

East Sussex SACRE  
**Role Descriptions**  
June 2023



East Sussex  
County Council



# SACRE Role Description

---

## Chairperson

As SACREs are bodies appointed by the local authority, in principle the local authority has the right to appoint the Chairperson of SACRE. In East Sussex, the Chairperson is elected on an annual basis, usually at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The process for the appointment of the Chairperson and the eligibility of candidates is clearly set out in East Sussex SACRE's Constitution.

There are several key roles that the Chair performs, grouped under three broad headings:

- Specific
- General
- Strategic

### Specific

The specific role of the Chairperson is to ensure the SACRE fulfils its statutory duties and responsibilities. To do this the Chairperson must have a clear grasp of the nature and make up of SACRE, what it is responsible for and what it can do beyond its statutory functions. The Chairperson should also take a leading role in SACRE's on-going process of self-evaluation and development.

During SACRE meetings it is the responsibility of the Chairperson to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the meeting. This includes making sure the business of the meeting is dealt with and that all members can participate and contribute fully. The Chairperson also has the responsibility to decide on any involvement from non-members who are present, for example, experts who might be brought in to advise SACRE on a specific matter pertinent to an agenda item being discussed; likewise, if it is deemed necessary, to decide when someone should be asked to leave the meeting or be removed from it.

### General

The Chairperson of SACRE is responsible, with the clerk and the professional officer, for constructing the agenda for each meeting. This includes deciding on items where the press and public might need to be excluded if they are present.

In the meeting, it is the Chairperson's role to sign the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record as well as to ensuring that any actions resulting from the minutes have taken place. If the Chairperson needs a mandate to act on SACRE's behalf before the next meeting, that should be sought at the meeting being chaired.

If there are issues relating to inefficiencies in the timeliness of notice for meetings, the publication of agendas and reports, the provision of funding or support or the venue of SACRE's meetings, it is the Chairperson's place to bring this up with the most senior paid official of the local authority.

## Strategic

In many ways the Chairperson of SACRE is its public face and may be asked to represent SACRE at Council meetings or public events, including interfaith events. In this way the Chairperson of SACRE becomes a champion for religious education and collective worship in the local authority and its schools. Therefore, it is important that the Chairperson of SACRE has a clear understanding of the nature of RE and collective worship and how they affect different schools in different ways, the role that RE and collective worship play in a broad and balanced education and their contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Beyond understanding these, a good and effective SACRE Chairperson needs to believe in the positive contribution of these elements of education in the development of each pupil and of society. The Chairperson also needs to be committed to ensuring the inclusive involvement of all SACRE members and the constituencies that they represent.

## Specific duties

Ensure that:

- A clear timetable of meetings for the year is agreed and publicised.
- Membership of the SACRE is efficiently maintained, i.e. that the four groups of SACRE have appropriate representation, with good attendance and participation.
- SACRE produces guidance to support the local authority and its schools with regard to religious education and collective worship.
- An Annual Report is produced each year and sent to the Secretary of State as required by statute.
- SACRE members have a programme of training and, when necessary, induction.
- There is a Vice or Deputy Chair if the Chair is unable to make a meeting.
- Where there is an agreed a Code of Conduct, that it is adhered to by all SACRE members.

# SACRE Role Description

---

## Children's Services Representative

It is customary for SACREs to be attended by a senior LA Officer who represents the Director of Children's Services, supports SACRE's effective communications with the LA and the smooth running of the work of the Clerk and RE Professional. Where either or both other functions are provided by an external consultant, this role is vital and pivotal as the LA Officer will need to establish the necessary links for SACRE with Council processes and departments to ensure effective communications with schools and cross-Council working.

The LA Officer will be able to provide SACRE with information regarding the local schools and the successes and difficulties they are experiencing, will understand and link SACRE to budget processes and Council initiatives which may influence or impact on their work, e.g., the Prevent Board or Community Safety Partnership.

Where the RE Professional is not a LA employee, the LA Officer will need to facilitate their link to other information about schools, examination data and other LA employees who can support links with schools, training processes and office backup.

When the LA is setting its budget for the coming year, the LA Officer should ensure the needs of SACRE are recognised and that a sufficient budget is available so it can perform its statutory duties. When there is an Agreed Syllabus Conference, those additional needs will also have to be budgeted for.

## Specific duties

This person is appointed to represent the local authority and school improvement services in the county and to support SACRE in carrying out its statutory duties. They should:

- Engage with NASACRE, where appropriate, and respond to the national agenda.
- Join the Southeast Central Regional SACRE Meetings with the Specialist RE Adviser.
- Undertake agenda planning for SACRE meetings.
- Write, update, and evaluate the development plan during the year.
- Work with the Chairperson of SACRE and support them in their role.
- Liaise with the Clerk to SACRE to ensure the committee runs smoothly.
- Review minutes and papers for meetings.
- Preparing papers, as needed.
- Give presentations on key items at meetings.
- Manage the budget effectively in line with priorities.
- Liaise with external bodies including our strategic partners, RE Today, and manage the contract, conferences, and ongoing professional development.
- Liaise with Primary and Secondary Network Leads and support them in their role.
- Liaise with Specialist RE Advisor and support them in their role.
- Join working groups or focus groups, as required.
- Facilitate governor training and engagement.
- Liaise with schools and respond to enquiries, as required.

## Allocation

Provided through Democratic Services

# SACRE Role Description

---

## Specialist RE Adviser

In some LAs, this role is taken over by a consultant employed for this purpose.

It is important therefore that the RE Professional Adviser can work with the support of the Clerk and the LA Officer, at least one of whom should be able to make necessary links with council processes and departments to ensure effective communications with schools and cross-Council working.

## Specific duties

This person is appointed to provide specialist advice on religious education and collective worship as well as facilitating links with national, regional, and local organisations. They should:

- Attend Southeast Central Regional SACRE meetings and report back to SACRE.
- Attend Executive Committee meetings for the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC).
- Attend NASACRE Annual General Meeting.
- Support the development and implementation of the Agreed Syllabus.
- Know the statutory requirements for the teaching of RE and Collective Worship.
- Understand the work of SACRE so effective advice and support can be given.
- Support agenda planning for SACRE meetings.
- Support SACRE Members in their role.
- Write guidance for schools that relates to the teaching of RE and Collective Worship.
- Attend national events to inform the work of SACRE, as appropriate.
- Share best practice from other local authorities and schools.
- Participate in appropriate training such as RE leadership programmes.
- Support working groups or focus groups, as needed.
- Support the development of training programmes for RE and Collective Worship.
- Contribute to the writing, updating, and evaluating of the development plan.
- Liaise with the Children's Services Representative and Network Leads.

## Allocation

Up to 7 days@8hrs per academic year.

# SACRE Role Description

---

## Primary, Secondary and Special Network Leads

To support curriculum design and subject delivery, primary and secondary networks have been established as part of the East Sussex Learning Collaborative Network (ESLCN).

All subject networks have been created to improve outcomes for children and young people. They draw on experienced teachers and leaders within the county to work with others to bring about positive change. Network leads co-ordinate activity and develop expertise in the teaching of religious education and the leading of collective worship.

Alongside a range of support and continuing professional development, subject networks contribute to the reviewing of the agreed syllabus, identification of strengths and areas for development as well as identifying where additional support should be targeted.

## Specific duties

This person is appointed to co-ordinate activity and develop expertise in the teaching of religious education and the leading of collective worship. They should:

- Lead termly network meetings for their phases (3 times per year)
- Plan an agenda for these meetings.
- With the agreement of SACRE, commission support and plan for CPD for primary and secondary phases that is meeting the needs of the schools and supports the development of quality provision.
- Support with the delivery of training.
- Support with the promotion and delivery of an annual subject conference.
- Support the Specialist RE Advisor in organisation of school visits by SACRE members.
- Liaise with the Specialist RE Advisor and Children's Services Representative to ensure coherent support for schools.

## Allocation

Up to 3 days@8hrs per academic year (Primary/Secondary Network Leads).

# SACRE Role Description

---

## Clerk to the SACRE and ASC

Legislation underpinning the statutory work of SACREs requires that they should have the support of a clerk or similar officer, that minutes are produced in an efficient and legal manner, thereby ensuring the smooth and effective running of the SACRE; the LA has a responsibility to ensure that the minutes of SACREs and ASCs are publicly available for six years after their adoption.

Follow-up from meetings and liaising with various organisations and communities is time-consuming, requiring a level of professional competency. Both the SACRE and ASC need to have a wide membership, representing the many and varied faith communities in the LA. The Clerk is often the first point of contact with these communities and SACRE members.

## Specific duties

The SACRE and ASC Clerk should:

- Arrange, attend and clerk three meetings of the SACRE per year and the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC), when required.
- Produce and circulate minutes and agendas of the SACRE/ASC in a timely manner (minutes to be produced within two weeks).
- Ensure all papers are circulated to members in advance of meetings.
- Ensure finalised papers are sent to Democratic Services.
- Advise on dates of meetings, particularly in relation to religious holidays or other Council meetings which may clash and affect quoracy.
- Book venues for meetings of the SACRE/ASC or set-up online meetings.
- Liaise with a venue for use of any necessary equipment (e.g., IT, projector) required.
- Remind members or other attendees about reports and circulation deadlines.
- Circulate additional papers from e.g., NASACRE, RE Council and Ofsted, as appropriate.
- Work as a team closely with the Chair, Specialist RE Advisor and other SACRE officers to produce reports, e.g., when changes to the SACRE constitution or membership are required.
- Be the first point of contact for SACRE members, faith community members, members of the public and other bodies concerned with the work of SACREs.
- Respond to queries, alerting the Chair and Specialist RE Advisor when necessary.
- Maintain the SACRE membership list, keeping it up to date, chasing members whose attendance is poor and identifying any membership issues for the attention of the Chair, RE Professional and LA officers.
- Contribute information, e.g., membership and attendance details for the Annual Report.
- Assist in the production and circulation of the Annual Report.
- Issue materials for new members and ensure that they have sufficient information.
- Where possible liaise with the LA Officer, other Council departments, keeping the Chair, the RE Professional and other officers informed of any relevant Council initiatives.
- Ensure all SACRE publications/advice are circulated to the relevant bodies.
- Liaise with the Council's committee/legal section regarding governance issues.
- Be responsible for the passing on invoices for payment, relating to SACRE work, e.g., attendance at national conferences, catering for meetings.

## Allocation

Provided through Democratic Services