

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education



SACRE Annual Report 2019-20

Introduction from the Chairman – Ted Cooke

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Waltham Forest SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACREs



Introduction from the Chair of SACRE

Yet another school year has flown by, all be it a very unusual one that none of us expected. The start of the new school year started with its usual mixture of hope and excitement, seasoned by our SACRE's desire to finish the revision of our Agreed Syllabus and plans to review the advice documents for our schools. Of course the best laid schemes of mice and men quoting Shakespeare really hit in January with the news coming from China of a new Covid infection which was beginning to spread and kill people.

Come February with the news that it had spread to a skiing resort in Italy inevitably bringing it to the UK in the lungs of returning half term holiday makers. By the end of the month we were hearing stories of horror from Italian communities and their death rate, that come the beginning of March we had hushed whisper meetings in which school closures were being discussed. Of course our first and draconian lockdown followed a few days later and school pupils and most of the rest of us were ordered to stay home. The most dramatic and disruptive move for most of our pupils and staff.

I want to at this point to thank and praise all those in local authorities and schools who in many creative ways kept contacts alive and education continuing, however unusual the situation. As much as possible moved on line and in the following months most of us have become adept at using Zoom and Teams for meetings and working together.

Like many of us I had to face the challenge of running Zoom or Teams meetings on line. Indeed early on I had to go and sit in our car to get a good signal after a builder had accidentally chopped through my Internet cable and my phone battery was running out.

We will not dwell on the events through the summer with the publication, withdrawl and then settling on teacher predictions for the results of both A and O level results. Just to say that this farrago affected so many pupils including one of my step grandsons who lost a university place and then had it re offered to him after he had chosen and been accepted elsewhere.

Having spent considerable effort it redrafting our Agreed Syllabus soon became apparent that to produce a syllabus of real quality for our schools with attendant online support materials we needed to engage with a third party provider.

In consequence following investigation, interviews and discussion it was agreed that Waltham Forest SACRE would engage RE Today to produce a syllabus which answered the needs of our schools and faith and non-faith communities. This was completed and the first pilot was made available to primary schools in June 2020. Due to a misunderstanding a different version to that approved by SACRE was published and subsequently withdrawn. The revised syllabus was not ready for launch until November so approval, introduction and implementation will come in our report next year.

My I finally draw this introduction to its conclusion by thanking my vice chair Mike Stygal, Donna Miller our SACRE Clerk, Darra McFadden our Advisor, Julie our minute taker, David Kilganon for facilitating our finance and his council and support and last but not the least all the members of SACRE for their contribution and support for our work this year.

Kind Regards

Ted Cooke

Chair, Waltham Forest SACRE

1. The local context

The community of the London Borough of Waltham Forest is culturally and socially diverse. Many people have travelled across the globe to come and make their home among us. This diversity is celebrated in the schools, shops, restaurants, businesses, places of worship and institutions throughout the borough.

Our school population records pupils coming from over 150 different language backgrounds. This diversity is also reflected in the faiths and beliefs of our community, as well as in the varied cultural traditions of those who identify as followers within the major religious groups.

Religious affiliation in Waltham Forest 2011 Census	
Religion	% of pop.
Buddhist	0.8
Christian	48.4
Hindu	2.3
Jewish	0.5
Muslim	21.9
Sikh	0.5
No Religion	18.0
Religion Other	0.4
Religion not stated	7.3

Source: Office for National Statistics

The borough is served by 33 maintained schools (24 primary , 9 secondary, 2 special, 2 6th form colleges), 5 voluntary aided Schools, 1 voluntary controlled, plus 24 academies (18 primary, 4 secondary, 3 special)

2. Religious Education

2.1. Locally Agreed Syllabus

The Local Authority established an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) the previous year to review of the Agreed Syllabus for Key Stages 3, 4 & 5. The ASC recommended to SACRE that the Key Stage 1 & 2 Agreed Syllabus should be updated at the same time to enable a continuity of provision from EYFS to KS5.

A series of meetings were held with 2 providers who would be able to produce a model syllabus that would be suitable and supportive to the effective provision of RE in Waltham Forest schools. It was agreed that RE Today, a national provider of training and support for the teaching of RE, would be contracted to supply a model policy. The model policy chosen is one currently used successfully by a number of London LAs.

The National Lockdown in March caused some difficulties to the production of the new syllabus. It was hoped to include a wide range of art work produced by

local young people in the final production. However, with schools closed this proved impossible. Unfortunately, due to a misunderstanding an incorrect model policy was published at a virtual launch in June. SACRE held an emergency meeting in July to respond to the situation and ensure that the project was put back on track.

The new syllabus is due to be launched in November 2020. It is planned that schools can prepare and pilot the new syllabus during the spring and summer terms with full implementation from September 2021.

2.2. Standards in RE (exam data 2018-19)

KS4 GCSE

All schools in the LA entered at least some pupils in KS4 for RE at GCSE. 9 out of 19 schools entered a majority of pupils for the subject, of these 6 schools entered nearly 100% of the cohort. The overall results show a marked improvement on 2017/18 with 13 of the schools exceeding or matching the national average points score.

Congratulations to Norlington, Eden Girls', Holy Family College, Connaught School for Girls, and Willowfield Schools who entered a high proportion of students and meet or exceeded national average point scores.

AQA RE (A): Religious Studies (4610) / Exam: GCSE (9-1)				
School	NOR	entered	Avg Pts	Nat av pts
Belmont Park School	12	5	2.2	5.2
Buxton School	140	126	3.8	5.2
Chingford Foundation School	226	221	4.7	5.2
Eden Girls' School Waltham Forest	97	93	6.3	5.2
Heathcote School & Science College	152	11	5.2	5.2
Lammas School and Sixth Form	101	21	5.3	5.2
Leytonstone School	153	18	5.4	5.2
Norlington School and 6th Form	107	94	5.6	5.2
South Chingford Foundation School	125	46	1.9	5.2
Walthamstow Academy	168	13	5.3	5.2
Walthamstow School for Girls	173	1	7	5.2
WJEC Eduqas: Religious Studies (4610) / Exam: GCSE (9-1)				
Willowfield School	153	117	6	5
Pearson Edexcel RE (B): Religious Studies (4610) / Exam: GCSE (9-1)				
Connaught School for Girls	117	116	6	5

George Mitchell School	97	21	5.8	5
Highams Park School	222	37	6.2	5
Kelmscott School	162	158	4.3	5
South Chingford Foundation School	125	76	4.7	5
Walthamstow School for Girls	173	73	5.9	5
Pearson Edexcel RE (A): Religious Studies (4610) / Exam: GCSE (9-1)				
Holy Family Catholic School	172	170	5	5

KS5 GCSE A Level Results 2018/19

In 2018/19 only 3 of the 10 schools or colleges with 6th forms across the LA entered students for RE at A level. This compares with 4 out of 10 in the previous year. The total of 33 entries in 2019 represents a continuing pattern of declining number of entries over the last few years. In this regard, Waltham Forest reflects the declining numbers taking the subject and lower average point scores nationally.

School/College	NOE	A*-A	A*-B	A*-E	Avg Pts
National (all entries)	15840	22.2	50.5	98.0	34.3
Chingford Foundation School	4	25.0	50.0	100.0	37.5
Leyton Sixth Form College	12	-	16.7	91.7	25.0
Sir George Monoux College	17	-	-	88.2	14.1

2.3. Teaching & Resources 2019-20

The Summer term of 2020 saw the closure of our schools. In consequence a number of programmes could not occur.

The Faith and Belief Forum Linking programme:

This programme was successfully run prior to the general schools closure in March.

Students and children on the programme:

- Take part in three engaging and memorable link days with their partner school during the academic year
- Deepen knowledge and understanding of different beliefs by engaging directly with students from different backgrounds
- Develop skills of communication, empathy and reflection

Teachers and schools on the Linking programme:

- The programme helps the schools with their SMSC and British Values provision; It fosters in students an understanding and respect for difference, as well as giving them the opportunity to reflect upon their own identity and beliefs
- Teachers gain training and resources for running inter-faith and inter-cultural events, as well activities and ideas relevant to RE and PHSCE teaching at 2/3 CPD days during the academic year
- Build partnerships with local school

During 2019/20 Faith and Belief worked with nine schools, six Primary and three Secondary. This involved fourteen classes and more than three hundred students and provided two days training for ten teachers. The Forum were unable to continue the programme face to face between March and July 2020 but remained connected with the teachers and provided all with home learning resources for their linking classes and to use more widely within their schools

2.4. Complaints about RE

No complaints regarding Religious Education were received by SACRE during the year.

2.5. Withdrawal from RE and collective worship

SACRE did not receive any notifications from schools of parental withdrawals from RE or collective worship.

3. Collective Worship

3.1. Determinations

SACRE has reviewed the Determinations Policy & Procedures following a consultation with schools. No requests for determinations relating to collective worship or complaints about how collective worship is delivered in school were received.

4. SACRE

4.1. Code of conduct for members

A “Code of conduct” setting out the expectations for all SACRE members as was adopted. The document will be available on the SACRE section of the WF website.

4.2. Annual Plan

In the summer of 2020 SACRE confirmed the priorities for the work of the meeting in the coming academic year 2020-21.

- Monitor and review the launch and implementation of the new Agreed Syllabus.
- Review the membership of SACRE and ensure vacant posts are filled in a timely manner.
- Ensure that SACRE guidance and information for schools and settings is easily accessible.
- Develop a survey tool to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and outcomes for Religious Education in schools and settings.
- Enhance the quality of professional development available to leaders and teachers to deliver high quality teaching and learning of RE.
- Provide guidance on Collective Worship that supports schools to inspire children and young people to take an active role in reflecting on their shared values and celebrating the diversity of belief and practice in their school, Waltham Forest and the wider world.
- Produce an Annual Report that informs the LA and schools of the feedback gained from our monitoring.

5. Links with other agencies

5.1. The Faith and Belief Forum

Faith and Belief Forum has worked in Waltham Forest since 2017 bringing together teachers, children and young people of all beliefs in the ‘Linking Schools’ programme.

The charity was founded in 1997 as the Three Faiths Forum. Over the years their work has expanded to include people of all faiths and beliefs, both religious and non-religious. In 2018, they changed their name to the Faith & Belief Forum to reflect their inclusive ethos.

5.2. Other links

Prevent Strategy – SACRE received a briefing by PC Steven MacDonald in the form of a WRAP (Workshop to raise awareness of Prevent) session.

Safeguarding - The meeting was given an update on the importance of safeguarding and SACRE agreed to receive a detailed briefing from the Local Authority Designated Offer for Safeguarding in the following term (Autumn 2020).

Relationship and Sex Education – the Director of Learning provided an update on the new requirements and development for the implementation RSE in the borough schools.

Newham SACRE – Claire Clinton (adviser to Newham SACRE) gave a presentation of the Newham Agreed syllabus and how it links with teacher resources on the Newham Curriculum Hub.

Appendix A Membership

Group A Other Christian denominations and other faiths represented in Waltham Forest		
African Caribbean Free Church	1	<i>vacancy</i>
Bah'ai	1	<i>vacancy</i>
Buddhism	1	Mr Pilling
Free Church	1	<i>vacancy</i>
Hinduism	1	Mrs Tara Khare
Islam	4	Mr Akhtar, Mr Looch, Mr Qureshi, <i>vacancy</i>
Judaism	1	Mr Braham
Roman Catholic	1	<i>vacancy</i>
Sikhism	1	Mr Tarsem Bhogal
Pagan	1	Mr Stygal
Group B The Church of England		
Appointed by the Diocese of Chelmsford Education Committee with the Synod of the Waltham Forest Deanery	4	Mr Cooke, Fr Summers, Ms Waller, Fr Walsh.
Group C The Teachers and Educators of the borough		
Headteacher	1	<i>vacancy</i>
Early years	1	Ms Lloyd
Primary	1	Ms Soar
Special schools	1	<i>vacancy</i>
Primary Academy	1	<i>vacancy</i>
Secondary Academy	2	Mr I Jasat + <i>vacancy</i>
Secondary Schools	2	Ms L Hamilton + <i>vacancy</i>
KS5	1	Mr O'Brien
Higher Education	1	Mr O'Neil
School Governor	1	Mr Whitehead
Group D The London Borough of Waltham Forest and the community		
Elected Members	4	Cllr Rehman, Cllr Sweeden, Cllr Saumarez Cllr Lyons.
Director of Learning (or appropriate nominee)	1	Mr Kilgallon
Humanist non-faith representative		Ms Kaufman
Others (non-voting)		
RE Advisor to WF SACRE		Ms McFadyen
Waltham Forest Faith Community Forum		<i>vacancy</i>
Faith and Community Officer (Met Police)		PC S McDonald

Appendix B Meetings and attendance

Key Attended: **Y** Absent: **abs** Apologies received: **ap** Membership ended:

	Autumn 2019		Spring 2020		Summer 2020	
	2nd Oct	28 th Nov	29 th Jan	25 th Mar	29 th April	8 th Jul
Meetings						
Mr Pilling	Y	abs	Y	ap	ap	ap
Mrs Tara Khare	Y	ap	Y	abs	Y	Y
Mr Looch	abs	ap	abs	abs	abs	abs
Mr Akhtar	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs
Mr Qureshi	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs
Mr Braham	abs	ap	Y	abs	Y	Y
Mr Tarsem Bhogal	abs	abs	ap	ap	ap	abs
Mr Stygal	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	abs
Mr Cooke	Y	Y	ap	Y	Y	Y
Fr Summers	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs
Ms Waller	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs
Ms Lloyd	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs
Ms Soar	ap	abs	Y	abs	Y	Y
Mr I Jasat						Y
Ms L Hamilton						Y
Ms K O'Brien	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs
Mr D O'Neil	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs
Mr Whitehead	Y	abs	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cllr Rehman,	Y	abs	Y	abs	Y	ap
Cllr Sweeden,	abs	ap	abs	abs	abs	Y
Cllr Saumarez	abs	abs	abs	abs	ap	abs
Cllr Lyons	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs	abs
Mr Kilgallon	Y	Y	ap	ap	ap	Y
Ms Kaufman	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Ms McFadyen	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PC A Akano	Y	ap	abs	Y	Y	Y

Appendix C

Constitution of the Waltham Forest Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education [SACRE]

1. Defined Terms / Acronyms:

Adviser	The LA's professional RE technical lead
Agreed Syllabus	The approved RE syllabus adopted by the LA
DfE	Department for Education
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
LA	The Local Authority known as Waltham Forest Council.
Members	Nominated and approved SACRE person eligible to vote
Ofsted	Office for Standards in education- the sector inspectorate
Other Persons	Any member of public eligible to join SACRE but does not hold voting right solutions for SACRE work topics
Representative	The LA's professional representative from Children's Services
RE	Religious Education
Working Parties, recommending	A delegated group from within SACRE tasked with recommending

2. The purpose of the Waltham Forest SACRE is:-

1. **To advise the Local Authority (LA)** on matters connected with collective worship in community schools and the religious education (RE) to be taught in accordance with the local agreed syllabus in community and voluntary aided schools. SACRE also provides advice to Academy, Independent and free schools within the LA boundary.
2. SACRE may respond to other matters regarding religious education which the borough may refer to the SACRE, or as the SACRE may see fit e.g. challenging the provider with regards to opportunities to study the subject, training of staff, and standards of achievement.
3. a. SACRE is the local body to agree a "determination", for a particular school, on application by the Headteacher. Whilst the Law requires the majority of acts of collective worship in schools, to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, the Act also gives to SACRE the power to amend this requirement by a determination and put in its place an alternative form of collective worship, for some or all pupils.

b. SACRE may appoint a sub-committee to exercise this role which will consist of the chair, the vice chair and one representative of each SACRE group.
4. **To work with and actively support the Borough** in implementing the Waltham Forest Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

3. The work of SACRE will be achieved in partnership with the interested parties by:-

- a) Being given information about the existing provision for RE in schools, i.e. levels of staffing, resources, curriculum used, progress data, achievement and results.
- b) Providing support for RE within the LA and to schools, subject to available resources
- c) Publicising SACRE's role and function to Headteachers, Governors, Teachers, Parents, Academies, Free Schools, Independent Schools and the wider Faith Communities and the local community as a whole.
- d) Advising those in c) about the nature of RE, its legal requirement in schools and their responsibilities for ensuring its provision.
- e) Supporting and fostering community cohesion, citizenship and interfaith and cultural links
- f) Encouraging members of SACRE to lead and participate in training activities
- g) Advising resources for the support of the WF Agreed Syllabus and the promotion of good citizenship, community cohesion and interfaith links
- h) The Council keeping up to date with national developments from HMI, Ofsted, and DfE with regard to the development and teaching of RE and provision for collective worship
- i) Offering advice, support and participation in the Borough's complaints procedure when appropriate/on request.
- j) Discussing in a local context national policy, in relation to RE.

5. **(i) To publish an annual report** (as per Circular 1/94) which shall:-

- a) Specify any matters in respect of which SACRE has given advice to the borough
- b) Broadly describe the nature of advice given
- c) Where any matter was not referred to the SACRE, give SACRE's reason for offering advice
- d) Report on the public examination results in RE / RS for the previous school year
- e) Report on activities undertaken to promote and develop RE and collective worship in the borough's schools and community
- f) Describe work towards the production of/ review of/modification of the Waltham Forest Agreed Syllabus
- g) Describe work done by SACRE to promote community cohesion in the LA.

(ii) SACRE may appoint a sub-committee to carry out this function which must include representatives of all four groups.

3. **Membership**

The Waltham Forest Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) shall consist of representative members appointed by Waltham Forest Council (the Local Authority) to represent:

- Group 'A': Christians and other religious denominations as will appropriately reflect the religious traditions of those within the Local Authority (See appendix A)
- Group 'B': The Church of England
- Group 'C': Teachers Associations Recognised by the Authority and Other educational establishments
- Group 'D': The Local Authority and non-faith organisations

The Membership of the SACRE will be reviewed annually at the first meeting of the autumn term.

4. Composition and quorum

All Groups the composition shall be as presented in Appendix A of this document.

Meetings of the SACRE shall be quorate when at least one representative member from each of the four representative groups is present; four representatives. If the meeting is not quorate, the meeting can continue, but decisions would have to be ratified at the next meeting of the SACRE.

A Working Party meeting does not constitute a formal SACRE meeting (see paragraph 6).

5. Co-opted Members

The representative groups on the SACRE may co-opt other persons for such purposes and such length of time as the representative groups on SACRE decide. Co-opted members may resign at any time and may be removed by representative Groups at any time.

6. Working Parties

SACRE may establish and appoint members to Working Parties which may include non-members of SACRE that have the expertise to contribute to a particular subject/topic. Any established Working Party will have a 'terms of reference' for its work leading to recommendations to SACRE rather than the delegation of decision making. The composition for a working party will include a member representative from each Group of the constitution of SACRE.

7. Position of Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE

The elections of the Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE shall be conducted annually by the representative members of the SACRE, at its first meeting of the council cycle.

Each represented member will have one vote for the purpose of electing a Chair and Vice Chair.

The Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE will be elected from amongst members of Groups A, B, C and D. If there is more than one candidate for either position, the candidate receiving the most votes shall be elected.

In the absence of a Chair and vice chair', an executive member shall be elected to lead the SACRE for that meeting.

The prime duties of the Chair, with the support of the Vice Chair are to:

- Manage the meetings of SACRE
- Attend meetings with the LA as necessary
- Represent the WF SACRE to other bodies (e.g. NASACRE) as required and
- To lead on any other matters as agreed by SACRE

8. Advisor to SACRE

The LA will allocate appropriate advisor time to the SACRE. The specific responsibilities of this advisor are to:

- Provide advice to the SACRE and any Working Parties on professional issues
- Advise and update SACRE members on any new government guidance or policy documents
- Support SACRE to carry out its role of monitoring and supporting schools within the LA for the delivery of the RE and Collective Worship curriculums.
- Provide updates and information to the LA as necessary

9. Voting Procedures in SACRE

On any issue to be decided by the SACRE, except as provided in Section 7 paragraph 2, only the four representative groups shall be entitled to a vote and each group shall have a single vote.

Individual representative members cannot vote separately. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote; nor are the advisor(s) to SACRE.

All issues shall be decided by a simple majority vote, there shall not be a casting vote.

All decisions taken by the SACRE, including the election of Chair and Vice Chair, shall be recorded by the Clerk in the minutes of the meeting.

10. Voting procedures within each Representative Group

Before any representative group casts its single vote on any issue to be decided by the SACRE it shall meet to discuss the issue. The decision of the representative group shall be determined by a simple majority vote in which each member of the group has one vote.

Issues shall be decided by a simple majority vote and there shall not be a casting vote. In the case of a tied vote the group shall abstain from voting on the issue in SACRE; this abstention should be recorded by the Clerk.

Where there is an instance when a meeting is not quorate, votes may be polled via email to the Clerk to SACRE A written proposal must be provided to members in advance of this vote requiring a yes/no vote only.

11. Terms of Office for Representative Members

The representative members shall hold office until such members' terms of office come to an end or they resign or they become otherwise ineligible for membership.

When a vacancy arises, the LA must attempt to appoint a replacement member to the SACRE to represent the same group as the retiring member.

Any representative/ member may resign at any time.

12. Declarations of Interest

Interests, whether personal or prejudicial, should be declared annually. If a member has a prejudicial/personal interest in a particular, one-off, agenda item they should declare that interest and withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the decision making process.

13. Disqualification

Members or co-opted members who fail to attend three consecutive meetings without a satisfactory explanation will have their membership reviewed by the SACRE. The Local Authority may remove any representative or co-opted member that has failed to attend three consecutive meetings without valid reason.

14. Administrative arrangements

The SACRE must utilise its allocated funding to secure a Clerk to SACRE that will:

- Draft an agenda in accordance to requirements and legislation no less than 21 days prior to the meeting
- The agenda must be distributed to all members no less than seven days in advance of the listed meeting; all information shall be sent at least electronically and in hard format as necessary
- The minutes of each meeting shall be produced and approved with the Chair and Clerk within 20 working days of the meeting, the Clerk shall distribute these minutes to all members electronically
- The minutes of each meeting shall be listed on the agenda of the subsequent meeting for approval and shall be re issued to all members with the agenda for the forthcoming listed meeting
- Maintain an attendance register of attendance at SACRE and advise on attendance matters as detailed in point 13 of the constitution
- Publish all documents relating to the SACRE on the LA's website for public scrutiny

15. Financial Arrangements

The LA will provide the SACRE with an allocation of funding for the purposes of maintaining the work of the committee, securing professional advice as required, resourcing syllabus development and maintaining an overview of the provision in schools.

16. Disputes and Complaints

The intention of SACRE is to be collaborative and collective to ensure that no particular sector or member is unduly favoured within Waltham Forest. Any disputes or complaints shall be debated and resolved by SACRE at its meetings. Should any party/parties feel that matters have not been satisfactorily resolved they should reference the Council's Complaints Policy and Procedures for guidance.