

**ROTHERHAM STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(SACRE)**

Date and Time:- **Thursday 11 June 2026 at 4:00 p.m.**

Venue:- **HYBRID - Rotherham Town Hall, The Crofts, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH and via Microsoft Teams**

The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

AGENDA

1. Appointment of Chair

To appoint a Chair for Rotherham SACRE for the 2026-2027 academic year.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

To appoint a Vice-Chair for Rotherham SACRE for the 2026-2027 academic year.

3. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence from any members who are unable to attend.

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interest from any members with respect to an item of business.

5. Exclusion of Press and Public

To determine whether any items on the agenda require the exclusion of members of the public or press.

6. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 4 - 11)

To review and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 March 2026 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and to be signed by the Chair.

7. Development Plan Update

To receive a verbal update from the Chair on the SACRE Development Plan.

8. Continuous Professional Development Update

To receive a verbal update on recent Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities undertaken by SACRE members.

9. SACRE Membership Update

To receive an update on the current SACRE Membership, including any vacancies or new member requests.

10. RE Awards Update

To receive an update on plans for the RE Awards Ceremony.

11. Together for Tomorrow Project Update

To receive an update on the Together for Tomorrow Project.

12. Update on appointment of an RE Advisor to Rotherham SACRE (Pages 12 - 14)

To consider and discuss the process for the appointment of a new RE Advisor to Rotherham SACRE, to include consideration of the revised job and person specification included in the Agenda Pack, for approval by SACRE members.

13. Annual Budget Report (Page 15)

To receive an update relating to the SACRE budget, including the following:

- the Annual Budget Report for 2025-26; and
- an overview of the proposed SACRE budget for 2026-27

14. SACRE Annual Report 2025-26

To discuss the proposed process and timeframe for completion of the SACRE Annual Report for the academic year 2025-26.

15. Approved Syllabus Conference Update

To receive an update on the recent Agreed Syllabus Conference meeting which took place on 1 June 2026 and continued progress made on the review of the Local RE Agreed Syllabus.

16. Urgent Business

To determine any items which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Edwards', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Edwards,
Chief Executive

**The next meeting of the Rotherham Standing Advisory Council
for Religious Education will be held on Thursday 17 September 2026
commencing at 4:00 p.m.
in Rotherham Town Hall.**

**ROTHERHAM STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(SACRE)
THURSDAY 19 MARCH 2026**

Present:-

Group 1

T. Griffin

D. Homer

Group 2

H. Lambert (Chair)

Group 3

S. Yasseen

Group 4

Councillor R. Ismail

N. Devlin

Also in attendance as Kristianne Thorogood – Governance Advisor

83. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following members: Councillor V. Cusworth; Councillor S. Alam; V. Gregory; E. Nicholls; L. Melvin; and F.Radford.

84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

85. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no matters of business for which it was deemed necessary to exclude members of the public or press.

86. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the last meeting on 4 December 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

87. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Chair reported that they had recently delivered an online RE CPD

session jointly for Rotherham and Sheffield. This session looked at oracy in particular, and considered how oracy could be promoted within the RE curriculum and used as creative means to deliver lessons. Attendance at this session had been strong, with around 27 teachers from across the Rotherham and Sheffield areas attending.

In response to a question, the Chair explained that oracy encompassed how to teach and help children to speak well, and to match their speech to the formality of the situation. The Chair commented that there was currently a big push in education nationally on oracy, and that it featured on most schools' development plans.

88. DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

A written update on the SACRE development plan had been included in the Agenda Pack.

T. Griffin enquired whether there were any plans to re-run the "Ask me Anything" panel. The Chair confirmed that they had been asked to run the event again with a broader range of religious views on the panel. Councillor Ismail confirmed that they would be happy to participate in the event again and it was reported that A. Vishwanath had expressed interest in taking part. The Chair would check the date of the event and would share details with Members.

89. FEEDBACK FROM THE AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE

The Chair provided a verbal update on the recent activities of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) following the meeting held on 2 March 2026.

The Chair explained that they had made a good start on making the amendments to the Agreed Syllabus agreed at the previous meeting. However, the Chair's capacity to complete this on her own, given that the RE Advisor had recently stepped down, was limited. As a result, the Chair informed Members that the Agreed Syllabus was unlikely to be finalised for approval in SACRE's meeting in June, for roll-out to schools in September 2026. However, the Chair was hopeful that the Agreed Syllabus could be finalised over the summer months and put forward to SACRE Members for approval in September 2026.

The Chair would look to arrange a separate sub-group meeting of secondary school staff members of SACRE ASC, as their input was required for the amendments to the "Program of Study" sections for Key Stages 3, 4 & 5.

The Chair informed Members of discussions that had taken place at the ASC meeting with Angela Duncan, SEND School Representative from The Willows School, regarding the production of further RE lesson plans for use by SEND specialist teachers. Whilst SEND teachers accessed the current Key Stage 1 units available, it was suggested that some of the

content from further up the curriculum could be incorporated to expand these units and make them suitable for SEND students for longer. The Chair would add this project to the SACRE development plan.

D. Homer commented that the needs of SEND students were so diverse that it was very important to equip SEND teachers with enough resource to be able to find appropriate materials that were relevant to their students. The Chair commented that a more sensory and visual approach would be required for SEND students.

N. Devlin, the Service Director for Education and Inclusion (Service Director) put forward a proposal to Members that the Chair's school should be recompensed for the increased amount of time that the Chair had spent in completing the review of the Agreed Syllabus. As the post of RE Advisor to Rotherham SACRE was now vacant and was likely to remain so for the rest of the academic year, the Service Director felt that it should be recognised by SACRE that the Chair had been taken away from their usual duties as Headteacher in carrying out this task, largely alone. The Service Director recommended that this be an ongoing arrangement until such time as the work on the Agreed Syllabus was complete.

The Service Director asked the Chair to provide an estimate of the number of hours they had spent to date on the review of the Agreed Syllabus and provide an invoice to the Council to enable their school to be reimbursed. The Service Director asked the Chair to provide an invoice before 31 March 2026 in order that this payment could be paid out of the 2025-2026 SACRE budget.

Members confirmed their agreement to this proposal on an ongoing basis, until such time as work on the Agreed Syllabus was completed.

Resolved:-

- That SACRE note and endorse the Chair's action plan with regard to completion of work on the Agreed Syllabus; and
- That SACRE agree to the proposed reimbursement of the Chair's school for the time the Chair had spent in undertaking the review of the Agreed Syllabus, and that this arrangement should continue until work on the Agreed Syllabus was complete.

90. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Chair asked the Governance Advisor to update Members on the current membership of SACRE. The Governance Advisor confirmed that they had conducted a review of attendance at recent meetings. The SACRE Terms of Reference set out that if a member was absent for 3 or more consecutive meetings, they would be deemed to have vacated their place on SACRE. The Governance Advisor had identified the following

members who met this criteria:-

- **A. Shazad** – it had been identified that this member was no longer at the school that SACRE had an email address for.
- **S. Hopkin** – it had been identified that this member was on maternity leave and was no longer at the school that SACRE had an email address for.
- **N. Choudry**
- **M. Shah** – Councillor Ismail offered to contact this member to confirm if they still wished to be a Member of SACRE.

The Governance Advisor commented that it would be good to recruit more members to SACRE to ensure resilience and quoracy at meetings. In recent meetings, attendance by members of Group C (teachers) had been low and this could cause future issues with quoracy and decision making.

The Chair confirmed that the work of SACRE was often highlighted at Rotherham teacher CPD meetings but that no further members had been forthcoming. S. Yasseen confirmed that a member of staff at their school would like to become a Member and the Governance Advisor suggested that their contact details be provided so that they could be invited to the next meeting.

The Chair commented that V. Gregory had indicated that they would like to continue their involvement in SACRE as a Group C member, now that they were unable to continue as the RE Advisor. Members were asked to raise their hand to vote for V. Gregory to become a Group C member of SACRE.

Resolved:- That SACRE approve the membership of V. Gregory into Group C.

91. APPOINTMENT OF RE ADVISOR TO ROTHERHAM SACRE

As referred to earlier in the meeting, the Chair explained to Members that V. Gregory was unfortunately unable to continue the role of RE Advisor to Rotherham SACRE as their school could no longer release them for the time required to fulfil the role. As a result, SACRE would need to recruit a new RE Advisor.

A draft job specification had been included at page 15 of the Agenda Pack. The Chair explained that the job specification had been drafted by the Service Director, and the Chair and former RE Advisor had made some amendments to it.

Members commented that more detail was required on the qualifications and experience required. For example, that the RE Advisor would need to have experience of working in an educational setting and have a lot of substantive knowledge of the of RE as a subject. Organisational, writing and administrative skills would also be key. Members felt that the

document as it stood felt more like a description of the role than a detailed person specification.

The Service Director confirmed that the role would be paid but that payment would be made to the RE Advisor's school to compensate for the time taken away from their substantive role. The Chair commented that it was usually the equivalent of 5 days' worth of time per academic year. It was commented that this should also be specified in the job description, along with details of who the RE Advisor would report to (the Chair). The Chair confirmed that the role would be advertised via the Council website and the Rotherham School Improvement Service (RoSIS) website and newsletter.

Members asked the Chair and the Service Director to revisit the job specification document and amend it to include the additional information discussed. The Service Director confirmed that they would make the necessary amendments and would circulate an updated job specification to Members for review. The Chair and the Governance Advisor would also consult the NASACRE website to see if any sample job specification documents were available on there.

Resolved: - That the Chair and the Service Director would rework the RE Advisor job specification to ensure that a more detailed person specification sat alongside it.

92. SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025 UPDATE

The Chair informed Members that the SACRE Annual Report 2024-25 had been presented to the Council's Improving Lives Select Commission (ILSC) on Tuesday 17 March 2026 and that ILSC had noted the report and endorsed the priorities of SACRE going forward.

The Service Director commented that the Chair had done an excellent job of presenting the SACRE Annual Report to ILSC and that the Annual Report also had the endorsement of the relevant Cabinet Member, Councillor Cusworth. Members thanked the Chair for representing SACRE and for highlighting the important work and function of SACRE at the ILSC meeting. The Chair thanked the Service Director for their help in compiling the Annual Report.

The Governance Advisor reminded Members that the aim for the 2025-26 Annual Report was to start drafting it during the summer term of 2026, in order that it could go through the various governance processes earlier. The Service Director emphasised the need for the Annual Report to be the work of SACRE and not the Council, in order that it could fulfil its role of holding the local authority to account.

93. BUDGET UPDATE

This item provided an update on the 2025-2026 SACRE budget prior to

the close out of accounts at the end of the financial year, during which the following was discussed:

- The Chair explained that the cost for the planned RE Awards would fall into the 2026-27 financial year as it was not due to take place until the summer months.
- The Service Director confirmed that the final accounts for the 2025-26 financial year would be presented to SACRE at its June meeting.
- The available SACRE budget for 2025-26 was £5695.00. The amount committed in the budget but not spent was £3,563.00, representing £1,813.00 for the RE Awards and £1,750.00 for 5 days of V. Gregory's time as RE Advisor, which had not been provided.
- The Service Director proposed utilising some of the unspent funds in the 2025-26 budget towards payment for the Chair's time to date in reviewing the Agreed Syllabus, as discussed earlier in the meeting. The Service Director also sought approval of a spend to update the SACRE website. The revised spend for the remainder of the 2025-26 financial year was presented to SACRE members as follows:
 - £2,000.00 - 4 days Headteacher time (Review of Agreed Syllabus) - Hannah Lambert; and
 - £250.00 – SACRE website - updating and formatting.
- This would leave a balance unspent of £1,830.00 for the financial year 2025-26.

Members were in agreement to the revised spend.

Resolved:-

- That the proposed spend for the 2025-26 financial year be amended to include the following:
 - £2,000.00 - 4 days Headteacher time (Review of Agreed Syllabus) - Hannah Lambert; and
 - £250.00 – SACRE website - updating and formatting; and
- That the Annual Budget Report be presented at the next SACRE meeting for consideration and approval in June 2026.

The Chair informed Members that no update to progress on the RE Awards Ceremony was available as the sub-group who were due to organise it had not yet been able to meet. The Chair would speak to E. Nicholls, L. Melvin and V. Gregory to see if a meeting could be arranged and S. Yasseen confirmed that they were also due to take part in this group and would contact the other members to arrange a date.

95. CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT REVIEW UPDATE

The Chair provided an update on the Curriculum and Assessment Review from a recent online NASACRE meeting. A summary was provided at this meeting of the key-note speech of Dr Vanessa Ogden, Chair of the Task & Finish group. This summary had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

The Chair reported that programmes of study had been written for RE for the new National Curriculum and were due to go to the government for approval shortly. Nothing had been made widely available to RE teachers yet. It was therefore looking likely that RE would come under the National Curriculum. Members welcomed this development.

The Governance Advisor, who had also been present at the NASACRE online meeting, reported that NASACRE had confirmed that any SACREs that were currently undertaking a review of the Agreed Syllabus, should proceed with a “light-touch” review, given the imminent changes in RE and probable inclusion in the National Curriculum. This supported the view that Rotherham SACRE had taken with regard to its current review of the Agreed Syllabus.

The Chair further reported that there had been discussion over the future role of SACREs and how this was likely to strengthen with regard to community cohesion. Members commented that this would fit with the Government White Paper on Education and the intended approach to include a greater emphasis on belonging and community and how children could be “good citizens”.

D. Homer asked whether anything was likely to change with regard to collective worship. The Chair commented that the Church of England was reviewing its guidance on collective worship. Members discussed the importance of making sure that collective worship was appropriate for the context of each school. For a lot of schools, a daily act of collective worship was very difficult to accommodate due to space. Often, assemblies and celebration or special event days were used to promote messages of tolerance, inclusion and community engagement.

The Chair commented that they intended to add to the SACRE Development Plan for the next academic year, the task of creating guidance for schools on requests to withdraw from RE, following the recent judgment in Northern Ireland. It would now be considered

“burdensome” for both parents and schools to be called in for meetings to discuss the matter, so the Chair felt that schools would benefit from clear guidance on how to navigate this difficult situation. Current advice for schools was to immediately agree to a withdrawal.

96. DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2026-27

The Governance Advisor confirmed that the draft meeting dates had been approved by Full Council at its meeting on 4 March 2026 and that the dates set out in the Agenda Pack (below) were confirmed meeting dates for Rotherham SACRE for the municipal year 2026-2027:-

- 11 June 2026
- 17 September 2026
- 3 December 2026
- 4 March 2027

The Governance Advisor had checked that there were no clashes with any religious holidays/festivals but asked Members to let them know if they were aware of any issues. Invites for the upcoming meetings would be issued shortly.

97. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair asked for it to be noted that the description of the circumstances of V. Gregory stepping down from the position of RE Advisor to Rotherham SACRE was not correct in the Agenda to the meeting. It was explained that V. Gregory had not resigned from the post but that her school was no longer able to release her for the amount of time required for the role. The Governance Advisor confirmed that, for clarity, this correction would be reflected within the minutes to the meeting.

Key Responsibilities

The SACRE RE Adviser will:

- **Governance & Strategic Support**
 - Attend all SACRE and ASC meetings, supporting agenda setting and preparation of key papers.
 - Advise SACRE on statutory responsibilities and developments in RE and Collective Worship.
- **Curriculum & Syllabus Development**
 - Lead on the review, development, and implementation of the Agreed Syllabus.
 - Ensure SACRE is informed of local, regional, and national initiatives.
 - Work with the Chair to draft and edit the SACRE Annual Report and other SACRE publications.
- **Monitoring & Evaluation**
 - Lead SACRE's monitoring activities, including school visits and analysis of RE examination results where these are available.
- **Training & Development**
 - Manage and deliver training for SACRE members, teachers, and other stakeholders.
 - Support SACRE members in acting as effective links with their nominating bodies.
- **Community & Stakeholder Engagement**
 - Build partnerships with local faith and belief communities.
 - Liaise with schools, governors, and external partners to promote high standards in RE.

Person Specification: RE Adviser to SACRE

Role Purpose

To provide expert professional advice and support to the Rotherham Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), ensuring high-quality Religious Education (RE) and collective worship across the local authority in line with statutory requirements and national guidance.

Essential Criteria

Qualifications & Knowledge

- A good honours degree (or equivalent) in Religious Education, Theology, Religious Studies, or a related subject
- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or equivalent teaching qualification
- In-depth knowledge of:
 - The statutory framework for RE and SACRE duties
 - The locally agreed syllabus for RE
 - National guidance, including NASACRE and DfE frameworks
- Understanding of:
 - Collective worship requirements
 - The role and constitution of SACRE
 - Current developments and debates in RE

Professional Experience

- Significant experience of teaching RE in schools (primary and/or secondary)
- Experience of curriculum development and/or leadership in RE
- Experience of advising, supporting, or training teachers and school leaders
- Experience of working with a range of stakeholders (e.g., schools, faith communities, local authority)

Skills & Abilities

Advisory & Strategic Skills

- Ability to provide high-quality, impartial professional advice to SACRE
- Ability to interpret legislation and guidance and apply it in a local context
- Ability to support SACRE in monitoring standards and provision

Communication & Interpersonal Skills

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to present clearly to diverse audiences (including SACRE members, teachers, and governors)
- Ability to work sensitively with people from a wide range of religious and non-religious backgrounds

Organisational Skills

- Ability to plan and support SACRE meetings effectively
- Ability to produce clear reports, including SACRE annual reports
- Strong time management and ability to manage multiple priorities

Personal Attributes

- Commitment to inclusion, diversity, and respect for different beliefs and worldviews
- Integrity, professionalism, and discretion
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively
- Reflective practitioner with a commitment to continuous professional development

The RE adviser's school will be paid for 5 days of non-contact time for the adviser to carry out their duties.

SACRE Financial Report - June 2026

385040 - SACRE	2025/26 Outturn (£)	2026/27 Plan (£)	Notes
Budget Available	5,695.00	5,695.00	1
Committed	0.00	1,615.00	2
Spent	3,865.00	0.00	
Unspent or uncommitted balance	1,830.00	4,080.00	3

Committed spend	0.00	1,615.00
NASACRE Annual Subscription 26/27	0.00	115.00
RE Subject Leader Facilitation - H Lambert	0.00	1,500.00

Actual spend	3,865.00	0.00
NASACRE Annual Subscription 25/26	115.00	0.00
RE Subject Leader Facilitation - H Lambert	1,500.00	0.00
SACRE Website Update	250.00	0.00
Review of RE Syllabus	2,000.00	0.00

Notes

1. Represents the approved DSG budget for SACRE for the year
2. Represents planned (and agreed) commitments for 2026/27
3. Budget balance for 2026/27 yet to be committed - awaiting board decision on spending plan or commitments for the year. Unspent budget or balance would fall into the DSG Reserve account (ring fenced to cover schools related expenditure in the following year)