

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

**THURSDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**Present:-**

**Group 1**

T. Griffin

**Group 2**

H. Lambert (Chair)

**Group 3**

L. Melvin

S.Yasseen

**Group 4**

Councillor R. Ismail

Councillor V. Cusworth

N.Devlin

F. Radford.

Also in attendance was Vanessa Gregory, Specialist RE Advisor to SACRE.

**55. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from D.Homer and T.Williams.

**56. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press and public.

**57. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes from the last meeting on 5 June 2025, were approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

**58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**59. AN OVERVIEW OF SHEFFIELD SACRE'S ACTIVITIES**

This item was deferred by the Chair.

**60. REWARDS EVENT FEEDBACK**

This item provided an update and feedback on the RE Awards Event which took place in June 2025, during which the following was noted:

- PowerPoint slides were included within the agenda pack for this item.
- The positives of the Rewards Ceremony were as follows-
  - Students loved the ceremony and responded well to it. They were very appreciative of the Mayor's attendance and the chance to have a photograph with the Mayor.
  - Certificates and recognition were great, and the tour of the Town Hall was very well received. Town Hall employees were very helpful, and refreshments were provided to the pupils, at this point the Mayor spoke to all of the children in groups.
  - Overall, the afternoon was a lovely celebration of RE.
- Suggested areas for development for next year's Rewards Ceremony were as follows-
  - The preparation beforehand was felt to be time consuming, it was felt that there was too much 'red tape', an example was provided of completing the Mayors Visit Form.
  - There was a misunderstanding in which the Town Hall Team thought that the school were hosting the event.
  - It was felt that certificates should be checked beforehand as there were some missing.
- Future considerations should be as follows-
  - A more structured approach was required.
  - Funding for the event needed to be agreed in advance by SACRE members, at a SACRE meeting beforehand.
  - Consideration should be given as to whether to invite parents.
  - Next year's RE Awards should include multiple schools and consideration should be given to how this could be managed.

- SACRE should provide the certificates or award.
- Given the timescales for arranging the event at the last minute, the event was viewed as a huge success.
- It was felt that a SACRE working group should be created to arrange the RE Awards for summer 2026.
- The Cabinet Member would like to develop a link between Neighbourhood Working, Ward Councillors and their local schools. Each ward was provided two and a half days a week support via a Neighbourhood Co-ordinator. The Cabinet Member would explore this link and report back at the next SACRE meeting on any updates relating to this.
- Before the pandemic the RE Awards Ceremony was delivered in conjunction with the Children's Culture Event. The Ceremony was held during the evening, teachers were also nominated for RE Awards as well as pupils, and there were guest speakers that attended the event. Applications for the awards were assessed by the Chair of SACRE and the RE Specialist Advisor to SACRE.
- Members felt that it was important to publicise the RE Awards Ceremony for 2026 to ensure attendance and that the Ceremony should be held as an evening event so that parents could also attend.
- Consideration would be given to aligning the RE Awards Ceremony in 2026 with the Together for Tomorrow Project Celebration Event. The CYPS Officer present would be visiting Arc Cinema in the upcoming weeks to view their venue as a potential venue option for the Ceremony.

#### **Agreed Actions:-**

- 1) That a working group be developed to plan and organise the 2026 RE Awards Ceremony, in conjunction with the Together for Tomorrow Project.
- 2) That the following SACRE members volunteered to form the working group and provide an update to SACRE members at the December meeting:
  - V. Gregory
  - L. Melvin
  - S. Yasseen
  - F. Radford.

## 61. SACRE BUDGET UPDATE

This item provided an overview of the 2025-2026 SACRE budget, including the proposed forecast spend for 2025-2026, during which the following was discussed:

- The 2025/2026 SACRE budget, including the proposed forecast spend, was included within the agenda pack.
- Previously there was not an Annual Budget Report provided to SACRE members for the SACRE budget. Therefore, this budget item was added to the agenda to ensure that any decisions made relating to the proposed spending of the budget, would be considered and/or agreed by SACRE members.
- In future a detailed Annual Budget Report would be provided to SACRE members every year, alongside a standard budget briefing which would be presented to SACRE members at every SACRE meeting. CYPS were working to establish which directorate within the Council would be responsible for the Annual Budget Report.
- The available SACRE budget for 2025/2026 was £5685.00, the proposed forecasted spend was £5178.00, this would create a balance of £517.00 left. The proposed spend was presented to SACRE members as follows:
  - £115.00- NASACRE annual subscription 2025/2026
  - £1,000.00- RE Conference keynote speaker
  - £813.00- RE Conference room hire and catering (based on an estimate of 50 delegates)
  - £1,750.00- RE Advisor to SACRE (V.Gregory for 5 days per year)
  - £1,500.00- RE Subject Leader facilitation (H Lambert, Chair of SACRE).
- Members noted that the proposed forecast spend required amending to include any associated costs for the RE Awards Ceremony, such as room hire, refreshments and certificate costs.
- Members were advised that there had been low uptake in hiring the artefact boxes based at Rockingham, although this had been publicised via ROSIS and subject leader sessions. The RE Advisor and/or Chair would provide the Assistant Director for Education and Inclusion with a short paragraph of text detailing what boxes were

available, so that this could be circulated to schools within the borough.

- The RE Advisor to SACRE advised that they received a quote for Lat Blaylock to attend the RE Conference in January 2026, the quote was £1155.00 for the full day. This would be an increase to the proposed spend forecast factored into the 2025/2026 budget, only £1000.00 had been budgeted for the RE Conference keynote cost. Historically the Conference was two days, one day for primary and one day for secondary, however the cost for both days would be £2310.00. Members discussed and agreed that research should be completed to see what other available options there were, rather than paying the same company and/ or individual to deliver the training every time.
- Previously there hadn't been many attendees at the RE Conference. Members were advised that during the previous year, the Conference was made free to all Rotherham schools wishing to attend and only under 50 attendees attended, this also included several teachers from Sheffield.
- It was clarified that any decision to make the conference free for Rotherham schools in future, should be considered and/or approved by SACRE members at a SACRE meeting.
- Members were asked to bear in mind the low attendance when considering the costs associated with the Conference. Members felt that spending up to £2000.00 for 30 Rotherham schools to attend a Conference would not be the best use of the SACRE budget. Therefore, the following two alternative proposals were discussed with SACRE Members:
  - That the option of hiring a keynote speaker be removed and the Conference be organised and hosted in January by SACRE Members and the SACRE RE Advisor, alongside inviting RE Leaders from schools and faith leaders to attend and present. This option would save the SACRE budget between £1000.00- £2000.00.
  - That the Chair and SACRE RE Advisor host an additional Subject Leader Session in the spring term of 2026, instead of holding the RE Conference in January 2026, and that the allocated budget for the RE Conference be re-purposed and invested into the RE Awards Ceremony in Summer 2026.

**Agreed Actions-**

- 1) That the Assistant Director for Education and Inclusion establish whether any remaining funds from the SACRE Budget can be rolled over into the next financial year.
- 2) That the proposed forecasted spend budget table be amended to include the following:
  - A £1000.00 cost for the RE Awards Ceremony be added, to include room hire, refreshments and certificate costs.
- 3) That the revised proposed forecasted budget be brought back to the next SACRE meeting for consideration and/or approval in December 2025.

**62. SACRE ANNUAL REPORT'S UPDATE FOR 2023-2024 AND 2024-2025**

- The Assistant Director for Education and Inclusion drafted a SACRE Annual Report for 2024-2025, the draft would be presented to SACRE members at the next meeting in December 2025.
- The SACRE Annual Report 2024-2025 would be presented to the Improving Lives Select Commission in February 2026, Full Council in April 2026 and sent to NASACRE by the end of April 2026, following all required approvals.
- In relation to future SACRE Annual Reports, the following timeline was agreed:
  - End of June- Annual Report draft to be completed (pending GCSE results being added in August).
  - September- internal service approvals to be completed for the draft report and draft report to be presented to the SACRE meeting in September for consideration and/or approval.
  - September- if approval from SACRE received, the annual report will be presented to the Improving Lives Select Commission in September.
  - November- Annual Report to be presented to Full Council in November.

- Once all approvals received, the Annual Report would be sent to NASACRE and the Department for Education in November.

#### **Agreed actions-**

- 1) That the draft SACRE Annual Report for 2024-2025, be presented to SACRE members for consideration and/or approval in December 2025.

### **63. AGREED SYLLABUS CONFERENCE UPDATE**

The Chair provided a verbal update on the activities of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) following the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025. During which the following was noted:

The ASC Agreed that:

- More context be added to the Local Agreed Syllabus relating to the world view approach and that work schemes be amended to be clearer, ensuring questioning would be a starting point.
- That adaptation of the content within the Local Agreed Syllabus be completed to assist SEND schools to use and access the Agreed Syllabus. Additional specific alternative schemes of work should also be produced for SEND schools.
- That the exact number of schools within the borough that use the Local Agreed Syllabus be established.
- That the current Census be reviewed and analysed, to provide SACRE ASC members with a good idea of the current beliefs that were held across the borough.
- That SACRE ASC form a further sub-group to lead on the updating of the statutory part of the Local Agreed Syllabus and to identify what changes were required, what could be kept and what further detail needed to be included within the syllabus.
- That the sub-group meet face-to-face before the next SACRE ASC meeting in December.
- That an update be provided to the sub-group on the activities of the Together for Tomorrow Project, to establish whether any resources developed as part of the project could be included within the review

of the Local Agreed Syllabus.

- That the sub-group seek to invite a representative of the Islamic faith to be part of the sub-group.
- That the Chair contact's the Humanist representative of the SACRE ASC to invite them to take part in the sub-group.
- That the feedback from this meeting be provided to the next SACRE meeting on the 18 September 2025, and an invitation to join the further sub-group is extended to all SACRE members at the September meeting.

**64. RE CONFERENCE 2026 UPDATE**

The Chair advised that this update was provided during the agenda item SACRE Budget Update (Minute 61).

**65. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Members were advised that there was no update to provide relating to Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

**66. SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE**

This agenda item provided an update on the SACRE Development Plan. The following was discussed and noted:

- The Development Plan was included within the agenda pack and was a working document.
- In relation to objective three- developing links with Doncaster and Sheffield SACRE, it was advised that Barnsley had not been added to this list as Rotherham SACRE were still working to develop links with Doncaster and Sheffield SACRE.

**67. URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.