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## **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Monday 20 March 2023  
Frobisher Room, Council House  
1.30 pm  
Council House (Next to the Civic Centre) Plymouth

**Members:**

Councillor Mrs Aspinall, Acting Chair  
Cllr Tina Tuohy, Cllr Sally Cresswell, Cllr Jonathan Drear, Cllr John Mahony, Cllr Chip Tofan

Katie Freeman, Dr Judith Beckman, Lesley Clark, Ben Kerr, Nic Gibson, Dr Catherine Bowness, Ed Pawson, Emma Butler, Alex Parks, Ms Gwen Hughes, AnnMarie AllChurch, Claire Wills, Claire Linden, Sara Wells, Professor David Salter, Father David Bailey (observer), David Evans, Michael House, Jim Barnicott (observer), Asif Siddique, Jason Pincombe.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

For further information on webcasting, attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link – [Get Involved](#)

**Tracey Lee**  
Chief Executive

# **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

## **PART I**

### **Agenda**

#### **1. Apologies**

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by SACRE Members.

#### **2. Welcome to new Members**

The Chair will welcome new members to the forum.

#### **3. Declarations of Interest**

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

#### **4. Minutes**

**(Pages 1 - 6)**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 05/12/22.

#### **5. Chair's Urgent Business**

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

#### **6. LA Officer to SACRE Update (Michael House)**

**(Pages 7 - 10)**

The LA Officer will update the group regarding previous actions, SACRE related budgets and LA developments.

#### **7. Ofsted Inspection Updates (Michael House)**

**(Pages 11 - 12)**

The LA Officer will review any Ofsted Inspections that have taken place since the previous SACRE Meeting.

#### **8. LTLRE and RE Hub Update (Katie Freeman)**

The Hub Lead will update the group regarding LTLRE and RE HUB developments.

#### **9. Holocaust Memorial Day Update (Lesley Clarke)**

The group will receive an update and discuss supporting activity.

**10. Plymouth Centre for Faith and Cultural Diversity (Sara Wells)**

The group will receive an update on recent PCFCD developments.

**11. Members Updates (All)**

Members are invited to update the group regarding relevant developments and activity.

**12. Any Other Business (Chair) (Pages 13 - 22)**

Any other items to be discussed.

**13. Date and venue of next meeting - Asif Siddique**

The next SACRE meeting will take place at the Plymouth Council House on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2023, at 13:30 (Venue TBC).

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## **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**Monday 5 December 2022**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Mrs Mary Aspinall, Acting Chair

Cllr Jonathan Drean, Cllr Tina Touhy, Cllr Sally Cresswell, Cllr Chip Tofan, Cllr John Mahony

Dr Judith Beckman, Lesley Clark, Ed Pawson, AnnMarie Allchurch, Katie Freeman

Co-opted Representatives: Sara Wells, Claire Linden, Professor David Salter

Also in attendance: Jim Barnicott (Head of Education and Virtual School) (Observer), Michael House (Local Authority Officer to SACRE), Jason Pincombe (Democratic and Member Support Officer), Asif Siddique (Democratic and Member Support Officer).

### **1. Apologies - Chair (Cllr Mary Aspinall)**

Nic Gibson, Dr Catherine Bowness, Father David Bailey (observer), Ben Kerr, Gwen Hughes, Emma Butler, Alex Parks, Claire Wills

The meeting started at 1.00pm and finished at 2.40pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

### **2. Welcome to New Members - Chair (Cllr Mary Aspinall)**

Chair welcomed all members.

### **3. Declarations of interest - All**

None

### **4. Minutes from the last meeting - Chair (Cllr Mary Aspinall)**

Minutes agreed from the last meeting on 27 June 2022 by all members with the following amendment to reflect that;

1. Lesley Clark was present in the last meeting held on 27/06/2022
2. It was recommended that a development plan is utilised by SACRE.

### **Actions:**

- (a) Asif S to contact Dr Catherine Bowness to see if a web page link in relation to Holocaust Memorial was sent to be distributed to SACRE members.
- (b) In order to improve SACRE minutes going forward, Chair and Michael House will double check the minutes and actions and Asif S to put actions on the minutes in bold.
- (c) Chair agreed to add 'Agreed Syllabus – what is the picture in schools?' item on agenda. AnnMarie Allchurch was due to provide an update in the last meeting but was unable to attend. Agreed syllabus and Teacher Views, Katie Freeman to supply and this to be sent to wider SACRE group.
- (d) Send congratulations to three schools doing positive in latest Ofsted Report regarding RE or Humanities, wording to be suggested by Michael House
- (e) Michael House to invite and setup sub group to discuss Ofsted report and SCARE's formal reactions and actions.
- (f) Michael House to review GCSE results data and provide SACRE an analysis, previous years' data to be included along with NATRE Data (provided by Katie Freeman).
- (g) Lesley Clark to send details to Michael House, Sara Wells and Katie Freeman regarding Holocaust School Poem Flyer. Before 16 December, ideally within a week of the meeting date, to share via Health and Wellbeing in Education Briefing and other sources. Add link to Holocaust Memorial Day webpage.
- (h) Mary Aspinall will liaise and take responsibility for co-ordinating Holocaust School Poem Booklet printing.

## **5. Chairs Urgent Business - Chair (Cllr Mary Aspinall)**

None

## **6. LA Officer to SACRE Update - Michael House**

**MH also to provide data from Office of National Statistics, to be sent out as additional appendix to these minutes**

## **7. Ofsted Inspection Updates - Michael House**

Michael House advised that eight schools had Ofsted Inspections since the start of term – RE or Humanities subject areas mentioned within four reports (three positively and one as an opportunity for development – see Local Authority Officer to SACRE Update Autumn 2022) .

Ed Pawson clarified that Legislation 1988 was written for Maintained Schools, SACRE's role is to monitor and support, influence these schools carefully and sensitively, identify from reports where schools are doing ok and where they are not. Ed has spoken to Richard Quay (RE Ofsted Lead), who mentioned RE is listed in Personal Development and reports are complex.

Mary Aspinall suggests sending congratulations to the three schools who are doing positively and offer support to the school where it's in area of development, wording to be used advised by Michael House.

Sally Cresswell advising this is putting SACRE forward as the Critical Friend. Michael House suggesting a formalisation of how SACRE responds to situations and reports like this, formulate a specific support package in cases like this.

Mary Aspinall suggesting a Working Group from SACRE members to discuss this idea further and be proactive.

David Slater suggests something tangible and practical due to school funding pressures, suggest to offer SACRE budget prizes.

Sara Wells could support via cultural and diversion centre.

Ed Pawson at request from Chair advises that bigger issue nationally, not a clear definition as to what RE should be and what academes should follow, other subjects are set by a national curriculum. Waiting on clearer national standards.

Katie Freeman lobbying with MPs to get this to happen.

Mary Aspinall suggests continuing with current action based on information provided around the current schools that Michael has just provided.

Michael House request for sub-group to look into process more and how respond to Ofsted Reports formally. Michael to invite Sara Wells, Ed Pawson, Mary Aspinall, Ann Marie and David Salter.

No further update on non-compliant school.

Ed Pawson brought up that GCSE results are out now and asks Michael House if his team could provide an analysis for SACRE to review as part of this. Michael House agrees. Also request from Sally Cresswell for previous data over around 5 years.

Katie Freeman advises NATRE Data is available.

Ann Marie advises caution when looking at historic data, particularly around the years where Covid had an effect.

## **8. LTLRE and RE Hub Update- Katie Freeman**

The Hub Lead will update the group regarding LTLRE and RE HUB developments.

Katie Freeman: Hub has not met, there will be three meetings in the Spring term to catch up. We are going to see the national Picture of RE. We are having our own conference on RE.

## **9. Holocaust Memorial Day Update- Lesley Clark**

LM and DLM have been asked to join judging team by Mary Aspinall.

Lesley Clark, needs to go out to schools for next term, each year group to write poems regarding Holocaust. Sensitive matter in Plymouth as the shootings in 2021. Need flyer sent to schools by 16 December. Booklet to be made and then judged by Easter, need help designing flyer and distribution to all schools.

Sara Wells advising they are stretched, can help with communication, can delay own flyer and send out combination with both. Don't have every school subscribed to them so may be some gaps.

Lesley getting the idea of Ordinary People out is important.

Katie Freeman also request a copy of flyer to send out on RE Hub link.

Mary Aspinall and Jonathan Drean offer help to Judge in March.  
 Lesley Clark requesting funding for printing a booklet, A5, 50 pages with best entries, send 1 to all participating schools and a copy to prize winners.  
 Mary Aspinall, will check with multiple print companies for costs, ask SACRE groups for agreement to use SACRE funding for this project. All agree unanimously. 58:00

#### **10. Plymouth Centre for Faith and Cultural Diversity - Sara Wells / Claire Linden**

Sara Wells provided a brief update, Claire would like to thank Katie and Ed for invite to Learn/Teach/Lead Conference in October, was really useful and great contacts made.  
 Interfaith week held event in Guildhall to mark start of the week, went well with schools, 3 schools involved. Try and maintain this on annual basis.  
 Training with new speakers, difficult to recruit new speakers, if anyone knows anyone interested please advise Sara or Claire.  
 January or via Zoom, Soli Workshops and uptake from schools is good.

#### **11. Members Updates – All**

Ann-Marie Allchurch is no longer Head at Saint Andrews, now at Mount Wise Community School. Would like to speak to other head teachers and get views on RE to add to views collected in Summer term. Will add to email sent to Katie.

Jonathan Drean, no update, happy to support where necessary.

Tina Tuohy, nothing to report.

David Salter, Quakers are interested in meeting at the university, met Chaplain, they are going through reorganisation with new management hoping to be sorted by January. Opportunity to get back from students support from them, been too compartmentalised, be good to have more discussion across the divides and hoping the revamp in the university will be successful.

Sally Cresswell, did some online training, useful and interesting, meeting other SACRE's and other expertise, thank you. Mary Aspinall also advised that if anyone would like training then can be setup by Asif Siddique.

John Mahony, no update.

Chip Tofan, no update.

Dr Judith, visited a couple of primary schools, colleague Deborah Temple also visited, would like to have Secondary Schools also involved. Granddaughters advised of teachers making mistake in regards to Judaism.

Ed Pawson, really good feedback about visits to the synagogue, people raving about visits, open days through the year.

Asif Siddique, no update.



Katie Freeman, no update.

Michael House, review the houses and co-opt going forward?

Mary Aspinall, considers that we are still ok, Ann Marie has changed schools but is still a school head, A Judith, B Ed and Katie, Ann Marie and a gaggle of councillors. All houses are in place. Additional people, co-opted reps, Claire and Sara plus various officers. David is here so will swap and update that.

Ann Marie, agreed syllabus, teacher views sent to Katie Freeman prior to summer break, discussed in last meeting, advised to resend to all.

Jim Barnicott, council officer viewing proceedings.

## **12. Any Other Business - Chair (Cllr Mary Aspinall)**

### **13. Date and venue of next meeting - Asif Siddique**

1:30pm Monday 20 March 2023, room to be confirmed, Council House.

Members agreed to start the next meeting at 1:30pm instead of 1:00pm to allow school staff to attend the meeting.

### **14. Exempt Business**

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(Members of the public to note that, if agreed, you will be asked to leave the meeting).

### **15. PART II (PRIVATE MEETING) - RE Advisor role**

Michael House summarised current activity, to date, regarding the potential engagement of a dedicated RE Professional Advisor to SACRE. Preparatory work has been completed by the Local Authority and a candidate has been identified.

Following a summary of the potential costs implications and benefits, the SACRE Group agreed to ask the Local Authority to proceed with this engagement process. Next steps will include the Local Authority, The SACRE Chair and the Candidate meeting to discuss arrangements, responsibilities and cost implications.

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# PLYMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELGIOUS EDUCATION LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICER TO SACRE (LAOS) – UPDATE (SPRING 2023)



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Please find below a summary of information that is shared at the Spring 2022 SACRE meeting (20/03/23).

## 2. SACRE BUDGET POSITION

ANNUAL BUDGET	IN-YEAR SPEND	PLANNED / EXPECTED SPEND	BALANCE TO DATE	COMMENTS
£13105 (£12000 + £1105)	£225 (NASACRE Subscription + Supply Cover - Chair)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One-Off Claims expected (Supply Cover) TBC</li> <li>Proposed RE Professional Advisor to SACRE Role (£5K / £6.5K TBC)</li> <li>RE Conference (Member Attendance TBC)</li> </ul>	As of 20/03/23 (>£12K)	

## 3. SCHOOL SUBJECT / PARTICIPATION

SCHOOL	SUBJECT	No OF ENTRANTS	ACHIEVEMENT	COMMENTS
Information requested from Plymouth City Council Education Performance Team and will be summarised at the March SACRE Meeting.				

## 4. LOCAL AUTHORITY SACRE FACILITATION PLAN

PRIORITY AREA	ELEMENT	PROGRESS
1. SACRE Facilitation & Organisation	A: Develop Standing Agenda, Meeting Delivery, Minute Taking	<b>COMPLETED / ONGOING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to Increase Speed of Minute Approval (Chair/LAOS/Clerk)</li> </ul>
	B: Commission RE Professional Advisor to SACRE	<b>IN PROGRESS</b> Now in later stages of confirming agreement. RE Professional Advisor to SACRE to commence support in July 2023.
	C: Communicate LA Facilitation Plan	<b>COMPLETED / ONGOING</b>
	D: Facilitate Sub Groups	<b>IN PROGRESS</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sub Group Activity: 'Developing Standing Protocol for Concerns and Ofsted Judgements (Spring 2023) Meeting Took Place 02/02/23 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting TBC March/April) 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sub Group Activity: 'Developing the 'Time To Breathe' (Activity within 1 <sup>st</sup> Sub Group). 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sub Group Activity: 'Review of SACRE Constitution' Scheduled for Summer 2023.

	E: Review SACRE Constitution	<i>SCHEDULED FOR SPRING/SUMMER TERM 2023 (Sub Group Activity)</i>
<b>2. SACRE Representation</b>	A: Recruit SACRE Chair and Vice Chair	<i>ONGOING BUT NOT ACHIEVED (Cllr Aspinall acting as SACRE Chair).</i>
	B: Ensure that Membership is Representative	<i>ONGOING</i>
<b>3. Communicating The Work Of SACRE</b>	A: Communicate RE and CW Requirements & Guidance	<i>IN PROGRESS</i> <i>Time To Breathe document to be revised (Consulting Plymouth schools) by Sub-Group, Spring/Summer Term, 2023. First Sub-Group Meeting taken place / Next Meeting TBC.</i>
	B: Communicate SACRE Activity	<i>COMPLETED / ONGOING</i> <i>SACRE Activity Update to be included in February HWiE Briefing</i>
	C: Promote the Work of the PCFCD	<i>COMPLETED / ONGOING</i> <i>PCFCD Activity to be promoted within the January (and subsequent) HWiE Briefing/s.</i>
	D: Review and Update PCC Website	<i>SCHEDULED FOR THE SUMMER TERM 2023.</i>
	E: Communicate RE & CW Information to Schools	<i>IN PROGRESS</i> <i>Ongoing via the HWiE Briefings aSub Group Activity as per 3.A. .</i>
<b>4. Facilitating The Agreed Syllabus Conference</b>	A: Facilitate SACRE Sub Groups	<i>SCHEDULED FOR AUTUMN 2023 ONWARDS</i> <i>Agreed Syllabus Conference Planning / Development (Autumn 2023 / Spring 2024)</i>
<b>5. Responding To Advice From SACRE</b>	<i>A: Develop Standing Protocol for School Concerns</i>	<i>SCHEDULED FOR AUTUMN 2023</i>
	<i>B: Communicate Ongoing Review of Ofsted Reports</i>	<i>COMPLETED / ONGOING</i> <i>Ofsted Report Review – Delivered at each SACRE Meeting (05/12/22 – 20/03/23)</i>

LAOS = Local Authority Officer to SACRE, REPAS = Religious Education Professional Advisor to SACRE

## LOCAL / NATIONAL INFORMATION SHARED WITH PLYMOUTH SCHOOLS AND SETTINGS INCLUDING OPPORTUNITIES / GUIDANCE / TRAINING VIA HWiE BRIEFINGS & SACRE CORRESPONDENCE

WHAT	DETAILS
<b>STRICTLY RE IS BACK IN 2023</b>	Strictly RE online conference takes place on 28 - 29 January 2023. Please note Strictly RE 2023 will be held online, from the comfort of your home. Strictly RE 2023 conference themes: Depth; Diversity; Abrahamic Worldviews. Don't forget: By booking onto Strictly, you can attend the live sessions but you also get all the recordings and downloadable resources that are available from the weekend and weekday sessions that you didn't attend! See <a href="https://www.natre.org.uk/courses-events/strictlyRE-2023/">https://www.natre.org.uk/courses-events/strictlyRE-2023/</a> for details and booking form.
<b>A VIEW ON THE WORLD – CALLING ALL BUDDING FILM MAKERS</b>	How have religious and non-religious worldviews changed over time where you live? How would you describe the mix of worldviews in your community today? What might it look like in 50 years' time? We are inviting children and young people to create a 90 second film script, storyboard or recorded film. The winning entry will have their film professionally made! The competition is open to all children and young people aged 5-18 whether educated at school or at home. Entries from children and young people with special educational needs or from pupil referral units are welcome. Please use the following links to find out more including suggested resources, judging criteria and how to submit entries:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For Teachers: <a href="https://www.reonline.org.uk/information-for-teachers/">https://www.reonline.org.uk/information-for-teachers/</a></li> <li>For Home Educators: <a href="https://www.reonline.org.uk/information-for-home-educators/">https://www.reonline.org.uk/information-for-home-educators/</a>.</li> </ul> <p>Closing Date: Friday 31st March at 5pm.</p>
<b>COMMUNITY MATTERS: FREE PSHE RESOURCES FOR KS1 – KS3</b>	<p>With the cost-of-living crisis and climate crisis dominating the headlines and replacing Covid as the greatest threats to our communities, the Archbishop's Youth Trust is re-launching their free resource 'Community Matters' this term. The resource provides activities and ideas to help KS1-KS3 pupils explore why community matters, looking at a range of social and environmental issues, and consider how children and young people can become courageous advocates and play their part in creating positive change. Find out more here: <a href="http://www.abyyt.com/communitymatters">www.abyyt.com/communitymatters</a></p>
<b>PLYMOUTH SACRE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY (HMD) - POETRY COMPETITION</b>	<p>Plymouth's SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) is launching this year's HMD competition. This year the theme for Holocaust Memorial Day is that ordinary people can do shocking things to others. 'Ordinary People' is the theme for Holocaust Memorial Day 2023. You can access HMD-related films and resources on the Devon Faith and Belief Forum <a href="#">website</a>, and also national <a href="#">HMDT resources</a>.</p> <p><b>THE COMPETITION:</b></p> <p>Use examples from everyday life and from the past to help pupils understand that anyone can act in a cruel manner and in certain circumstances whole nations can pick on a group and persecute them. The aim of this competition is to explore this theme of the depths to which ordinary people can go and why we should not just ignore it.</p> <p>We are asking school pupils to write a poem on this theme. The competition is open to all ages 5-18. Poems will be judged on originality, insight and interpretation of the theme and judged in age categories: Key Stages 1, 2, 3, &amp; 4 and post 16. An illustration can also accompany each poem. Schools are to submit their best 10 entries by the February half-term. State name, age, title of the poem plus name of school. If entries could be typed it would help but not essential. Judging will take place in March 2023. Please return entries to <a href="mailto:clarklesley@icloud.com">clarklesley@icloud.com</a> or send them to: <i>F.A.O. Michael House, Education, Participation and Skills, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ (MARKED AS HMD POETRY COMPETITION)</i>.</p> <p>The best poems will be made into a booklet which will be sent to schools and the winning poets will receive their own copy. Useful resources to assist your teaching and learning are available from the Holocaust Educational Trust (<a href="https://www.hmd.org.uk/">https://www.hmd.org.uk/</a>).</p>
<b>FREE ONLINE RE COURSES – CULHAM ST GABRIEL'S</b>	<p>We offer a range of free online courses for teachers and other stakeholders engaged in educating in religion and worldviews. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An Introduction to Religion and Worldviews</li> <li>Digging Deeper: Religion and Worldviews</li> <li>An Introduction to Curriculum</li> <li>Digging Deeper: Curriculum</li> <li>An Introduction to Research</li> <li>Primary Beginning Teacher Courses</li> </ul> <p>Further courses are being added on a termly basis. Please follow: <a href="https://courses.cstg.org.uk/">https://courses.cstg.org.uk/</a></p>
<b>PROMOTING RELIGIOUS PEACE &amp; TOLERANCE - RETOPEA 'DOCUTUBES' PROJECT</b>	<p>Join Professor John Wolffe and friends in conversation about the RETOPEA project, featuring amazing 'docutubes' created by young people. You won't want to miss this (20th March 2023, at 16@30-17:10 Online). Book your free place: <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/retopea-promoting-religious-peace-and-tolerance-through-history-tickets-482422226867?aff=ebdsoporgprofile">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/retopea-promoting-religious-peace-and-tolerance-through-history-tickets-482422226867?aff=ebdsoporgprofile</a></p>
<b>'CRE-ATIVE RE-INSPIRING' RE CONFERENCE – 21/03/23</b>	<p>CRE-ative, RE-inspiring Online RE Conference - filled with inspirational speakers and a choice of RE workshops – open to all who are passionate about RE. It is virtual it means that schools can attend from all over the country and indeed the world! Please find, embedded, details about the exciting CREative &amp; REinspiring RE Conference being held online on 21st March. Book your place here: <a href="https://sdbe-onlinelearning.thinkific.com/courses/REConference-March23">https://sdbe-onlinelearning.thinkific.com/courses/REConference-March23</a></p>

<b>FREE RAMADAN TRAINING FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS</b>	<p>With Ramadan starting around 22nd March, <a href="#">Muslim Learner Services</a> will be running webinars to support primary schools develop their subject knowledge and confidence in teaching and learning about Ramadan/Eid &amp; Muslims in Britain (Inc Islamophobia). We already have over 150 schools register for the FREE Ramadan webinar (22/03/23). We can only host a limited number of places on the online webinar and anticipate a high demand for the free training with Ramadan starting next month.</p> <p><b>Teaching and Learning about Ramadan &amp; Eid for Primary Schools</b> (Trainer - Imran Kotwal: Content: Purpose and Rules of Fasting, Teachings from Qur'an &amp; Hadeeth, key Ramadan vocabulary &amp; pronunciation, how Eid is celebrated and Q&amp;A session. Date: Wed 22nd March 2023, 16:00 to 17:00 - Online Zoom Webinar - Cost: FREE (One place per school) £45 for each additional place / Broadcast as a full staff meeting £200. Can't attend the live session: Video Recording &amp; Training materials: £45). To book your place: Complete the booking form <a href="#">HERE</a> or Copy &amp; Paste this link <a href="https://zfrmz.com/5iRfoNFUbrEmHV56pRDw">https://zfrmz.com/5iRfoNFUbrEmHV56pRDw</a> or email <a href="mailto:CPD@Muslimlearnerservices.org">CPD@Muslimlearnerservices.org</a>.</p>
<b>PLYMOUTH CENTRE FOR FAITH &amp; CULTURAL DIVERSITY</b>	Speakers, Visits, Artefacts, Website: <a href="http://www.pcfcd.co.uk/schools/">http://www.pcfcd.co.uk/schools/</a>

HWEiB = Health & Wellbeing in Education Briefing (a Local Authority information, guidance and opportunities briefing that is delivered to Plymouth schools each month. Within the table above you can see some of the information included within this briefing that relates to SACRE's area of activity in 2022/2023).

## PLYMOUTH SACRE CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>SACRE EMAIL</b>	<a href="mailto:sacre@plymouth.gov.uk">sacre@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
<b>SACRE WEB</b>	<a href="https://democracy.plymouth.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=480">https://democracy.plymouth.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=480</a>
<b>SACRE CHAIR (Acting)</b>	Cllr. Mary Aspinall (Plymouth City Council) <a href="mailto:mary.aspinall@plymouth.gov.uk">mary.aspinall@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
<b>SACRE VICE CHAIR</b>	Vacant
<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICER TO SACRE</b>	Michael House (Plymouth City Council) <a href="mailto:michael.house@plymouth.gov.uk">michael.house@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
<b>RE PROFESSIONAL ADVISOR TO SACRE</b>	Vacant
<b>SACRE CLERK</b>	Asif Siddique (Plymouth City Council) <a href="mailto:asif.siddique@plymouth.gov.uk">asif.siddique@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
<b>NASACRE WEB</b>	<a href="https://nasacre.org.uk/">https://nasacre.org.uk/</a>

**PLYMOUTH SACRE (SPRING 2023)****SUMMARY OF OFSTED INSPECTION COMMENTS RELATED TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

<b>OFSTED INSPECTIONS REPORTS (December to March 2023)</b>					
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>PUB. DATE</b>	<b>RATING (Trajectory)</b>	<b>OFSTED REPORT COMMENTS (<i>Inspection Type</i>)</b>	<b>SACRE ACTION</b>	<b>WHO</b>
1	Jan23	RI(↓)	<i>(Graded) Leaders have devised a coherent personal development programme. Pupils understand that all people should be treated with respect.</i>	TBC	SACRE
2	Jan 23	Good (↓)	<i>(Graded) Pupils describe XXXX as a caring school. Many pupils hold roles of responsibility, such as 'gospel guardians'. They make sure pupils know how Christian values help them make the right choices in school and beyond. Pupils are adamant that they should treat everyone the same. They say this always happens at XXXX. Pupils understand why this is important. As a result, pupils understand that people can have different beliefs and opinions. They listen to and value others even when their beliefs differ from their own.</i>	TBC	SACRE
3		Good (±)	<i>(Ungraded) + Deep Dive RE Curriculum thinking in a few subjects beyond the core does not ensure pupils deepen their subject-specific knowledge and understanding over time. For example, in religious education (RE), leaders have not ensured that pupils understand key concepts about different world religions. Opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions help them to recognise and respect others' differences. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. In a few subjects, the curriculum does not ensure that pupils develop subject-specific knowledge and skills deeply over time. As a result, pupils, and particularly some pupils with SEND, do not build their knowledge of key concepts equally well across all subjects. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to gain deep, cumulative knowledge in all subjects.</i>	TBC	SACRE
4	Jan 23	Inadequate (±)	<i>(Monitoring Visit) R.E. Not Specifically Mentioned</i>	TBC	SACRE

5	Jan 23	Good (±)	<i>(Graded) Pupils gain a strong understanding of respect, tolerance and the principles of equality and diversity.</i>	TBC	SACRE
6	Dec 22	Good (±)	<i>(Graded) Pupils understand that differences make everyone unique. They respect, and show interest in, the opinions of others. Pupils learn about discrimination. They say that it does not happen in this school and teachers would not tolerate it. Leaders ensure the taught curriculum helps pupils to identify and challenge prejudice.</i>	TBC	SACRE
7	Dec 22	Good (↓)	<i>(Graded) Pupils respect and celebrate one another's differences. They are proud of their multicultural school. From the start of the Reception Year, children learn about the school's Christian values.</i>	TBC	SACRE
8	Dec 22	Inadequate (±)	<i>(Monitoring Visit) RE Not Specifically Mentioned</i>	TBC	SACRE
9.	Dec 22	Good (±)	<i>(Ungraded) Leaders promote pupils' personal development through the school's Christian ethos, as well as the curriculum. Assemblies promote the school's six core values of friendship, truthfulness, responsibility, courage, forgiveness and thankfulness. Pupils reflect on these values and recognise their importance. They develop their cultural understanding by celebrating events such as Black History Month.</i>	TBC	SACRE

State funded schools are Rated as 4. Inadequate, 3. Requires Improvement, 2. Good or 1. Outstanding and types of Ofsted Inspections include Graded, Ungraded, Urgent and Monitoring, under Sections 5 and 8 of the Education Act 2005.



**EMAIL RECEIVED BY SACRE REGARDING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP (30/01/23)****‘A CASE FOR INCLUSIVE ASSEMBLIES’****MR ANDREW EDMONDSON – COORDINATOR OF CHICHESTER HUMANISTS**

*Dear SACRE members,*

*Please see below, an email that was received from Andrew Edmondson (Co-Ordinator of Chichester Humanists) on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, 2023. I have included the text from Mr Edmondson's e-mail and his two attachments, for your information and to inform discussion at our next SACRE meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March.*

*Thank You*

*Cllr. Mary Aspinall (SACRE Chair)*

*Michael House (Local Authority Officer to SACRE)*

**START:**

Dear SACRE

I am the Humanist full member of West Sussex SACRE.

I recently raised an agenda item to consider collective worship and inclusive assemblies.

A few minutes before the meeting, members were told that they were not allowed to discuss collective worship. From fellow Humanist SACRE members, I realise that SACREs vary around the country. With this in mind, I have decided to send all SACREs my case for inclusive assemblies. I have also attached the introductory statement to my agenda item, which I was prevented from making. This summarises my position.

All schools in the UK that hold collective worship are violating the European Convention on Human Rights, specifically Article 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion). Consequently, they are liable to legal action brought by parents. A recent High Court case in Oxfordshire resulted in Burford Primary School having to change their practice.

Such legal cases are bound to be repeated but they can be avoided if SACRE advises schools in a manner consistent with human rights and the other aspects of RE promoted in their agreed syllabus, e.g. mutual respect, morality, equality, diversity, social cohesion.

I would be grateful if you could raise this issue with your members. In particular, if you have a Humanist member, please forward this email to them, so that they may consider raising collective worship and inclusive assemblies as an agenda item.

Thank you

Andrew Edmondson

Coordinator of Chichester Humanists  
079 3450 8671

## **FIRST ATTACHMENT:**

### **INCLUSIVE ASSEMBLIES AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

*WSSC SACRE Nov 2022. Intro to Agenda Item 11: Inclusive Assemblies and Collective Worship*

Following several discussions with members, I realise that some of you greatly value collective worship and see it as a positive activity that benefits everyone. However, whilst I fully support your freedom to worship, I am opposed to forcing others to, which is what the current guidelines advise schools to do.

Freedom of religion and freedom from religion is a basic human right. This right is enjoyed by the religious members here but denied the school children of West Sussex. Human rights are universal, moral rights. As part of the Agreed Syllabus, SACRE advises schools on the teaching of morality, mutual respect, equality, social cohesion and diversity. Promoting collective worship is clearly incompatible with these aspects of RE. Human rights are also legal rights. Indeed, the UK co-authored the European Convention of Human Rights and is bound by the European Court of Human Rights. Citing UK law and DfE guidelines in support of collective worship is merely an excuse. This is because UK laws concerning collective worship fail when challenged in the courts and because they are unenforceable. WSSC broke the same UK laws by appointing me as a full Humanist member of SACRE; they did so to avoid being sued. The government will not prosecute WSSC, or any school, for failing to enforce collective worship, because it is bound to lose in the courts. For SACRE to be a credible, moral authority that schools can take seriously, it must distance itself from collective worship.

This can be achieved in two ways:

- SACRE can advise WSSC to adopt guidelines for inclusive assemblies.
- SACRE can release a public statement opposing collective worship.

It is up to WSSC whether they wish to follow the advice of SACRE, of course. Your choice today is simple. Support inclusive assemblies and human rights, or promote collective worship and oppose human rights. This is the most important issue that SACRE can consider, so I would like there to be a formal vote. This will give us the opportunity to discuss my proposed guidelines. It will also make clear to schools, and the residents of West Sussex, the position of SACRE on collective worship and human rights. I ask you to support my request for a formal vote.

**SECOND ATTACHEMENT:****THE CASE FOR NON-RELIGIOUS, FULLY INCLUSIVE ASSEMBLIES IN UK SCHOOLS**

The [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) requires that *each pupil in attendance at a community, foundation or voluntary school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship ... wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character*. However, [it also states that](#) the *circumstances relating to the family backgrounds of the pupils ... are relevant for determining the character of the collective worship*.

All community schools and most other schools<sup>1</sup> will be attended by pupils from non-religious families. Also, many pupils in all schools will identify as non-religious and/or non-Christian. They are required to attend assemblies, where most collective worship takes place. In order to accommodate these children and their parents, assemblies should not include religious worship. To comply with the law as far as is reasonable, schools should arrange collective worship for those pupils and teachers who wish to opt in, e.g. during break time, extra-curricular visits to places of worship, prayer rooms, before or after school hours. In some schools, there might be no demand for collective worship. Assemblies are valued by teachers, parents and pupils. They should be non-religious and inclusive (for example see the website [Assemblies for All](#)). These assemblies would incorporate values shared by religious and non-religious people alike.

Non-religious, inclusive assemblies would free teachers of any obligation to conduct religious worship or force<sup>2</sup> pupils to participate. Non-religious parents would also welcome them.<sup>3</sup> Inclusive assemblies should be adopted because compelling children to take part in a daily act of collective worship is immoral, in the universal sense that morality is concerned with the promotion of wellbeing. It also contravenes the European Convention on Human Rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Declaration of Human Rights<sup>4</sup>.

The current WSCC guidelines<sup>5</sup> promote collective worship and are incompatible with the content of our agreed syllabus, e.g. mutual respect, diversity, equality, social cohesion, morality, justice, as well as our intended Worldviews approach. Instead, they should promote inclusive assemblies but also include advice on collective worship in schools where there is a demand.

LEAs are bound by the [Education Act 1996](#) and the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) (see [Appendix 1](#)); however, legal penalties for promoting inclusive assemblies are so unlikely as to be ignored. It should be noted that WSCC has already broken the same law by appointing a Humanist as a full member of SACRE; there have been no penalties. The law is currently being broken by a large proportion of schools and is unenforceable.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, parents recently won a legal challenge in the High Court against Burford Primary School for forcing their children to attend acts

<sup>1</sup> Up to 11% of parents are forced to send their children to faith schools against their wishes.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/education/faith-schools-families-choice-religious-school-1160733?fbclid=IwAR35Raq3uguY-BOMwc8meMgIKvAY6wo6alrLSUblh-nzrN-qmv9W9IV4Eo>

<sup>2</sup> The Framework Act 1988: *each pupil ... shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship ...* The legal term “shall”, used in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, means “must”.

<sup>3</sup> <https://humanists.uk/campaigns/schools-and-education/collective-worship/>

Although parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship, this is rarely done; this could be due to fear of ostracization and/or the perceived value of assemblies (see, for example, <https://www.secularism.org.uk/opinion/2014/11/parents-perspective-the-collective-worship-dilemma>). Also, school assemblies are valued for other reasons. Children under 16 have no right to withdraw themselves.

<sup>4</sup> “Children should have freedom of thought, conscience and belief”, as guaranteed under Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Human rights are both moral and legal rights.

<sup>5</sup> Here is a link to the [current WSCC guidelines](#), including my comments.

<sup>6</sup> Schools breaking the law regarding Collective Worship. [Humanists UK report](#).

of worship.<sup>7</sup> Also, SACREs cannot even advise their LEAs regarding the frequency of collective worship.<sup>8</sup> LEAs' impotence to enforce the law is visible to all schools.

With the decline of Christianity and religion generally<sup>9</sup>, the law concerning collective worship has no legitimacy. For many people, reverence for God(s), upon which religious worship is founded, has been replaced by a reverence for human rights, civic institutions, family life, the natural world, etc. Non-religious inclusive assemblies are supported by numerous organisations: religious (Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jewish, Hindu), teachers (NAT, ATL, CULRE, NUT, NASUWT), head teachers (NAHT), local government (LGA), WASACRE, RE inspectors (AREIAC), parents (NCPTA) and others (e.g. SEO, VEC).<sup>10</sup>

The role of SACRE regarding collective worship is briefly mentioned in the DfE Circular 1/94<sup>11</sup>. It refers to SACRE's role of advising the LEA on making provision for collective worship, i.e. making sure it takes place, nothing more. This is a hopeless task that has produced fudged guidance on how schools can essentially avoid religious worship, when read between the lines. Even so, the majority of schools have chosen to ignore it and break the law on a daily basis.

The role of SACRE is to give advice, which the LEA may or may not choose to follow. Furthermore, SACRE can advise the LEA on other matters, e.g. inclusive assemblies.

WSCC can continue to provide outdated immoral guidance to schools, or it can proactively encourage fully inclusive assemblies, ahead of the inevitable changes to the law.<sup>12</sup> There are only positive consequences for the residents of West Sussex, SACREs, and other LEAs that follow our lead.

The proposed alternative guidelines (see [Appendix 2](#)) are based on the following ideas:

- School assemblies, mealtimes, lessons, and visits from religious leaders should not include religious worship, e.g. praying, singing hymns, religious readings.
- Assembly themes should be inclusive, interesting, and concern moral, personal, social and environmental issues (see [assembliesforall.org.uk](http://assembliesforall.org.uk)).
- Alternative arrangements should be made for pupils and staff who wish to participate in religious worship, e.g. allocated rooms for collective or individual worship, reflection<sup>13</sup>, meditation; extracurricular activities, etc.

The moral authority and credibility of SACRE is at stake. There is nothing to lose but much to gain.

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<sup>7</sup> Parents Lee and Lizanne Harris [successfully challenge compulsory collective worship](#) in school assembly on human rights grounds.

<sup>8</sup> OFSTED reports have not referenced collective worship since 2004.

<sup>9</sup> <https://humanists.uk/campaigns/religion-and-belief-some-surveys-and-statistics/> The 2021 census shows that around 38% of residents are non-religious

<sup>10</sup> Labour Party Policy Review, The School Curriculum, [Response from the British Humanist Association](#), p4

<sup>11</sup> DfE Circular 1/94 [Religious Education and Collective Worship](#)

<sup>12</sup> <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2878> In the meantime, justice delayed is justice denied.

<sup>13</sup> Replacing collective worship with collective reflection is of no educational value, is unnatural for most teachers and children, and will also be ignored by many schools.

**APPENDIX 1:**

**SCHOOL STANDARDS AND FRAMEWORK ACT 1998**

Section 70: Requirements relating to collective worship.

- (1) Subject to section 71, each pupil in attendance at a community, foundation or voluntary school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship.
- (2) Subject to section 71, in relation to any community, foundation or voluntary school—
  - (a) the [local authority] and the governing body shall exercise their functions with a view to securing, and
  - (b) the head teacher shall secure, that subsection (1) is complied with.
- (2) Subject to paragraph 4, the required collective worship shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- (3) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (2), collective worship is of a broadly Christian character if it reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination.
- (4) Not every act of collective worship in the school required by section 70 need comply with sub-paragraph (2) provided that, taking any school term as a whole, most such acts which take place in the school do comply with that sub-paragraph.
- (5) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) and (4)—
  - (a) the extent to which (if at all) any acts of collective worship required by section 70 which do not comply with sub-paragraph (2) take place in the school,
  - (b) the extent to which any act of collective worship in the school which complies with sub-paragraph (2) reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief, and
  - (c) the ways in which those traditions are reflected in any such act of collective worship, shall be such as may be appropriate having regard to any relevant considerations relating to the pupils concerned which fall to be taken into account in accordance with sub-paragraph (6).
- (6) Those considerations are—
  - (a) any circumstances relating to the family backgrounds of the pupils which are relevant for determining the character of the collective worship which is appropriate in their case
  - (b) their ages and aptitudes.
- (7) In this paragraph references to acts of collective worship in the school include such acts which by virtue of paragraph 2(6) take place otherwise than on the school premises.

**APPENDIX 2:****PROPOSED GUIDELINES ON INCLUSIVE ASSEMBLIES AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

*(note: West Sussex County Council have prohibited SACRE from discussing or approving these guidelines, which were written by the Humanist member Andrew Edmondson)*

**INCLUSIVE ASSEMBLIES & COLLECTIVE WORSHIP in SCHOOLS**

Proposed Guidance for West Sussex Community Schools

**INTRODUCTION**

Well-planned inclusive assemblies, where the school community or a part of it meet together, perform a variety of functions that are of benefit to pupils and staff. Most assemblies are attended by pupils and teachers with varying worldviews: Christian, non-Christian, and non-religious. For assemblies to be inclusive, there should be no collective worship. The law does not require the inclusion of collective worship in assemblies. However, it does state that the circumstances relating to the family backgrounds of the pupils must be taken into account. To comply with the law, as far as is reasonable, schools should arrange collective worship for those pupils and teachers who wish to opt in.

**AIMS OF INCLUSIVE ASSEMBLIES**

- Create, nurture and sustain a sense of community, camaraderie and belonging.
- Develop a positive school ethos that affirms the school's priorities, aspirations and values.
- Contribute to personal, social and moral development.
- Develop core values: lessons in diversity, accountability, leadership, anti-bullying.
- Provide a structured environment where pupils learn social discipline, respect for others, listening skills, and appropriate audience participation.
- Deliver key messages, celebrate achievement, and correct antisocial behaviour.
- Provide information about the school, including extracurricular activities.
- Build confidence through pupil involvement, e.g. sharing ideas, experiences, stories.
- Set the tone, so pupils are focused, positive, calm, and ready to start the day.
- Foster cooperation between schools and the local community.
- Experience a short period of silence on special occasions, e.g. Remembrance Day, bereavement of a pupil or member of staff.
- Mark important national and international commemorative days and celebrations.
- Make senior staff visible.

*“When I deliver an assembly, I strive to invite the students to consider their inner capabilities, their positive worth, their place in the community and their purpose for the week, and I do it from the touchstone of positive values. I then give them time to share what is important to them, to help them see that they are valued by the whole school community.”* Melisha Trotman, Principal, Primary School

**PLANNING INCLUSIVE ASSEMBLIES**

The leadership team should work out the vision and values to communicate during assemblies. Ideally, the assembly curriculum should be planned seven to eight weeks ahead and run from topic to topic in a carefully sequenced way. Monday morning assembly is particularly important, as it should bring the whole school back together again after the weekend break and focus upon the week's objectives.

Other assemblies during the week build on these objectives. Schools should develop their own pattern of assemblies that will include whole school, key stage, year group and class assemblies.

Also, the time of assembly will vary with purpose. Planning a school assembly is essential for success. Here are some tips on how to make school assembly exciting and fun for all concerned.

### **ESTABLISH A THEME**

A theme will bring the whole assembly together into a cohesive whole that the audience can get behind. Is it an anti-bullying rally, or is the assembly associated with a recognized event or a day of significance?

### **INTRODUCE INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS**

The best school assemblies have interactive elements which involve pupils, even if in a small way. Asking questions and the use of music or multimedia can help draw pupils into the spirit of the event.

### **MAKE IT ENGAGING**

Assemblies should convey a message and teach pupils core values about life. To do that effectively requires the assembly to be engaging enough to keep their attention. When children become inattentive, it's tough to make a connection and forge a lasting impression.

### **PREPARATION IS KEY**

Before starting the assembly, any equipment used should be checked. Faulty microphones or visual equipment can dampen the enthusiasm of the room.

- **HAVE CLEAR EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOUR DURING ASSEMBLIES**

For example, students lined up before they enter the assembly room in quiet manner. Phones should be banned and there should be an expectation that students are fully engaged throughout. All staff in the assembly should work to support this.

- **SET THE APPROPRIATE ATMOSPHERE AND TONE**

- A central focus, such as a display, that can help pupils think about the theme of the assembly
- Music can help create a calm and reflective mood.
- Black-out or spot lighting help to make assembly time special.
- The leader seated appropriately as the pupils arrive for assembly.
- Adults modelling the behaviour that is expected of the pupils.
- Pupils being actively included in all aspects of the assembly.

### **RESOURCES**

The website [assembliesforall.org.uk](https://assembliesforall.org.uk) describes hundreds of inclusive assemblies organised by calendar date, theme or organisation. Many have free materials.

### **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Many teachers, parents and pupils do not want to participate in collective worship. Consequently, some schools do not comply with the statutory requirements outlined below. Fortunately, these requirements are subject to the circumstances of pupils' family backgrounds, which gives schools sufficient leeway to remove collective worship from assemblies, lessons, mealtimes, visits to places of worship, visits from religious leaders, and other curricular activities.

Nevertheless, schools should make arrangements for those teachers and pupils who wish to take part in collective worship. These can include:

- Prayer rooms/spaces for individual or collective worship/meditation during break times, before or after school hours.
- Extra-curricular visits to places of worship.

If there is a demand for collective worship, it should be planned carefully, with sensitivity to the beliefs of all concerned. Separate groups may be necessary. Collective worship should be offered on a strictly opt-in basis. There should be no pressure for pupils or staff to participate.

Schools following these guidelines will not need to apply for a [determination](#).<sup>14</sup> Also, parents will not need to [withdraw](#) their children from collective worship.<sup>15</sup>

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS<sup>16</sup>

### ALL SCHOOLS

- All pupils in attendance at a maintained school shall, on each school day, take part in an act of collective worship.
- This may be a single act of worship or separate acts for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups.
- It may take place at any time of the school day.
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from worship
- Teachers have the right to withdraw from collective worship.

### FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

- For community schools (not voluntary schools) the act of worship shall be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character".
- Community schools may apply to the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) for a determination that worship in their school could be other than wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- Worship should take place on the school premises.

### FOR VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS

- The type of worship to be provided in voluntary schools is the responsibility of the Governors in line with Trust Deeds.

## DETERMINATIONS

A determination is a process whereby schools can apply to SACRE that their worship could be other than "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character".

### Which schools can apply to SACRE and for what?

- Applications for a determination can be made only by community schools.
- Community schools may apply to SACRE for worship in the school to be other than "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character".
- They may apply on behalf of the whole school or groups of pupils in the school.
- The considerations that may apply are:  
"any circumstances relating to the family background of the pupils concerned which are relevant for determining the character of the collective worship which is appropriate in their case e.g. the faith of the family."

### How can a school apply to SACRE?

- If any school in West Sussex is considering an application to SACRE, the Headteacher should first contact the General Adviser (R.E.) who will be able to explain the procedures.
- Before an application the Headteacher must consult the school's governing body.
- The governors may wish, in turn, to seek the views of parents.

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<sup>14</sup> The law provides a mechanism, called a "determination", [detailed below](#), for schools to opt out of collective worship of a broadly Christian nature.

<sup>15</sup> The law provides a mechanism, [detailed below](#), for parents to withdraw their children from collective worship.

<sup>16</sup> [Education Act 1996](#) and [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#)



What form will worship take following a determination?

- SACRE will give their determination in writing to the Headteacher and the worship will have to be carried out in accordance with those instructions.

**WITHDRAWAL**

The provision for parents to withdraw their children from collective worship was first put in place in the 1944 Education Act and has been re-enacted in subsequent acts of parliament since with little change. The original purpose was to allow parents who, for reasons of conscience, did not want their children to attend collective worship to withdraw them from attending.

The Statutory Requirements

Subsequent acts of parliament were brought together in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The provision for withdrawal is set out in section 71 and subsequently amended by the 2006 Education and Inspections Act to include a clause about sixth form students.

The main requirement is set out in subsection (1)

- (1A) If the parent of any pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school other than a sixth-form pupil requests that they may be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship at the school, the pupil shall be so excused until the request is withdrawn.
- (1B) If a sixth-form pupil requests that they may be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship at a community, foundation or voluntary school, the pupil shall be so excused."

Summary of requirements

- If a parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship, then the school must comply.
- Parents are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal.
- Schools should not divulge information about withdrawal to other schools without the agreement of the parents.
- This applies to all LA maintained schools – community and voluntary.

If the request is to be partly excused, the school must make all reasonable attempts to comply but have the flexibility to deny the request if the logistics of agreeing makes it too difficult.

A parent may request that a pupil be withdrawn from school premises to receive worship of a denominational nature. A school may comply so long as the LA is satisfied that this will not interfere with the child's attendance at school other than at the beginning or end of the school day.

A parent may request that, once the child has been legally withdrawn, a child receive collective worship of a denominational nature on school premises. The school is required to allow this request if:

- the provision cannot be conveniently provided elsewhere;
- the school does not meet the costs;
- the school does not consider that because of the special circumstances it would be unreasonable to do so.

There are some special conditions relating to boarders allowing them to attend a place of worship on Sundays or other days exclusively set apart for religious observance.

A school continues to be responsible for any child withdrawn by its parents from collective worship unless the child is lawfully receiving collective worship elsewhere.

Schools are required to set out the right of withdrawal in their prospectus.

### Advice for Schools

What should a school do if a request is made?

1. As this is a legal provision, the school should ask for any request for withdrawal to be made in writing.
2. To avoid any misunderstanding a head teacher will find it helpful to establish with a parent wanting to exercise the right of withdrawal:
  - the religious issues about which the parent would object to their child being taught and the elements of worship they would object to the child taking part;
  - the practical implications of withdrawal;
  - the circumstances in which the school can reasonably be expected to accommodate parental wishes; and
  - if the withdrawal is partial, whether the parent will require any advance notice of such collective worship.
3. This should not affect the fact that parents do not have to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal.
4. The school must then make arrangements to enable the withdrawal to take place and ensure the health and safety of the pupil.

### How to organise withdrawal?

- The pupil's health and safety are the most important responsibility of the school.
- It would be normal for withdrawal to be exercised through the physical withdrawal of the pupil from the place where the collective worship is taking place.
- However, if both the parent and the school agree that the pupil could remain physically present, there is nothing in the law to prevent this.
- It is good practice to ensure that the pupil is gainfully employed when withdrawn; so, if they do not bring work from home, a check should be made to ensure they have something to do.

If the pupil is withdrawn from worship, a number of organisational options are used by schools, such as:

- the pupil works in the back of class and is supervised by that class teacher;
- the pupil works in another classroom;
- the pupil works in a library and is supervised by the librarian or other adult;
- in smaller schools the pupil may sit outside the office and be supervised by the office staff.