

East Sussex SACRE

# Induction for New Members

November 2025



East Sussex  
County Council



# SACRE Induction

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## Welcome to East Sussex SACRE<sup>1</sup>

Thank you for joining East Sussex SACRE.

Serving on East Sussex SACRE is a rewarding experience which supports your local community in an important way. Whichever group you represent, your active participation can make a valuable contribution to the quality of religious education and collective worship that pupils experience in our schools and to the coherence of our community.

## What is SACRE?

SACRE stands for: Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education. SACREs were established as permanent bodies legally constituted by local authorities by the Education Reform Act 1988.

The role of SACRE is to advise the local authority on religious education and collective worship in community, foundation and voluntary controlled schools without a religious designation.

## What is the purpose of a SACRE?

A SACRE is unique. The law says that RE must be taught in all schools and a SACRE's role is to advise its local authority on what needs to be done to improve religious education (RE) and collective worship (CW) for schools in its area. This is because RE is not part of the National Curriculum; it is a local responsibility. Through the SACRE, local communities and teachers can influence directly what pupils learn in RE.

## Who attends meetings?

A SACRE is set up to represent a balance of all the interests of the local community. Each SACRE is made up of four groups:

- Group A  
Christian denominations other than the Church of England and representatives from faiths in the local area
- Group B  
Church of England
- Group C  
Associations representing teachers
- Group D  
Local authority representatives

In addition, SACRE can co-opt people to support its work.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from NASACRE's "Your Local SACRE"

## What are SACRE's duties?

The SACRE's main function is to advise the local authority on matters related to the religious education, which follows the locally agreed syllabus, and on collective worship in schools.

- It can require the LA to review its agreed syllabus.
- It must consider applications from a headteacher that the school be allowed to modify the 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' requirement for collective worship. (This is known as a determination.).
- It must publish an annual report of its work.

In a broader sense, SACRE's role is to support good RE and collective worship within its schools by:

- Giving advice on ways of teaching RE according to the locally Agreed Syllabus, including the choice of teaching materials.
- Monitoring schools' provision for RE and collective worship as well as the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development (SMSC) of pupils.
- Advising the LA on the provision of training for teachers in RE.
- Considering complaints about the provision and delivery of religious education and collective worship referred to it by the LA.

## What is a locally agreed syllabus?

The locally agreed syllabus is the statutory document for RE in the local authority. It sets out what should be taught to pupils in all key stages and the standards expected of them at the end of each key stage. It is produced by an agreed syllabus conference.

The agreed syllabus must be reviewed every five years. If, at some other time, a majority of the members of SACRE asks the LA in writing to reconsider its agreed syllabus, it must convene a conference for that purpose.

## And collective worship?

By law every pupil must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents, or if in the sixth form they have decided to withdraw themselves. Most acts of collective worship should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

As with RE, SACRE has a monitoring role, but it also makes decision on *determinations*.

## Determinations?

A school can apply to SACRE for a determination to provide alternative collective worship if it feels that collective worship which reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief is not appropriate for their pupils. Applications for determinations are made to the SACRE by the headteacher of any community school after consultation with the school's governing body.

Determinations are only possible for schools that do not have a religious character. Many SACREs have an agreed process to enable such an application to take place. (They are called determinations because SACRE ‘determines’ whether the case being made in an application to modify the law for all or a group of pupils in a school is appropriate.)

### **What are my responsibilities as a SACRE member?**

As a SACRE member, you should be committed to education and to respecting the views of others. You will have responsibility to support children’s learning in RE and collective worship, and to work for the highest standards in both.

You should represent your community or sponsoring group in the work of SACRE and communicate the interests of the SACRE back to them. You should be able to network effectively to contribute to the relationship between SACRE, your local community, and schools. The specific opportunities you have will also depend on the interest group you represent.

### **How does SACRE fulfil its role?<sup>2</sup>**

#### **Being part of the team**

In East Sussex SACRE meets three times a year. All SACRE meetings and documents are open to the public. SACRE agendas, minutes and papers are published seven days before the meeting on the council website. SACRE discusses the issues set before it, considers evidence in the papers and then discusses whether to make any recommendations. All members are expected to attend and contribute to meetings and to take part in other working groups that may be set up.

#### **Before your first meeting**

- Find out who’s who - especially the Chair, the Clerk and Officer.
- Ask the Clerk for the username and password for the National Association of SACRE’s website (NASACRE).
- Ask the Clerk for the SACRE development plan, the minutes of the last meeting and the agenda for the next meeting.
- Be clear about where and when your first meeting is (virtual or venue).
- Ask the Clerk for the username and password to access the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

#### **Preparing for a SACRE meeting**

- Members will find it helpful to check the NASACRE website for current RE news. Members who are also teachers can visit the NATRE website for updates.
- Look at your local SACRE website to familiarise yourself with the members and its current actions:
  - [Committee details - Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education \(SACRE\) | East Sussex County Council](#)

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from NATRE’s “Being on Your Local SACRE”

- [Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education \(SACRE\) | Czone \(eastsussex.gov.uk\)](https://eastsussex.gov.uk)

## At the meetings

- Get to know your fellow SACRE members, there may be useful links for you in your local area and vice-versa.
- Take note of any area you can make contributions, remember, each member offers their own insight into their community.

## Between meetings

- Keep checking the NASACRE and SACRE websites and email relevant information to the Chair of SACRE.
- Request for important issues to be added to the agenda of the next meeting.
- Familiarise yourself with existing documentation,
- Read papers for your next meeting.

## Other activities of SACRE<sup>3</sup>

SACRE Activities may include:

- Reviewing the Agreed Syllabus.
- Undertaking school visits to see the provision for religious education and collective worship.
- Ensuring there is sufficient training for teachers of religious education.
- Responding to complaints about religious education or collective worship.
- Reviewing data on Religious Studies examinations.
- Reading Ofsted reports for comments on religious education, collective worship, and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education (SMSC).
- Visiting schools or organising events to promote good practice in religious education, collective worship or SMSC.
- Publishing guidance to schools on religious education, collective worship or SMSC.

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from "Introduction to Ealing SACRE"

## Membership of East Sussex SACRE – June 2025

<b>Group A – Representatives of other Christian denominations and other Religions and beliefs (15)</b>		
<b>Denomination/Area</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Appointment</b>
Diocese of Arundel & Brighton	Vacancy	
Hinduism Community	Vacancy	
Islamic Community	Vacancy	
Quaker Community	Vacancy	
Baha'i Community	Elizabeth Coleman	June 2021
Jewish Community	Pamela Hartog	June 2021
Southeastern Baptist Association	Peter White (Vice Chairperson)	June 2021
Unitarian Church	Dr Norman Williamson	June 2021
Humanist Community	Felicity Harvest	June 2024
<b>Group B – Representatives of the Church of England (4)</b>		
Church of England Representative	Andrew Jervis	September 2025
Church of England Representative	Rosemary Roberts	June 2021
Church of England Representative	Vacancy	
Church of England Representative	Vacancy	
<b>Group C – Representative of the Teacher Associations (6)</b>		
<b>Denomination/Area</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Appointment</b>
National Association of Headteachers NAHT (Primary Phase)	Laura Cooper	June 2021
Academy Representative (Secondary Phase)	Peter Holt	September 2025
National Education Union (NEU)	Claire Ramalli	June 2021
Special Schools Representative (Special)	Karen Sitwell-Cook	February 2025
<b>Group D – Representatives of the Local Authority (5)</b>		
Local Authority Representative	Cllr Colin Belsey (Chairperson)	June 2021 [09/09]
Local Authority Representative	Cllr Abul Azad	June 2022 [05/21]
Local Authority Representative	Cllr Steve Murphy	November 2022 [05/21]
Local Authority Representative	Cllr Trevor Webb	June 2021 [05/97]
Local Authority Representative	Cllr Anne Cross	May 2025 [07/23]
<b>Local Authority Advisors [No voting rights]</b>		
RE Consultant	Barry Blakelock	
East Sussex County Council Advisor	Claire Ramalli	
Primary Network Lead	Claire Rivers	
Secondary Network Lead	Vacancy	
Clerk	Rebecca Harmer	

## Induction Checklist

Activity		✓
<b>People</b>		
	Meet the Chairperson	
	Meet the Clerk	
	Meet the RE Specialist Advisor	
	Meet the Primary Network Lead	
	Meet the Secondary Network Lead	
	Meet the Children's Services Representative	
	Meet 'Link Member' to support induction	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On attending first meeting</li> <li>After attending second meeting</li> <li>During completion of induction checklist</li> </ul>	
<b>Activities</b>		
	Attend a SACRE Meeting	
	Attend a Primary/Secondary Network Meeting	
	Attend a Governor Briefing	
	Watch NASACRE <a href="#">So, you've joined your local SACRE...</a> @VTW5e^X	
<b>Documentation</b>		
	NASACRE Member Handbook	
	Induction Checklist	
	Code of Conduct	
	Constitution	
	Annual Report	
	Role Descriptions	
	Development Plan	
	Self-evaluation	
	Local Agreed Syllabus (password required) - <a href="#">Schemes of Work</a>	
	<a href="#">Understanding Christianity (understandingchristianity.org.uk)</a>	
<b>Websites</b>		
	<a href="#">RE and collective worship in schools (www.gov.uk)</a>	
	<a href="#">NASACRE (NASACRE.org.uk)</a>	
	Username: members	
	Password: 2425Gr8RE4a7L!	
	<a href="#">SACRE   East Sussex County Council</a>	
	<a href="#">SACRE   Czone (eastsussex.gov.uk)</a>	
	<a href="#">Explore RE in your Region (re-hubs.uk)</a>	
	<a href="#">RE Today supporting Religious Education in schools</a>	
<b>NASACRE Training</b>		
	<a href="#">About SACREs</a>	
	<a href="#">SACREs and Collective Worship</a>	
	<a href="#">SACREs and Religious Education</a>	
	<a href="#">SACREs and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural</a>	
	<a href="#">Other presentations and recordings</a>	