays Convent, the Ockendon, Gable Hall, Harris Academy Chafford Hundred and the Hathaway all achieved results at 9-4 that were above the national average. Special congratulations should be offered to the Ockendon Academy where the number of pupils achieving grades 9-4 rose from 41.3% when the course was taught to the whole cohort and 88% when it was taught as an option group.

Secondary Schools – **Table 1 2020 data to replace this**

School	% of timetable RE					GCSE 2019 (2018)				Pupil Premium	
	Seven	Eight	Nine	Ten	Eleven	KS4 Full Course Entries%	Short KS4	Percent age 9-4 FC	Percent age 9-4 Short Course	Percent of pupils entitled	Relative to national average
Grays Convent High School	7.5	7.5	7.4	10.5	8.5	94.7% (98%)	3.5	86% (85.2%)	75	22%	Low
The Gateway Academy ³	4*	4*	7	15.2	3.7	96% (74.8%)	0	44% (49.2%)		42%	Medium
Ormiston Park Academy ⁴	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			43%	Medium
Harris Academy Ockendon	7.3	7.4	6.9	6.9	7.1	39% (100%)	0	88%(41.3%)		34%	Low
Ortu Gable Hall School ⁵	2.7	1.6	3.2	1.4	0	24% (24.2%)	0	79% (63.8%)		21%	Low
William Edwards School ⁶	0	4.2	4.1	0	1	0.4% (3%)	0	0% (71.4%)		16%	Very Low
St Clare's School ²	4.8	4.9	2.7	2.3	0	0	28.6		87.7	24%	Low
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred ⁷	0	0	0	0	1.5	6% (12.2%)	0	100% (77.3%)		14%	Very Low

³ At both the Gateway and St Clare's, pupils sit the examination at the end of Year 10

⁴ Ormiston Park: RE is combined with Citizenship and Personal Education at Key Stage 3 and 4

⁵ Ortu Gable Hall: RE is combined with PSHRSE Key Stage 3 and 4 but no specific RE content is visible in the online plan. There is an option for RS at KS4

⁶ From 2019, William Edwards provides one hour per week in Y7 and an option group in KS4 but no discrete provision for those who do not opt for RS GCSE

⁷ Harris Academy Chafford Hundred In KS3 RE is combined with Citizenship and PSHE. RE an option at GCSE and A Level but there is no provision for remaining pupils

The Hathaway Academy ⁸	0	0	0	1.9	2.9	19% (13.7%)	0	75% (47.1%)		34%	Low
Hassenbrook Academy ⁹	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			35%	Low

⁸ Hathaway offers core RE in Years 7,8 and 9 and an option group but no provision for those who do not opt for RE

⁹ Hassenbrook: RE is combined with Personal, Social, Health, Relationships and Sex Education at Key Stage 3. There is no GCSE option provision for RS at KS4

Youth SACRE report to SACRE

Thurrock's Youth Cabinet is a group of 11 to 19 year-olds, who work to make Thurrock a better place for young people. The Youth Cabinet was set up to give the young people of Thurrock a voice. Youth Cabinet members regularly meet with councillors, council officers and other decision makers to give their views on a number of issues including the school curriculum.

As part of their monitoring work therefore, SACRE invited representatives of the Youth Cabinet to attend a SACRE meeting. Members informed the representatives that SACRE had invited the Youth Cabinet to their meeting as they felt it was important to seek their views about their experiences of Religious Education in Schools and the importance of Religious Education in Thurrock today. The representatives reported enjoying RE lessons more at secondary School than in primary. They felt the material they studied in secondary Religious Education was particularly interesting because it relates to real life scenarios and everyday life. The representatives also reported appreciating the visits they were offered to places of worship. They agreed unanimously that RE should be taught in schools especially as it was important for all young people to know about people from other cultures.

ADVICE

SACRE wishes to thank all those involved in the Youth Cabinet for their contribution to the monitoring of RE and Collective Worship in Thurrock Schools

SACRE discussion of National Developments in RE

- i. [NATRE:- Spirited Arts](#): This competition, which has been running for more than 15 years was commended to SACRE and it was agreed to promote entry vigorously.
- ii. Theos Report on [Worldviews in Religious Education](#) was discussed and it was agreed the topic should form the focus of an extended discussion at SACRE
- iii. Publication of updated guidance on the statutory provision for RE in Academies and Free Schools from the [Department of Education](#)

New OFSTED Framework for the Inspection of schools

SACRE discussed the implications of the final versions of the 2019 Inspection Framework and analysis of the first set of [reports here](#). Members heard that the pre-September 2019 framework had offered a degree of accountability to schools, for example with references in Ofsted reports to schools achieving the RE Quality Mark. A small number of schools had been criticized for failure to provide RE at all. This framework did not lend itself to a thorough examination of the curriculum, especially because inspections could last only one day. One of the effects of this was that schools that are non-compliant with their Agreed Syllabus or in the case of academies, their funding agreements, appeared to be inspected and not challenged about these failings at all.

The 2019 framework reverses this trend. Inspections will last two days and there will be a much greater emphasis on the curriculum. It is likely that a small number of subjects, possibly four, will be chosen as a focus for examining the curriculum and this could just as easily be RE as any other subject. A bonus from this approach is that over time, the information collected about each individual subject could (and should) be collated to create subject reports that identify national trends. SACRE welcomed this information and looked forward to reading specific information about RE in inspection reports of Thurrock schools in due course

Other matters discussed that fall under the remit of SACRE

Acts of Worship

SACRE discussed coverage in national media [here](#) regarding two children who had been withdrawn from Collective Worship in a primary school in Oxfordshire. The school concerned was a community primary. Although it had joined the Oxford Diocesan MAT, Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST), this did not change the status of the school. It was still required to provide daily collective worship of a ‘wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’ in line with current legislation. One family, supported by Humanists UK, chose to withdraw their children from this Collective Worship, as is their right. The parents were seeking a judicial review because they felt that during Collective Worship, the school should provide an alternative of equal educational worth for their children to attend. Before the Judicial Review took place the family and the school [agreed](#) an [out of court settlement](#). The DfE have clearly stated that this case has no immediate implications for SACREs or schools.

SACRE has a legal duty to monitor provision for collective worship in schools in its local area. SACRE collated policy documents from local schools in order to conduct a review. Thanks are due to the following for uploading their policies to their school websites:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harris Academy Ockendon • Bulpham Primary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grays Convent • Kenningtons Primary
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Members agreed that the most helpful policies included some or all of the following:

- A statement about the legal requirements around collective worship including the parental and teacher right of withdrawal
- The aims of collective worship in the school including links to school ethos and values, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, fundamental British Values and the taught curriculum
- Objectives or intended outcomes for the programme of collective worship
- Practical arrangements about how Collective Worship is organised in the school:
 - Groupings (e.g. year groups, classes/tutor groups, houses, whole school)
 - Timings, including links to the school timetable, calendar and local and national occasions and festivals
 - Leaders and their roles in collective worship – e.g. visitors, senior and middle leaders, individual and groups of pupils

- A clear statement about the nature of collective worship; what it is and what it is not. How collective worship may link to but is distinct from ‘assembly’
- A statement about how the effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed, by whom and when

Thurrock SACRE Youth Conference – Values through Religious Education June 2020 -

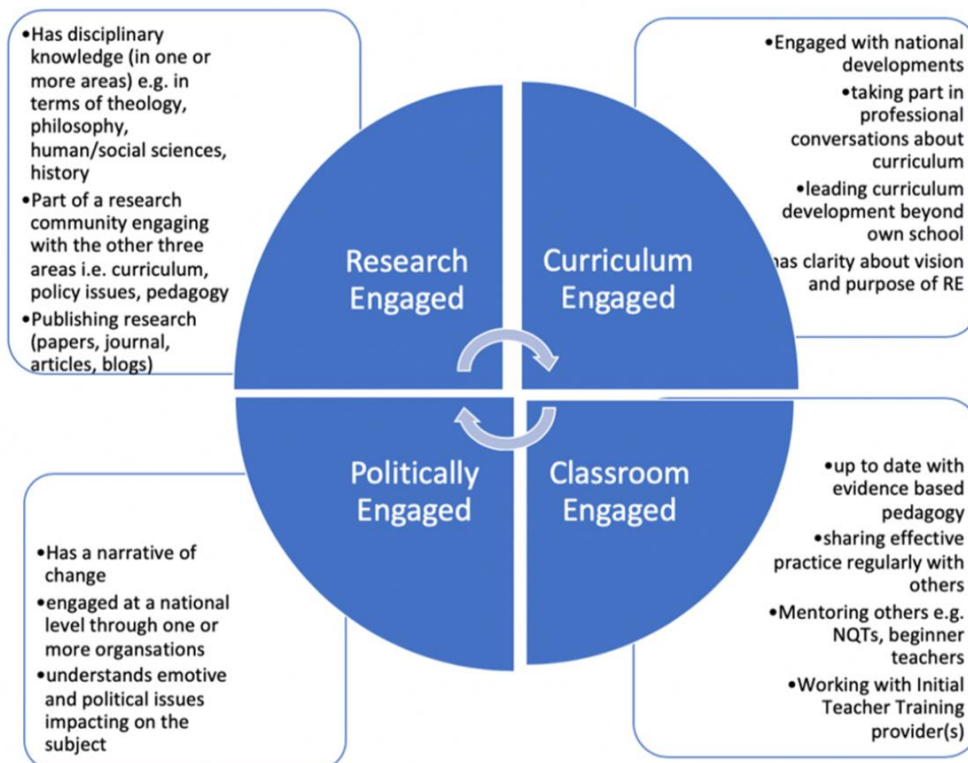
Thurrock SACRE planned to host a Youth Conference in June 2020 but this had to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. The aims of the conference were as follows:

- To encourage pupils to learn from each other through dialogue and shared experience
- To provide an interesting and exciting experience in RE to pupils from Thurrock schools
- To develop pupils’ creative and expressive talents
- To promote the place of excellent, open-minded RE in Thurrock

Teacher Recruitment and training

SACRE continued to monitor opportunities for training and to circulate these to teachers in Thurrock. These included:

- [Farmington Scholarship](#): This funded opportunity for a teacher to be seconded from school to carry out research was agreed to be an exciting opportunity and the adviser was asked to ensure all teachers were informed about the offer and encouraged to apply.
- Culham St Gabriel’s [Leadership Programme](#) which was provided free of charge to serving teachers



Appendix A

**THURROCK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

(SACRE)

CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

THURROCK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(SACRE)
DRAFT CONSTITUTION
REVISED January 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Education Act 1996 and circular 1/94, Religious Education and Collective Worship, the Local Authority (“LA”) has a duty to establish and set up a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (“SACRE”) and an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- 1.2 If there is a conflict between these Terms of Reference and the law, the SACRE shall comply with the law.

2. Functions and Responsibilities

- 2.1 To advise the Local Authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which do not have a religious character and the religious education to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus. This may include, in particular, methods of teaching, choice of teaching material and the provision of training for teachers.
- 2.2 To publish an annual report on its work specifying any matters on which it has advised the Local Authority, broadly describing the nature of that advice, and setting out the reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the Local Authority.
- 2.3 To publish its annual report by the end of the academic year and send to local schools and other persons and organisations it sees fit.
- 2.4 To encourage the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and in this regard to monitor the production of teaching resources and support material.
- 2.5 To support the Local Authority in reviewing provision for religious education and collective worship in schools within the Borough.
- 2.6 To disseminate an understanding of the educational role of religious education and collective worship and to encourage the active involvement of local religious groups and organisations.
- 2.7 To keep under review the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Agreed Syllabus until such time (and no later than 5 years after the publication of the last agreed syllabus) it decides to require the Local Authority to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to institute a formal review.

3. Membership and composition of SACRE

3.1 SACRE will comprise members of four representative groups appointed by the Local Authority as follows:

Group A Christian Denominations & other RE denominations
10 members

2 Free Church Christian members (nominated by the Free Church Federal Council)

1 Roman Catholic member (nominated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood)

1 Jewish member (nominated by the Board of Deputies of British Jews)

2 Muslim members (nominated by the Muslim Council of Britain)

1 Sikh member (nominated by the Local Gurdwara)

1 Hindu member (nominated by the National Council of Hindu Temples)

1 Pentecostal member (nominated by the Local King's Family Centre)

1 Buddhist member (nominated by the Buddhist Society)

Group B Church of England

4 members nominated by the Diocese of Chelmsford

Group C Teachers Associations

6 members nominated by the Professional Associations Group representing as far as is practicable, primary, secondary, special schools and academies.

Group D The Local Authority

4 members nominated by Council.

4 substitute members nominated by Council.

3.2 Co-Opted Members/Attendees

- 3.3. SACRE shall have the right to co-opt additional non-voting members who shall remain co-opted for as long as SACRE deems necessary or until such time as the co-opted member resigns.
- 3.4 Co-opted members may resign at any time and may be removed by the representative groups at any time or the LA.
- 3.5 It shall be open to SACRE to invite people of expertise or special interests to attend on an occasional basis.

4. Term of Office

- 4.1 Members of Committees A, B, C and D are appointed for a period of four years, but shall thereafter be eligible for re-nomination by their nominating bodies.
- 4.2 A member shall cease to be a member of SACRE if:
- a) They reach the end of their term of office
 - b) They write to the SACRE or the Clerk and tender their resignation;
 - c) They were appointed by virtue of being representative of the religion, denomination or associations which they were appointed to represent, but in the opinion of the LA, they cease to be such a representative, or to be representative of the authority;
 - d) The other members of their representative group notify the LA that the member should no longer act as one of its representatives on the SACRE and the LA agrees to their removal;
 - e) The LA determine, on reasonable grounds, that the member is unable, unwilling or an unsuitable person to continue these duties.
- 4.3 Any member of SACRE may at any time resign his/her office and a replacement be sought from the relevant nominating body.
- 4.4 The SACRE shall review the membership annually at their Autumn Term meeting.

5. Chair and Vice Chair

- 5.1 The Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE shall be appointed by Members in attendance at the first meeting of each Academic Year, or any meeting during the year when the position is vacant. The voting will be by a simple majority.
- 5.2 Each of the representative groups A, B, C and D shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair for the respective representative group. Each representative member having one vote. These chairs will be appointed annually at the Autumn Term meeting (or first meeting of the Academic Year).

- 5.3 In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson will take the chair and in the absence of both of these a member will be elected for one meeting.
- 5.4 The Chair will be responsible for:
- a) The management of meetings;
 - b) Representing the SACRE to other bodies;
 - c) Such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.
- 5.5 The Vice-Chair will be responsible for:
- a) Deputising for the Chair as required;
 - b) Representing the SACRE to other bodies in the absence of the Chair or by agreement with the Chair;
 - c) Such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.
- 5.6 The LA shall appoint a Clerk to:
- a) Attend the meetings of SACRE
 - b) Take appropriate minutes and notes at meetings;
 - c) Maintain and update the records of SACRE and its meetings;
 - d) Perform any other necessary administrative duties; and
 - e) Provide a copy of the minutes to the Members of the SACRE and LA.

6. Vacancies

- 6.1 In the event of a vacancy on the SACRE the Clerk shall:
- a. Advise the relevant appointing body of the vacancy;
 - b. Where appropriate, refer any nomination to the LA; and
 - c. Where such nominations are agreed, record the person as a member of SACRE.
- 6.2 In the absence of nominees from a representative group, the LA may nominate and appoint any person that it considers to be representative of that group and it deems appropriate, to fill the vacancy.

7. Arrangements for Meetings

- 7.1 Meetings will be convened by the Local Authority.
- 7.2 Special meetings may be called by the Chair and the Local Authority acting jointly.
- 7.3 There will be 3 meetings of SACRE held each academic year, normally one per academic term, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Chair.
- 7.4 Matters for the Agenda of any meeting shall be sent to the Clerk at least 21 days in advance of the meeting.

7.5 The draft minutes of the previous meeting shall be circulated to Members no later than one week before the next meeting takes place.

7.6 The Clerk will no later than 5 working days before the meeting, circulate the agenda and supporting papers to the SACRE members.

8. Attendance at meetings

8.1 The membership of any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without good cause will be considered to have resigned their position from SACRE and a replacement or reinstatement be sought from the nominating body.

9. Quorum

9.1 For the purposes of meetings, the SACRE will be deemed quorate when at least one member of the four representative groups are represented and not less than a third of the total membership are present.

9.2 If the meeting is not quorate, either business shall not be transacted or the meeting could continue but decisions would have to be ratified at the next SACRE meeting.

10. Voting Rights

10.1 Each representative group within SACRE shall have one vote. Groups are to determine their own internal voting arrangements. Decisions within a group about how that vote is to be cast do not require unanimity. Individual representative members cannot vote separately. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote. Each group is to regulate its own proceedings including provision for resolving deadlock.

10.2 A proposal shall not be deemed to be carried unless it has been approved by at least three of the representative groups unless otherwise required by law or guidance.

10.3 In the interests of achieving consensus SACRE should only take a vote of the four groups when it is necessary to make a formal record of a decision, or if there are opposing views.

11. Access to meetings and documents

11.1 Meetings of the SACRE will be held in public and members of the public will be encouraged to attend meetings as observers except where matters under discussion are considered by SACRE to be confidential. Members of the public cannot take part in discussions nor have any voting rights.

11.2 Copies of agendas and reports for meetings of SACRE will be made available for inspection on the Committee Management Information System found on the Local Authority's website.

12. Constitutional Change

12.1 The Local Authority can alter these terms of reference but must consult SACRE before do

SACRE WORK PLAN
To meet the statutory duties of a SACRE
2019-2020

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Date	Success criteria
1. SACRE meetings are planned and dates published annually	Agenda planning Liaison with relevant council departments Meeting preparation Report writing Meeting attendance Minute taking Publication of meeting agendas and minutes	Clerk, Chair, Adviser LA representative, members	Termly SACRE meetings	Meetings are effective meetings with actions followed up between meetings Members have a working knowledge of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issues affecting RE in the area • the Agreed Syllabus for RE • an understanding of the responsibilities of SACRE
2. SACRE have the opportunity to consider national developments in relation to RE in Thurrock	Consider relevant material from National organisations (AREAIC, NATRE, NASACRE as well as the DfE, Ofsted and Thurrock Council departments	Adviser	As information is published	Items on the Agenda for each meeting, Attendance at relevant meetings e.g. NASACRE AGM Minutes record discussions and actions
3. Produce annual report of the work of SACRE including advice to the council.	Collate information, source data and draft report Ensure final report presented to LA Send copy to Department for Education and to NASACRE	Adviser to draft Chair to write introduction Clerk to circulate. Elected representative to present to council	Spring Term (to account for data publication dates)	Completed draft in time for Spring meeting Report presented to council Copies sent to all schools Copy acknowledged by DfE

4. Engage with local schools and Academy Trusts to understand how Religious Education and Collective Worship are provided in Thurrock	Officers to identify schools to host visits Members undertake school visits Committee considers school reports	SACRE members at least one per year	Up to 4 school visits - 2 per term	Meaningful visits or discussion completed, and reports discussed at SACRE meetings.
5. Provide information on the RE curriculum to schools including through training	Update schools on current developments in RE (NATRE and other material requested by SACRE) Host a SACRE Youth Conference to model high quality provision to teachers of RE	Adviser Adviser and RE Today	Termly Annually -Summer Term subject to funding	Schools in receipt of material Teachers respond to material received Teachers raise questions to the adviser
6. Monitor provision for RE and Collective Worship	Source and present national and local data as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GCSE validated and unvalidated results and entries (local and national) – School workforce data (local and national) – Surveys of provision and of issues such as withdrawal, use of agreed syllabus, who teaches RE etc (local) – Review school websites – Write to schools about findings – Sample collective worship policies 	Adviser All SACRE members LA representative	Annually	LA respond to advice offered on strengths of RE and collective worship, and areas in need of development Schools respond to feedback on their websites and policies
7. Evaluate SACRE work and establish priorities	Item at summer term meeting	All SACRE members	Summer term meeting	Evaluation identified success criteria are met

Schedule 2019/20

Date of meeting	Subject	Objective (note – objectives 1 and 2 apply to all meetings)	Success Criteria
Autumn 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National developments - update • Ofsted Framework on RE – Autumn 2019 • Monitoring provision via school workforce data • Review of membership and attendance • Monitoring the use of the right of withdrawal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 6 • 7 • 2 • 6 	
Spring 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring provision via GCSE and A level results • Annual report approval • Relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools and Academies ○ the Council ○ Governors ○ Communities of religion and belief ○ Thurrock work on Community Integration ○ NASACRE ○ Youth Cabinet ○ Regional Schools Commissioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 3 • 4+5 	

Summer 2020	• Standards and Achievements in RE in schools	• 6	
	• Review of SACRE website	• 6	
	• Review of Collective Worship	• 6	
	• Review of SACRE Conference	• 5	
	• Annual report including GCSE results	• 4	
	• Evaluation of work plan	• 7	

Appendix C: School workforce Data Nov 2019 – reported summer 2020

School	Type	Percent of timetable allocated to RE					GCSE					Ofsted Rating	Pupil Premium	
		Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	GCSE Full Course Entries %	GCSE Short Course Entries %	Percentage 9-4 Full Course	Percentage 9-4 Short Course	Total ACP Percentage		Percentage Secondary	Secondary Premium
Beacon Hill Academy												Outstanding	30%	Low
Olive Ap Academy - Thurrock										0		Special Measures	67%	High
Treetops School							0	0					39%	Low
Grays Convent High School	Voluntary aided school	8.33	8.63	8.28	11.16	10.42	94.7	3.5	85.2	75	84.8	Good	22%	Low
The Gateway Academy	Academy sponsor led	4.2	4.48	14.56	12.51	0	74.8	0	49.2		49.2	Requires improvement	42%	Medium
Ormiston Park Academy	Academy sponsor led	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				Good	43%	Medium
The Ockendon Academy	Foundation school	6.87	6.66	7.46	7.45	7.25	100	0	41.3		41.3	Good	34%	Low
Ortu Gable Hall School	Foundation school	0	2.51	2.96	0.7	0	24.2	0	63.8		63.8	Requires improvement	21%	Low
William Edwards School	Foundation school	2.6	4.49	4.53	1.19	0	3	0	71.4		71.4		16%	Very Low
St Clare's School	Foundation school	4.55	5.13	2.5	0	0	0	28.6		87.7	87.7	Good	24%	Low
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	Foundation school	0	0	0	0	0	12.2	0	77.3		77.3	Outstanding	14%	Very Low
The Hathaway Academy	Academy sponsor led	0	0	0	2.13	2.11	13.7	0	47.1		47.1	Good	34%	Low
Hassenbrook Academy	Academy converter	3.37	3.57	3.17	0	0	0	0					35%	Low
Harris Academy Riverside													29%	Low

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