



**Standing Advisory Council  
on Religious Education  
(SACRE)**

**Annual Report 2024-25**

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## **Section One: Introduction and the Work of SACRE**

### **Words from the Chair of Kirklees SACRE**

I am pleased to present the annual report of Kirklees SACRE and celebrate the great learning that happens in our schools when they embrace the opportunity to deliver high quality RE that opens the doors of children's imagination, increases their capacity to live with difference and develop the skills necessary to investigate different faith traditions.

During 2024/5 we have continued to work in partnership with Pennine Learning I want to express my appreciation of their professionalism and commitment to the teachers and children in our schools, enabling them to get the best from our agreed syllabus and the big questions that inform it.

We are confident that the RE network days for teachers and other resources that we offered in partnership with Pennine Learning really make a difference. In some schools there is only one RE specialist and when there is pressure on the curriculum RE may be squeezed. Helping teachers stay connected and valuing what they do is essential, in particular through our RE awards to schools.

Every year our RE advisor and the chair of SACRE present our report to Kirklees Council's scrutiny panel and we really value that opportunity to engage with councillors and explore the work of SACRE in our borough. We are very grateful to Kirklees for their continuing support of SACRE and to the officers of the council for their sympathetic and constructive engagement with what we do.

Members of SACRE bring their intelligence and coal-face experience to our meetings I want to express my appreciation of their lively engagement with the challenges and opportunities set before us. A good SACRE embraces a breadth of people of different convictions and world-views in a forum where people listen well and recognise our common humanity. At a time when we are experiencing increasing polarisation this is especially important. We have actively recruited new members of SACRE over the last year and will continue to do this.

Good RE helps children navigate a complex and sometimes confusing world with confidence and curiosity, understanding difference and disarming fears through discovering our common humanity. With that in mind I am pleased to commend our annual report to you.

**Mark Janes Chair Of Kirklees SACRE 2024-5**

## Overview

This annual report is prepared by Kirklees SACRE. SACRE is required to advise the Local Authority on Religious Education and Collective Worship. This report summarises SACRE's support for Religious Education and Collective Worship during 2024-25. The report is a public document which is sent to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) and the Department for Education.

For further information on the report or on RE and Collective Worship in Kirklees, contact Emma Salter at [emma@penninelearning.com](mailto:emma@penninelearning.com)

For information on SACRE please contact the clerk, Anna Twist on [annatwist@yahoo.com](mailto:annatwist@yahoo.com)

June 2024 saw Mark Janes and Hannah McKerchar re-elected as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. SACRE membership has increased. SACRE is conscious of the continuing need for diversity and representativeness in its membership. This includes belief, faith and different categories of school, including LA schools, Academies and MATs.

## Dates and content of meetings 2024-25

Kirklees SACRE held four meetings during 2024-25. Meetings are open to the public and minutes are available on-line.

- 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024; work plan and syllabus review
- 3rd December 2024; response to the NC call for evidence, agreeing the Annual Report
- 12th March 2025; RE future visions, working with RE Hubs
- 16th June 2025; AGM, working with the LA, Collective Worship Award.

SACRE meetings consider the general position of RE and collective worship in the borough. During 2024-25 the following topics were also discussed:

- The Local Agreed syllabus, which was revised and launched in April 2024
- Providing evidence for the National Curriculum review on the future of RE
- Clarification of funding for Kirklees SACRE responsibilities and activities
- Review of secondary provision for RE, including time allocation
- Progress on two sets of locally made films that support RE subject knowledge
- A Faith and Education project that encourages engagement between faith communities and schools
- Enhancing representation on SACRE from currently under-represented groups
- Completion of SACRE self-evaluation
- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) – items of interest or action, including information from NASACRE conference on the future of SACREs.

## **2024 – 25 Priorities and Actions**

### **Continue to embed the new Local Agreed Syllabus.**

The local agreed syllabus – Believing and Belonging in West Yorkshire 24 – 29 - was reviewed. This review included working with SACREs from Bradford, Kirklees, Calderdale and Leeds. Teacher networks focussed on long term planning, provision mapping and understanding the syllabus conceptual pathways, and how these are shared in school. A review of the units of work for the syllabus took place to ensure close links with the conceptual pathways. A series of webinars have been held for subject leaders to discuss applying the syllabus and units of work in their settings. Throughout the year 2024 – 2025 93 schools purchased the detailed planning resources for the syllabus. This is about 50% of the schools that would statutorily use the local agreed syllabus. In addition to this we are aware that 77 schools including a secondary school have purchased detailed classroom resources to support quality RE.

### **Continue working with the Kirklees Learning Service to identify schools for support and professional conversations**

Half termly professional meetings with senior learning partners in Kirklees Learning Services ensures schools that require support are identified and RE consultants deployed effectively. A work plan to support secondary schools and SEN settings has been set up on a two-year plan. Schools working towards the SACRE RE Award have had the opportunity to share good practice at network meetings. All notes of visits for the support given to schools are recorded in the Local Authority Nexus system. We have analysed the attendance register of activities that have taken place e.g. networks, courses and interfaith events and compiled a list of hard to reach schools. We have written to all schools with a universal offer of support and School Improvement Partners have been briefed to encourage schools to take up this offer.

### **Continue developing links with Kirklees Interfaith Councils to plan for joint projects e.g. school visits.**

Schools have participated in faith walks during which pupils visit numerous different places of worship in a single outing. School evaluations report a positive impact on pupils' learning. Twenty-three schools booked onto the Autumn Interfaith activity and online conference and this averaged out as 2000 pupils taking part in the activities and online questions with faith representatives.

### **Identify ways of supporting subject leader networks through SACRE funding**

Through professional discussions with the Senior Learning Partner and Finance officers funding has been secured for SACRE funded places for CPD in subject leader networks and middle leader training. Throughout the year an average of 30 delegates attended the subject leader networks for primary and 6 delegates for the secondary subject network. These numbers should increase with free places being offered on the networks.

## **2024 – 25 SACRE Self-evaluation**

Kirklees SACRE completed a self-evaluation based on the NASACRE template, which contributes to SACRE's strategic planning. Outcomes are listed below; selected outcomes are built into the development plan for the next two years.

### **SACRE**

- Establish channel of communication and working relationship with Kirklees Interfaith
- Establish channel of communication and working relationship with Kirklees Communities and Access team
- Engage with RE leaders/subject managers to understand their perspectives of how SACRE can support RE
- Capture teacher feedback about RE including LA syllabus and SACRE RE award
- Keep SACRE membership informed about policy and legislation relevant to RE
- Continue to strive to establish and maintain SACRE membership that represents religions and worldviews across Kirklees
- Continue to strive to establish and maintain SACRE membership that represents school types across Kirklees

### **Religious Education**

- Consider ways to increase delegate attendance at network meetings, potentially through offering networks at a reduced cost
- Continue to liaise with the local authority to identify schools needing additional support

### **Collective Worship**

- Provide CPD for SACRE members
- Continue to monitor and support the school in Kirklees with a determination

### **Community Cohesion**

- Review and reflect on census information on faith. Work with the local authority to identify information about diversity and ethnicity in different local areas
- Develop new links with the Communities team and Kirklees Interfaith groups to ensure SACRE is fully engaged with wider borough issues

Further details of the self-evaluation or the development plan can be obtained via the clerk to SACRE.

## **2025-26; meeting plans and priorities**

Meetings and themes for 2025-2026 are provisionally arranged as:

- 22<sup>nd</sup> September; connect with Kirklees Communities team and Kirklees interfaith groups
- 3<sup>rd</sup> December; connect with RE teachers and leaders; agree annual report; consider Curriculum and Assessment Review final report
- 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026; Collective Worship Monitoring, review SACRE constitution
- 15<sup>th</sup> June 2026; AGM, Self Evaluation review.

For more information contact the clerk, [annatwist@yahoo.com](mailto:annatwist@yahoo.com)

### **Priorities for 2025– 26 include:**

- Continue to support schools to embed the Local Agreed Syllabus
- Continue to liaise with Kirklees Learning Services to identify schools for support and professional conversations
- Write to schools to inform them about legislation and importance of RE at KS4, including pupils not on RE examination route
- Establish channel of communication and working relationship with Kirklees Interfaith
- Engage with RE leaders to understand their perspectives of how SACRE can support RE
- Capture teacher feedback about RE including LA syllabus and SACRE RE award
- Keep SACRE membership informed about policy and legislation relevant to RE.

## **Section Two: Statutory Responsibilities: Religious Education**

### **The Local Agreed Syllabus**

The Local Agreed Syllabus, 'Believing and Belonging', is the statutory curriculum for all maintained schools in the borough. This syllabus is shared with Bradford, Kirklees, Calderdale and Leeds. Other academies and free schools must teach RE according to the requirements of their trust deed or funding agreement. Although SACREs and local authorities do not have any responsibility or authority for their curriculum, it welcomes use of these resources by all local schools. Results from the recent SACRE survey of all schools in Kirklees demonstrated that the majority of academies have adopted the local agreed syllabus.

The Syllabus was agreed by a Local Agreed Syllabus Conference in March 2024 and a series of launch and training events took place over the summer term in each local authority area. This syllabus is based on the work of the Big Ideas team from Exeter University and follows six key concepts (pathways) that are taught progressively in all years from EYFS to KS5. In addition to the syllabus a series of core and focus units of work have been developed. These are detailed schemes of work to enable teachers to teach RE well in schools. Each phase of school will teach six core units of work over two or three years and will also be able to choose focus units to dig deeper into a particular faith/ belief. The syllabus units were reviewed in 2024 – 2025 to ensure they matched the conceptual pathways effectively.

### **Standards and Monitoring**

#### **Analysis of school website research**

Analysis of secondary school websites shows a largely positive experience at KS3 with schools using and adapting the local agreed syllabus. However, some schools appear not to offer a comprehensive RE programme at KS4 for those students not taking a RE an examined route. Some schools combine core RE with other subjects such as citizenship and PSHE. This means students are not receiving their full entitlement to RE in their curriculum. SACRE will write to schools to remind them of their statutory duty of RE provision from age 5 to 18 and of the benefits of meaningful RE for pupils' personal development.

#### **Ofsted Reports Analysis**

Recent Ofsted reports are being reviewed to identify schools in potential need of additional support, and schools to encourage to apply for an RE Award.

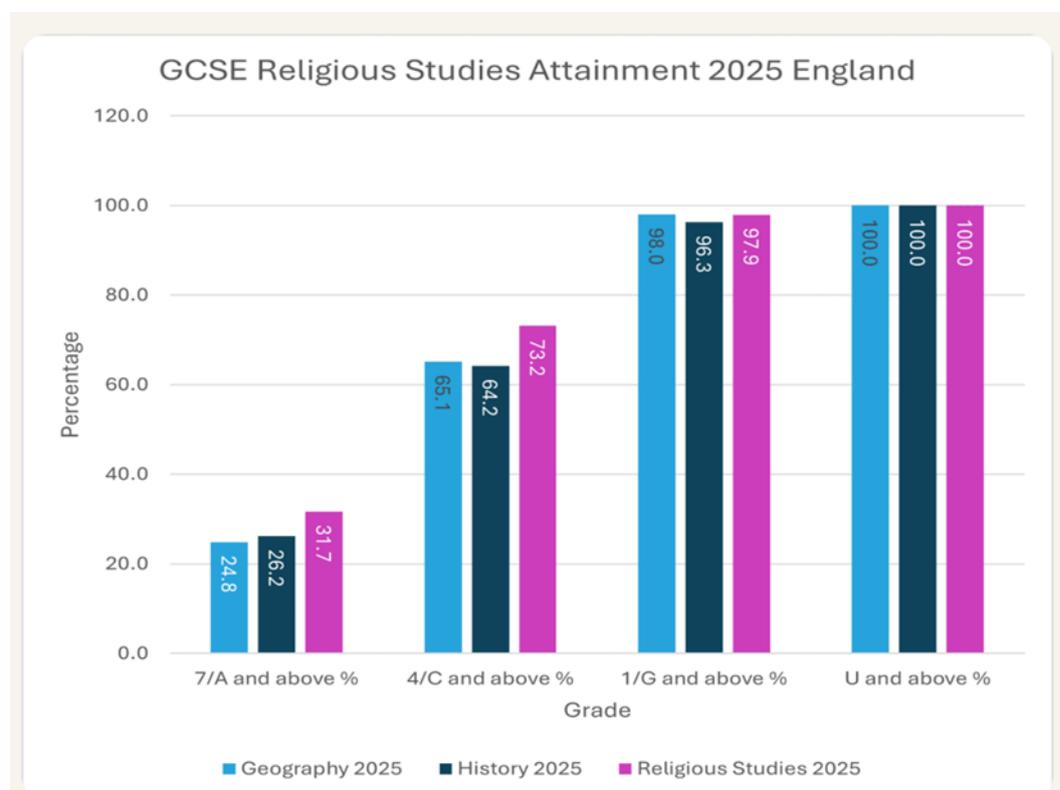
## Examination results

### National Picture

A data report produced by NATRE in September 2025 explains that nationally RS continues to demonstrate high attainment and is especially strong for girls.

Attainment in RS shows stronger outcomes than History and Geography, particularly at higher grades. In England, 31.7% of RS candidates achieved grade 7/A+, compared to 26.2% in History and 24.8% in Geography.

Entries in England shows RS entries are stable at around 240,000 annually, showing resilience compared to other optional subjects, despite curriculum pressures.



NATRE Report on GCSE Results 2025 September 17, 2025

## Local Analysis

	2023 -2024	2024 -2025
National Average Grades 9 -4	70.59%	73.2%
Kirklees Average Grades 9 – 4	82.6 %	69%
Kirklees Y11 cohort entries for GCSE (FC and SC)	29.88%	44%
Kirklees Y11 cohort no entry percent	70.11%	56%
Kirklees Number of schools entering Full or Short Course	19	17
Kirklees Number of schools entering full or nearly full cohort (including 3 RC Schools)	5	6

SACRE would like to congratulate the students who have worked so hard to achieve a GCSE in Religious Studies. We are pleased to see that a higher percentage of cohorts are being entered for GCSE RS. We are still concerned that it appears that 56% percent of pupils are not entered for a formal examination and that this then raises the question of how much core/ non examined RE is taught in KS4. We have noted which schools have not entered any students for examined RS or have very small percentage entries and our team of consultants will be contacting these schools direct to offer support.

### RE Quality Mark

Kirklees schools have the opportunity for their RE provision to be reviewed based on the REQM bronze award criteria. This is intended as a gateway to the national quality mark. SACRE is proud of Headlands CofE Infant + Junior School who achieved the Kirklees SACRE award in 2024 - 2025.

### Professional development and support for schools

#### General support

Professional support continued through Pennine Learning, a local company specialising in RE and community cohesion. Pennine Learning provides a total of eighty days support per year. This is arranged flexibly to facilitate effective working with schools and relevant others. Pennine Learning also supports SACREs and RE in Leeds and Calderdale enabling appropriate collaboration and partnership.

Through Kirklees Learning Services and RE consultants, schools and teachers have been able to access support, including in the following ways:

- Development of the syllabus and its schemes of work, including prompt responses to queries or difficulties
- Consultancy over specific or general RE issues, including advice about pupils' withdrawal from RE
- Availability of support by phone, email or virtual meetings
- Support for schools wishing to develop and improve RE following Ofsted inspections.

### **Training**

- One day course for new RE coordinators.
- Termly Primary RE network meetings attracting up to 40 delegates each session.
- Termly Secondary network meetings organised in partnership with Calderdale and Leeds.
- Subject-knowledge webinars for teachers on different religious and non-religious traditions hosted by a subject specialist and faith representative; and held in cooperation with partner local authorities.

In the coming year a full range of CPD and consultancy will be available through the Kirklees Strategic Improvement Plan.

### **RE Reviews and SACRE RE Award**



The RE review and SACRE award are available online and face to face. A small number of schools have worked with a consultant to review their RE provision using the award framework.

A 'Deep Dive' in RE is also offered to schools. This half-day session focuses on reviewing the scope, rigour and sequencing of RE curriculum provision.

These opportunities are promoted via RE networks and a half termly newsletter.

### **Further information**

A range of guidance continues to be available to Kirklees schools on a wide range of related areas, including:

- RE Policy
- Withdrawal from RE
- Collective Worship
- Celebrating Diversity
- Engaging with faith communities
- Sensitivity to Faith in Schools (Sharing the Journey)

A half termly newsletter and index of resources is distributed to all schools, together with a directory of potential RE visits and visitors.

## **Section Three: Statutory Responsibilities:**

### **Collective Worship**

#### **Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship**

Guidance and support are offered to schools for them to fulfil their statutory duty to facilitate collective worship.

Ofsted reports are scrutinised to identify issues or concerns.

#### **Complaints and determinations**

No complaints were made to SACRE about Collective Worship during 2024-25.

One determination request to vary statutory requirements in a maintained school has been reviewed this year.

Responsibility for determinations in English academies and free schools rest with the Schools Funding Agency.

#### **Professional development and support for schools**

Through the consultant, Pennine Learning, SACRE advises and supports schools on request.

SACRE members are well-placed to support collective worship in schools.

To help SACRE members support collective worship in schools the following framework is drawn on:

1. Collective: How does the assembly celebrate and promote a sense of community within the whole school (or group)?
2. Educational: Is there a clear aim and focus, with appropriate learning? Does it engage and interest pupils and staff?
3. Spiritual: How does the assembly nurture pupils' awareness of their beliefs and values - and those of others (including non-religious beliefs)? How does it develop a sense of meaning, purpose and value in their lives?
4. Reflective: Is there space and opportunity for thoughtful reflection, in the assembly or as a follow up? If prayers are used do these allow for different approaches and responses?
5. Inclusive: How does the assembly programme develop understanding of different perspectives and cultures? How does it promote values of respect, inclusion and equality?
6. Responsive: How did pupils respond and participate?

#### **Further information**

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their children from collective worship. Guidance on good practice and protocols for withdrawal is available to schools; consultants are available if further support is needed. Guidance is also provided to schools in fulfilling statutory obligations over collective worship and promoting good SMSC development.

#### **Section Four: Links with other organisations**

SACRE has active links with the following organisations:

- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)
- West Yorkshire SACREs (WYSACRE)
- The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC)
- Local faith organisations and interfaith groups
- Kirklees Learning Services
- RE Today Services
- National RE Hubs
- Other local organisations and charities such as Equilibria

## Section Five: Other areas of involvement

### Welcoming Schools

Visits to local places of worship and links with faith communities are facilitated to fulfil SACRE's obligation to broaden pupils' experiences and perspectives and promote their understanding and respect towards different faith communities.

Schools have access to an up-to-date directory of locations for faith visits, faith representatives suitable for school visits, and general information about RE relevant places and organisations. SACRE has worked with the Communities' team and the Kirklees Interfaith Councils to support school visits and visitors in Kirklees.

It is likely that virtual online visits will continue to be offered and promoted alongside in-person visits and events.



Through the Schools Welcome project free training is offered to faith communities to inform them of the requirements of the Kirklees RE Syllabus and to support them in hosting visits from schools. Training was offered in-person at venues in Leeds and Kirklees. Some SACRE members have participated in training. The project continues to build up worthwhile links between schools and faith communities. Kirklees SACRE prioritises working closely with Kirklees Interfaith Council to support publicity and participation in training events.

An audit tool and consultancy support for promoting understanding and respect of different faiths are available to schools. This has been promoted via the Pennine Learning website and at RE network meetings.

As part of the Education and Faith project faith trails have been created in Huddersfield and Dewsbury. Three schools have trialled these in preparation for making the faith trails available to all schools. A series of online interfaith conferences and resources have been developed over the last few years. A recent interfaith conference on Autumn Festivals helped approximately 2400 pupils engage with people from a Jewish, Sikh, Christian and Druid background. Pupils took part in craft activities and generated questions for the faith representatives.

### Faith Films

Kirklees SACRE has collaborated with Calderdale and Leeds SACREs in creating two professionally produced educational films; one about a synagogue and one about a gurudwara, both in Leeds. The films are part funded by a Westhill award won by Leeds SACRE. These films are freely available to schools with supporting materials and opportunity for live interaction with a faith representative, either online or in person. As of November 2025, the films had received 8000 views. To continue the series, production of films about

Hindu Dharma and Islam are underway both sponsored by their respective faith communities. Films about Humanism and Christianity are in the planning stage.

**Faith sensitivities**

Kirklees SACRE has worked with partners in Leeds, Calderdale, Oldham and Tameside to produce advice on sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools. This is available to schools as a document called 'Sharing the Journey', and which offers practical information and support to school leaders. Sharing the Journey has been re-issued to all schools in the borough to ensure consistency in approach to areas such as religious dress, fasting and prayer.

## Section Six: Kirklees SACRE arrangements

Kirklees MBC funds the operation of SACRE by contracting its consultants, providing a clerk and supporting its work through links with senior education officers.

SACRE membership includes representatives from all four constituent committees.

- Group A Faith and belief communities except for the Church of England
- Group B Anglican representatives
- Group C Teachers and schools
- Group D Kirklees MBC

SACRE will ensure members' attendance continues to be consistent and will seek to increase its number of teacher representatives, including teachers from academies and MATs.

Training is provided by NASACRE and offered to SACRE members including an induction webinar.

### Membership and attendance for 2024-5 was as follows:

Name	Representing	Att March 24	Att June 24	Att Oct 24	Att Dec 24	Att Mar 25	Att June 25	Att Sep 25
Mark Janes	Chair / Baptist	P	N	N	P	P	P	P
Hannah Mckerchar	Vice Chair / Counciler	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Anna Twist	Clerk	P	P	N	P	P	P	P
Suzanne Bridges	Methodist	N	P	P	P	N	N	N
Mashuda Shaikh	Islam	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Abdul Majeed	Islam	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Yousaf Baig	Islam		P	P	N	N	N	N
Prashant Kumar	Hindu Community in Huddersfield	P	N	N	N	P	N	P
Kuljindar Shokar	Sikhi	P	P	N	P	P	P	P
Tushari Richards	Baha'i						P	P
Jon Crooke	Baha'i						P	P
Ed Marks	Jewish					P	N	N
Rupert Madely	Church of England	N	N	N	N	N	N	P
Alex Burbidge	Church of England				P	P	N	P
Karen Atkinson	Church of England	P	N	N	P	P	N	P
Amanda Ogilvie-Berry	Church of England	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Anna Twist	Secondary Teachers	P	P	N	P			
Rafaqat Mohammed	Secondary Teachers		P	P	N	N	N	N
Janice Leam	Teaching Unions	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Emma Salter	Huddersfield University			P	P	P	P	P
Geoff Billing	Primary Head				P	P	N	P
Councillor Andrew Marchington	LA	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Councillor Darren O' Donovan	LA	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Councillor Joshua Sheard Birstal	LA	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Councillor Hannah Mckerchar	LA/Humanist	P		P	P	P	P	P
Emma Brayford		P		P			N	P

## **Section Seven: Advice to the Local authority**

The following advice is given by SACRE to the local authority:

- To review SACRE 's funding to ensure it is in line with national recommendations and good practice.
- To review SACRE's membership to ensure it reflects the breadth and diversity of the borough in terms of faiths and beliefs, and teacher representation.
- To ensure SACRE's annual report is considered carefully by the Scrutiny Panel of the Council and any of its content noted including how the work of SACRE can support Religious Education and community cohesion.
- To investigate the provision of RE for non-examined students at KS4 in all schools.

No appendices are attached to this report; all the relevant information is contained within the main body. However, any further information can be requested via the clerk.