

Report title: Kirklees SACRE Annual Report 2024 -2025

Meeting	Children Scrutiny Panel
Date	6th February 2026
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Cllr J Rylah, Education
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No No – this is a cross party outside body
<p>Purpose of Report</p> <p>This report provides Scrutiny with an overview of SACRE’s performance against statutory duties in 2024–25, key findings, risks, and actions required from the Local Authority.</p> <p>A report detailing SACRE’s work must be produced for each academic year and published no later than 31 December. This is a retrospective report looking at the last academic year. The report is sent to the Secretary of State and other public bodies e.g. National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) and it is shared for transparency with Kirklees Scrutiny today. See appendix 1 SACRE’s Annual Report 2024-25.</p> <p>To add context to the content within the report the following information has been provided: - Since 1988 local authorities have had a duty to establish a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The Kirklees SACRE advises the Local Authority on matters relating to collective worship in all schools in the Borough and on Religious Education (RE) given in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The SACRE monitors the effectiveness and appropriateness of the agreed syllabus, which is formally reviewed every five years. SACRE is made up of four committees including representatives from the Church of England, Councillors, teachers and faith representatives.</p> <p>In brief, these are the statutory duties of SACRE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To monitor RE provision and produce an annual report for the secretary of state. 2. To monitor and support collective worship. 3. To agree determinations from collective worship. 4. To produce an Agreed Syllabus for RE in community schools and to revise this every five years. 5. To support RE in schools through training and resources. 	
<p>Recommendations</p> <p>SACRE has identified the following recommendations for their work in 2025 – 2026. These are provided for Scrutiny’s information. Scrutiny is asked to note these recommendations and may choose to comment to inform SACRE’s 2026 planning. No action is required.</p> <p>These recommendations are drawn from SACRE’s routine work and its 2024-25 self-evaluation. Please refer to SACRE’s Annual Report 2024-25 (appendix 1) and the main body of this 2024-25 Scrutiny Report for details underpinning the listed recommendations.</p>	

1. SACRE recommends that funding continues to be aligned with national expectations.
2. Councillor involvement remains valued, and SACRE encourages sustained engagement.
3. Continued collaboration with LA teams supporting community cohesion is advised.
4. Membership diversity should continue to reflect the Borough's communities and school structures.
5. SACRE's CPD and support offer to schools should continue to be recognised and valued.
6. Feedback from schools and leaders should continue to shape SACRE's support.
7. Termly liaison with the Local Authority to identify schools needing targeted support is advised.
8. Schools should continue to be informed of statutory requirements for RE and Collective Worship.
9. SACRE highlights the importance of RE pathways at Key Stage 4 for pupils not taking GCSE RE.
10. SACRE will monitor national curriculum reform and advises the LA to do likewise.

Reasons for Recommendations:

These recommendations reflect the actions SACRE considers necessary to sustain compliance with its statutory duties, including provision of an agreed syllabus, support for RE and Collective Worship, and appropriate monitoring.

They are offered to Scrutiny to support assurance of the Local Authority's responsibilities under the Education Act 1988.

No action is required by Scrutiny, although comment is welcomed.

Resource Implication:

The DfE recommends that Local Authorities allocate approximately 2% of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) to support the statutory work of SACRE, including delivery of Religious Education and Collective Worship. Kirklees Council currently meets this expectation, and this level of resource enables SACRE to carry out the full range of statutory activities set out in the report and reflected in the recommendations.

Date signed off by Executive Director & name

Tom Brailsford 21/01/2026

Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?

Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: Members of SACRE

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes. This report does not contain personal data.

1. Executive Summary

Since the Education Act 1988 it has been a legal requirement for local authorities to establish a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) with responsibility to support schools in meeting their statutory duties for Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship, and to recommend to their Local Authority ways in which such support can be actioned and sustained.

The current report is the **Kirklees SACRE Scrutiny Report 2024-2025**. It explains how SACRE has fulfilled its responsibilities.

The attached SACRE report begins with ten recommendations by which the Local Authority can support SACRE to continue its work supporting schools and teachers to meet and exceed their statutory duties relating to RE and Collective Worship.

Funding for SACRE is provided by the Local Authority at the nationally recommended level of approximately 2% of the Central Schools Services Block. This allocation supports SACRE's statutory responsibilities for Religious Education and Collective Worship. The report outlines the risks associated with any reduction in funding, including constraints on SACRE's capacity to fulfil its statutory functions and the potential impact on schools' legislative compliance.

The report explains how SACRE's work corresponds with key aspects of the wider Council Plan, especially with respect to pupils' access to excellent education and to community wellbeing within the context of Kirklees' profile of diverse communities. It explains SACRE's collegial associations with national professional RE organisations, and with local groups aligned with SACRE's values of education and community wellbeing. Schools, teachers and pupils are SACRE's key stakeholders. The report explains some of the different ways in which SACRE supports these key stakeholders including through teachers' CPD, provision of a locally agreed syllabus for RE and provision of innovative, high quality teaching resources. Ongoing consultation with teachers is an important aspect of SACRE's work.

The report concludes by summarising SACRE's annual cycle of general tasks. These include four meetings, a structured self-evaluation to inform future strategic planning, and writing an annual report for submission to the DfE and NASACRE (National Association of SACREs). See appendix 1 for **Kirklees SACRE Annual Report 2024-2025** which evidences different ways in which SACRE has supported schools and teachers to deliver high-quality RE and Collective Worship across the Borough, including:

- authoring and publishing the Local Authority's RE syllabus *Believing and Belonging* along with supporting teaching resources and training for teachers
- providing continuing professional development for teachers through training courses, subject enhancement webinars and professional network meetings
- offering schools bespoke support for RE and Collective Worship
- enhancing pupils' RE experiences through pedagogically informed, structured engagement with faith representatives and communities, eg through visiting speakers and visits to faith centres, and through the production of high-quality films about local religious communities.

SACRE's work emphasises young people's cultivation of positive understanding and respect for themselves and others. It supports schools to meet their statutory duties for RE and Collective Worship. It promotes sound RE pedagogy and subject knowledge, pupils' developing personal awareness, and wholesome, respectful community relations.

2. Information required to take a decision

The report is provided for information and transparency regarding SACRE's statutory work. It is not classed as a decision item for Scrutiny.

For more detailed accounts of SACRE's work and achievements please refer to **SACRE's annual report 2024-25** (appendix 1). SACRE reports are submitted to DfE and to NASACRE.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

SACRE's work corresponds with the Council Plan especially with the Inclusive Communities Framework, Aspire and Achieve, and Safe and Cohesive Frameworks. SACRE contributes to the Our Kirklees Futures Implementation Plan. It enables schools and teachers access to regular CPD to support delivery of high quality RE and Collective Worship. Pupils encounter and learn about cultural diversity through the locally agreed RE syllabus *Believing and Belonging*, supporting teaching materials, and activities such as visiting speakers and visits to community faith centres. Development in pupils' own cultural literacy contributes towards safe and healthy communities. RE and Collective Worship contribute to schools' social, moral, spiritual, and cultural values.

The work of SACRE continues to support schools. Year 11 students being entered for RE GCSE (full and short courses) rose to 44% in 2024-25 from 29.88% in 2023-24. 69% of pupils entered for GCSE in 2024-25 achieved a 4-9 pass grade compared with the national average of 73.2%. See appendix 1, p12 for a more detailed explanation of examinations data.

3.2 Financial Implications

National recommendations suggest that 2% of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) should be allocated to SACRE. In 2024 – 2025 the council reviewed the allocation to SACRE. The new amount was used as a benchmark for the most recent tender process to commission services of an external advisor to support the functions of SACRE including the school improvement aspect for RE. The current allocation covers fees expected for the contract for these services for the remaining 2 (+1) years. Should the amount of the CSSB change in value, there may be the necessity to review the funding allocated to SACRE in advance of the next procurement exercise in Summer 2027. Thus the recommendation to continue reflecting on the value of funds allocated to SACRE.

3.3 Legal Implications

The work of SACRE supports the Local Authority legislative requirements empowered by the 1988 Education Reform Act; namely to produce an agreed syllabus for RE and to advise the Local Authority on RE and Collective Worship.

SACRE is a legal, statutory body that is a requirement of all councils in England. It is comprised of elected members (4 delegates for Kirklees) and representatives from Kirklees teachers and Head Teachers, the Diocese of Leeds (Church of England), other Christian denominations, and other faith and belief communities representative of the Borough.

3.4 **Climate Change and Air Quality**

Environmental sustainability, protecting bio-diversity and awareness about climate change are essential for community well-being and in tune with RE's underpinning value of respect. *Believing and Belonging*, the RE syllabus produced by SACRE for the Local Authority, incorporates elements of environmental sustainability education across its units of work.

3.5 **Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) or Human Resources**

Potential risks posed by inadequate financial and / or other necessary resources provision for SACRE include:

- Failure to meet statutory duty to provide the authority with a locally agreed RE syllabus.
- Failure or limitations to support schools in meeting their statutory duties for RE and Collective Worship.
- Failure or limitations in supporting schools to enhance their RE delivery beyond statutory minimum requirements.

Specific areas of SACRE work may require Integrated Impact Assessments to be undertaken to ensure avoidance of potentially unforeseen or accidental adverse implications and that opportunities are in view; for example when considering the new Agreed Syllabus and curriculum guidance.

4 **Consultation**

The creation of the new Agreed Syllabus had co-production and engagement with stakeholders from Kirklees schools and settings as well as regional collaboration. Co-production was a core value and approach. Faith, community and school partners have been integral to creating and reviewing the new 5 year Agreed Syllabus. No additional consultation has taken place in 2024 – 2025.

5 **Engagement**

SACRE engages with national RE organisations in order to keep abreast of the national picture of RE and how Kirklees fits into this. Such organisations include the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC), Culham St Gabriel's Trust, NASACRE, the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) and RE Hubs. SACRE members are invited to AREIAC's webinar series about the different roles and responsibilities of the SACRE. A representative from RE Hubs attends one meeting annually to discuss the national picture of RE with membership and newsletters are circulated termly.

SACRE has a close association with Pennine Learning an education consultancy that supports schools, teachers and SACREs across West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester with RE. This facilitates a strong understanding and exchange of knowledge pertaining to our regional contexts. Pennine Learning issues a termly newsletter with local updates. Kirklees pupils benefit from shared resources produced and managed by Pennine Learning, for example a series of high-quality films about local religious communities kick-started by a Westhill Award Grant won by Leeds' SACRE.

Schools, teachers and pupils are SACRE's key stakeholders. Supporting teachers to deliver quality RE to pupils is a priority and actioned through a range of CPD opportunities offered to teachers, including subject knowledge-enhancement webinars, RE Coordinator Training and termly Primary and Secondary professional network meetings. Professional Network meetings are offered to schools free of charge. They

enable teachers to enhance their knowledge of RE policy and pedagogy, and to engage in collegiate exchange of best practice and professional expertise.

SACRE is currently working towards forging sustained collegiate relationships with Kirklees Communities and Access Services Team and Kirklees Interfaith (North and South) to acknowledge shared values of community wellbeing within the context of culturally diverse communities.

6 Options

6.1 Options Considered

National and local collaboration is considered and taken into account by the SACRE advisor when compiling the annual report. The report is agreed and signed off by SACRE membership including the cross section of elected members before being shared with NASACRE and the DfE.

6.2 Reasons for recommended Option

NA

7 Next steps and timelines

SACRE meets four times annually. A self-evaluation exercise is completed in June the outcomes of which feed into strategic planning for the following year. SACRE's annual report is drafted in November and ratified by SACRE membership in December before being submitted to NASACRE and DfE. SACRE's annual report informs this Scrutiny Report, which is submitted to Scrutiny in February each year.

SACRE will keep up to date with developments arising from the DfE's Curriculum and Assessment Review Report that may impact RE. This will be achieved through SACRE's associations with national Religious Education organisations including the AREIAC, Culham St Gabriel's Trust, NASACRE, NATRE and RE Hubs.

8 Contact officer

Emma Brayford – Head of Service – Educational Outcomes
Emma.brayford@kirklees.gov.uk

SACRE advisor Emma Salter
Emma@penninelearning.com

9 Background Papers and History of Decisions

N/A.

10 Appendices

Appendix (1) – The **Kirklees SACRE Annual Report 2024-2025**

11 Service Director responsible

Jo-Anne Sanders Service Director – Learning and Inclusion. Jo-Anne.Sanders@kirklees.gov.uk