



Meeting of the Surrey SACRE

Date: Wednesday 12th March – Spring 2025

Time: 4.00-6.00pm

Venue – Millmead Baptist Church, Guildford (Clerk & Adviser present)

Meeting by Zoom - this meeting was recorded as part of minute taking.

Quorum required – 9 (at least 1 from each group). Meeting quorate 4.00pm.

Officers present x2 / Clerk x1 / Members Present 13 – Total 15 (Sarah Harris counts twice as officer & group A member)

Present: x 15

Officers x3:

Sarah Harris - Chair of SACRE

Rachel Boxer – Adviser to Surrey SACRE/RE Consultant

Clerk: **Liz Mitchell** - Diocesan Administrator & Clerk to SACRE

Group A x6: Jennie Johnson - Chair of Group A, Sarah Harris - Chair of SACRE, Rev Allan Taylor - Vice Chair of SACRE, Sadia Irfan, Peter Ward (joined at 4.07pm), Rashida Nasir (joined at 4.10pm)

Group B x3: Jane Whittington – Chair of Group B (joined at 4.17pm), Sarah Hutton, Shaun Burns

Group C x3: Saima Saleh - Co-Chair of Group C, Deborah Jackson, Emma Johnston – new member

Group D x1: Robert Hughes

Item No.	SACRE Business meeting Meeting convened at 4.00pm	Actions arising	
		By whom	By when
	RB informed meeting being held remotely due to Diocesan office move. Meeting being recorded on Zoom for minuting purposes. No objections.		
1.	Welcome and Introductions Chair SH opened the meeting with welcome and thanks for RSVPs from SACRE members. Introduced new member Emma Johnston in Group C. Plan to co-opt Emma as a full SACRE member but without full voting rights (see agenda item 7). Emma introduced herself to SACRE – rep of SaFe (Schools Alliance for Excellence) and lead on Educational Equity and Partnerships. Keen to get involved with SACRE to support and work together.		
2.	Apologies for Absence: Officers: Jo Kenyon - apologies given. Group A: Rosslyn Doney and Inderjeet Rehncy – apologies given. Raju Pandya and Patrick Thueanmuenwai, - no response. Simon Mortimore – resignation received. Group B: Jayne Pavlou – apologies given/resignation received. Group C: Saadia Nawaz – apologies given. Alex Page – no response. Group D: Dennis Booth – apologies given. Jordan Beech and Buddi Weerasinghe – no response. Action: Chair SH asked Liz to follow up members who gave no RSVP.	LM	April 25
3.	Approval of minutes for SACRE meeting 06.11.2024: Prior to 12.03.2025 meeting, Clerk circulated 06.11.2024 minutes to SACRE members by email on 20.12.2024 and with papers on 27.02.2025. No comments received from SACRE members by email or present at meeting. As meeting quorate Chair SH asked SACRE to agree minutes for 06.11.2024: proposed by RH and seconded by SI. No objections - minutes of last meeting 06.11.2024 formally agreed/signed off.	SACRE	12.03.25
4.	Matters Arising from previous SACRE Meeting 06.11.2024: Interfaith training – covered in agenda item 8. SDP update – covered in agenda item 11 Self-evaluation tool – covered in agenda item 12		
5.	Chair's Actions: Chair SH highlighted importance of attendance by SACRE representatives from each group at meetings to ensure quoracy and ability to conduct formal business. Group D (LA) tends to have lowest attendance rate. Requested RH to encourage councillors to attend. RH acknowledged and informed issue also been picked up by Kay Hammond.		

	RB asked RH to identify reasons for non-attendance and how SACRE can help to rectify. RH explained amount of County Councillor meetings and committee schedules may clash with SACRE meetings. RH highlighted he wrote to all SCC group leaders last summer to propose candidate to sit on SACRE and only DB put forward. SHut commented DB is a committed SACRE member and would have good reason if not able to attend which also recognised by RH. Action: RH to approach contacts again to try to recruit LA members who are able to attend SACRE. Clerk LM informed to update SACRE membership records with dates of terms of appointment and contact details. Action: Clerk to update SACRE membership records Chair SH asked RH to comment on any effect of SCC cancelled elections. RH confirmed council elections cancelled this year – no change for 2 years. RH explained first year of new unitary authorities will be shadow authorities – all appointments will reside with SCC until 1st April 2027. PW joined meeting online at 4.07pm. RN joined meeting online at 4.10pm	RH Clerk	June 25 June 25
6.	Surrey SACRE Annual Report 2023-24 (paper 6): Presentation of Annual Report, discussion and ratification – Chair SH asked RB to present item. RB referred those present to SACRE Annual Report (paper 6) as emailed prior to meeting on 27.02.2025. RB signposted exam data section in Annual Report incomplete as only received data day before meeting from JK at SCC which unable to distribute in time for meeting. RB shared the exam data document pdf in the meeting chat. Action: Clerk to circulate Annual Report exam data document to SACRE with minutes post meeting. RB invited comments from SACRE members on Annual Report – acknowledged receipt of PW comments by email prior to meeting. PW commented on wording in section 2.1 p4 which states ‘there are only 2 maintained secondary schools in Surrey’. PW suggested technically correct but may need revising because there are two denominational secondary maintained schools - St Andrew’s and St Bedes, two non-denominational maintained secondaries - Ash Manor and Oakwood and The Winston Churchill School which is a Foundation school and thus a maintained school but with special rights. RB thanked PW for his input and updated Annual Report in meeting on screen to reflect PW comments – wording changed to: <i>‘2 maintained secondary schools, 2 maintained denominational schools and 1 foundation school in Surrey’.</i> PW and RB unsure about rules regarding RE and Foundation Schools – PW to look into and report back. JWT joined meeting online at 4.17pm RB invited SACRE to make any further comments to agree Annual Report as accurate reflection of SACRE work over 2023/24: - RB highlighted the challenges that lie ahead relating to schools’ capacity to engage in teacher professional development and extra training which seems to be diminishing both in maintained and church schools. Schools were very engaged with implementation of new RE agreed syllabus but engagement from subject leads to attend training to help them improve their subject knowledge as recommended in Ofsted report (agenda item 8) has dropped off. RB recognised schools under huge amount of pressure and getting teachers to come out of school to attend subject knowledge training is difficult. EJ finds same issues with SAfE training. Makes support for schools difficult when low numbers attend despite training resources being offered some of which is free within the SACRE contract budget. - SHut questioned are communications getting to the right specialist people. RB informed hoping that working with EJ with SAfE connections can help the communication flow rather than relying on Surrey Schools Bulletin.	Clerk	April 25

	- SS suggested advertising via Surrey RE hubs which RB confirmed we do. - SI highlighted RB recently facilitated training in a local school (Buckland) with SI taking Q&As on specialist knowledge targetted to RE curriculum (Islam) within a staff meeting time on zoom. 20 minute session which staff said was very beneficial which could use as a model with other schools and record sessions as a resource. RB recognised could make this work - need to find time efficient way of delivering. Highlighted schools do request this but quite sporadic. - RN informed as RE lead across their Trust suggested to get RE leaders together from different Academies to do a workshop/seminar and discuss variety of faiths with Q&A session once or twice a year who can pass on knowledge gained to schools. If does go ahead could facilitate with Surrey SACRE members. RB highlighted challenge of giving time and priority to RE alongside the other curriculum subjects with focus on English and Maths. - JWT recognised engaging with MATs is a good way forward. RB thanked SACRE for their ideas. As no further comments received on Annual Report content RB shared the SACRE data report on screen and gave time for those presnt to read. Data compiled by JK who unable to be at meeting to answer specific questions. RB drew particular attention to: - Decrease in GCSE RE entries calls into questions if students are receiving their statutory entitlement at KS4 whether studying GCSE RE or not. - Surrey slightly up compared to national figures although dropped year on year. - AS (half A level) shows decline in numbers which again is a national trend. Fewer students choosing RE due to more demanding and increased level of content. RB acknowledged have little capacity to change as showing a national trend. Discussions going on nationally may have an impact on this going forward further down the line which will refer to in agenda item 9. Chair SH proposed SACRE members formally ratify Annual Report draft with data as presented. Seconded by SN and PW. No objections received – all approved by show of hands. Chair SH formally thanked RB for all her work done on Annual Report. Reminded SACRE members to pass on to their sponsoring organisations. Clerk to send to DfE, NASACRE and post on Diocesan SACRE website. Action: RB to circulate final copy of Annual Report 23-24 with exam data inserted as presented in meeting to Surrey SACRE members to distribute to sponsoring bodies represent. Clerk to send Annual Report to DfE, NASACRE and post on Diocesan SACRE website.	SACRE	12.03.25
		RB/Clerk	April 25
7.	Surrey SACRE Membership Updates: Group A – following resignation of SM awaiting replacement to be put forward. Action: SM to advise when new Baha'i representative found. Group B – following resignation of JP due to move out of area awaiting replacement to be put forward. Action: London Diocesan Board for Schools to advise when new representative found. Group C – two vacancies. RB advised Fiona Lewis (Gordons School teacher) has agreed to attend SACRE meeting in June with view to join Aut 2025 as Secondary rep in Group C to replace LS. RB/SS looking to recruit another member to replace RN – <i>post meeting RB confirmed Naomi Ezzard from TAMAT has agreed to join Surrey SACRE as Surrey Primary RE networks rep. Naomi to attend summer SACRE meeting in June.</i> No follow up contact from AP since left The Priory school July 2024 – Clerk to remove as SACRE member. Action: Clerk to invite Fiona Lewis and Naomi Ezzard to summer SACRE meeting. To remove AP as Surrey SACRE member. Chair SH asked SACRE to formally co-opt Emma Johnston to Group C – proposed by RH and seconded by DJ and SS. No objections – unanimously agreed by SACRE present in meeting. EJ formally admitted to Surrey SACRE as co-opted member without voting rights.	SM	June 25
		LDBS	June 25
		Clerk	April 25
		All	12.03.25

8.	Understanding Diversity and Worldviews SACRE training: Chair SH invited RB to go through the training carried forward as an agenda item from previous meeting to support SACRE members' understanding of what this means for schools. RB explained ran this activity with teachers last Autumn term using KitKats as way of discussing and understanding diversity using different KitKat varieties. How far can we stretch the concept of a KitKat before it loses its identity. Prompted hot debate with the teachers as starting point for discussing diversity. We each have our own favourite KitKat and what a proper one looks like. Across the diversity of traditions we represent individually and as a group our personal stories fits into the wider group - we need to help schools navigate what this looks like in their classes. RB used same exercise in SACRE meeting and related it to emotive discussions had recently as a SACRE around inclusion of the diversity of traditions geographically in Surrey particularly in regarding RN membership in Group A. RB also showed video clip from British Library about an art exhibit which is a metaphor for concept of diversity in terms of means of talking about the difference of the place that you stand as to the view you get of the multifaceted art form: British Library Optical Illusion Ofsted subject inspection report 'Deep and Meaningful' – Paper 8 RB shared Ofsted inspection report (published April 2024) on screen and main findings: - picture of RE nationally not altogether healthy - teachers' subject knowledge and impact on student's quality of learning - common thread through report is learning benefits if use syllabus as intended - report looked at curriculum, teaching and assessment, systems at subject and school level RB shared findings with SACRE to discuss before giving summary to schools in Schools Bulletin. Main findings are quite negative but gives positive recommendations which we as SACRE can look at in relation to our agreed syllabus which should support good teaching and learning and develop pupils understanding if used as intended. Relies on schools being engaged with SACRE, the syllabus and the training that already exists but would seem RE not high on many schools' priorities. Need to look at new ways of engaging with teachers eg. podcasts, webinars. SS suggested a webinar with a certificate for appraisal evidence which SACRE supported. Recommendations offered: - upgrading of guidance on statutory expectations for RE (last done 2010) - writing of syllabuses and commercial curriculums should enable pupils to build deep knowledge of chosen religious and non-religious traditions. - commissioning and organisation of CPD should increase range of training available to leaders and teachers to improve subject knowledge. - give priority to helping trainee teachers and those new to the profession to gain subject knowledge they need. - exam boards should recognise way in which schools use exam style questions not always appropriate and ensure communications with schools reflects this. RB highlighted obvious the work we have done on restructuring our syllabus should have an impact on students learning and connections they are making across their learning. Challenge is how to reach schools particularly secondary schools.to ensure using and teaching the syllabus as intended. Hoping connections develop via EJ and SaFe can help this. RB picked up that complexity in RE was a recurrent wording in the Ofsted report and expanded on this through using AI to summarise the Ofsted report. RB highlighted specific actions for SACRE involve developing diverse curriculum material in our syllabus for younger year groups regarding Dharmic traditions.		
----	--	--	--

	RB raised question of how to develop communications for Schools Bulletin to get the messaging right. Invited comments from SACRE: - PW commented when doing concept maps of Christianity there was a wide variation. RB noted to use this as a less controversial example. Supported by JWT. - SHut suggested using churches in Guildford eg chapel v St Nics v Catholic Church. Fear of making a mistake and looking ignorant so people tend to be simplistic. - Chair SH recognised all religions have a wide variety not always aware of and changes happen quickly which we haven't kept up with. - RN suggested rather than trying to anticipate issues we could send message to schools to contact Surrey SACRE as a place to ask for advice and signpost to support. RB noted as an idea. - SB suggested need to get schools to ask questions of themselves and how they are reflecting greater depth of community representation in their teaching. RB requested SB to send prompting questions for discussion and reflection by schools. Action: develop comms for Schools Bulletin on diversity of different faiths with input from SACRE suggestions. <i>The action of a previous meeting at the request of IR related to some serious issues that he had been made aware of with visitors to schools as part of RE. As IR not in attendance at this meeting SACRE unable to follow up on.</i>	RB/Chair SH	June 25
9.	National Updates – Should RE be part of the National Curriculum (Paper 9): RB outlined took part in webinar discussion group RE Online exploring different voices invested in future of RE and views about whether RE should be included as part of National Curriculum. Explained currently RE sits outside of the National Curriculum although part of pupils' statutory entitlement locally agreed as our locally agreed Surrey syllabus. RB signposted members to paper 9 and commented that the loudest voices have changed opinions on whether RE should be part of National Curriculum. RB asked PW to comment from his national representation perspective. PW commented: - a national review is taking place and positive that the Curriculum and Assessment Review have recognised need to say something about RE. - Government referred to the 'new National Curriculum' in the Children's Wellbeing and Academies Bill indicating changes in all composition and character of all subject areas. No parameters set at the moment. - given new form of National Curriculum is it possible that RE could be part of it. If so, it is more likely for RE to be a feature of every school's curriculum and reach all pupils. - review raises question of how have defined content for RE and a national content standard as RE Council have now. Premise that can have different content if achieve the standard. Could work for other subjects. - Curriculum and Assessment review currently taking place and interim report expected to be published in the 'Spring'. Final report due in the Autumn term. - Chair and member of Curriculum and Assessment review due to talk at RE Council AGM on 1st May which indicates may have something to say. - key feature is the government won't want to make any move if the big established religious providers of schools (Board of Deputies, CofE, Catholic Church) don't want to go down this line. From evidence seen they will allow if circumstances are right to be part of the right sort of National Curriculum. Will still want to have security for what doing with a content standard model. PW invited questions/comments: - RB commented webinar feedback voiced feels like a moment in history might not get again to look at relevance of RE being in or out of the National Curriculum, and the responsibility to handle feedback as required to give. Feeling that RE needs to be part of the National Curriculum to safeguard it in the future.		

	- SB thanked PW for his contribution but concerned not as clear cut as seems. Right for status of RE to be improved and schools to be supported and held to account for it but raises concerns around : Who will have control and decide on content if part of National Curriculum. Loss of local determination which Surrey and other SACREs value and local communities own. Need to future proof RE subject with local determination there too. How wide or narrow would a national content standard be and who would make the decisions on it dependent on Government. Could be dangerous to give away control of RE. Should support place of RE outside National Curriculum and SACREs being resourced properly nationally to offer consistent standards and advisory support to all schools. Chair SH requested SACRE members to feedback about national or locally agreed curriculum to share at NASACRE conference in May. Action: SACRE send feedback about national or locally agreed curriculum to Clerk for Chair SH and RB to take to NASACRE Conference in May. Sale of the syllabus – RB outlined request from Wiltshire CC to buy our syllabus to generate extra funds for SACRE. As JK unable to attend this meeting to ask to provide an update at summer SACRE meeting in June. Action: RB to ask JK to provide update on sale of syllabus for June meeting. NASACRE Briefings & Training: RB and Clerk LM reminded SACRE to access NASACRE website for training resources and latest briefing 41 which has up to date information for SACRE members: SACRE Briefing - NASACRE	SACRE/RB /Chair SH May 25 RB/JK June 25	
10.	Local Updates: Assessment guidance/protocols for RE subject leaders (paper 10) RB highlighted together with Diocesan colleague Paula Bliss communicating with school subject leaders to help them navigate the assessment process. RB and Paula have put together a guidance and protocols document (paper 10) for teachers to use for advice and support in assessing pupils progress in RE and is the new RE Surrey Agreed syllabus working together with questions to ask to help do assessment better. RB referred to document (paper 10) to make SACRE aware of this work to see the advice giving to schools regarding what is required and desirable for them to do. CPD training challenges / Jigsaw RE – RB outlined nationally there is a wariness around commercial schemes of work published as supporting locally agreed syllabuses. RB explained: - approached by Jigsaw RE who provide materials in our area to support PSHE and RE in relation to our Surrey syllabus. - working in coordination with SAfE, Jigsaw requested a conversation with RB as SACRE advisor to consider how well or otherwise their schemes of work they sell support our locally agreed syllabus. - RB met with Jigsaw to look at what they offer and had robust conversations and advice about what they can and can't say their schemes of work do in supporting our locally agreed syllabus when communicating to schools in terms of content. - between RB and Jigsaw came up with a model to use and give clear guidance to schools what they must continue to do in relation to meeting our locally agreed syllabus particularly the thematic units. - possible benefit of free CPD training resources for teachers Jigsaw can offer eg. webinars. RB currently in conversation with Jigsaw and EJ from SAfE to ensure schools have best information to make the best decisions of where to spend their money. SB commented lot of schools in area are confused whether it is Jigsaw or Surrey agreed syllabus they should follow. Questioned if message is being communicated it is Surrey they should follow. RB confirmed Surrey syllabus is being communicated and highlighted advantage of having EJ from SAfE working with SACRE to get the messaging right.		

	Surrey Healthy Schools steering group representative update RB briefed made decision she is best placed to engage with the Surrey Healthy Schools group and feedback as required how the PSHE agenda and Healthy Schools network can support what we as a SACRE are doing.		
11.	SACRE Development Plan (SDP) – Paper 11 (emailed to SACRE members 22.10.24): Chair SH invited PW to comment. PW referred to 2024/25 summer term pages 6-11 planning cycle. Made particular reference to item 7 – monitoring school websites. PW advised produced Aide Memoire to navigate looking at school websites which shared with AT to use. AT found it a useful tool. PW advised will continue to work through school websites. Requested volunteers to help in this for primary or secondary schools to build up an understanding across the county. DJ, SS and SI offered to help – PW shared email contact in the meeting chat. Action: PW to progress monitoring of schools websites with AT, DJ, SS and SI. SHut prompted discussion on accuracy of information on school websites. RB advised has a list from SCC of which are maintained schools who should be using our agreed syllabus. Action: RB to share list of maintained Surrey schools with PW for website monitoring. <i>EJ left meeting at 5.31pm</i> RB commented on purpose of SDP and signposted SACRE to the document as a guide to refer to. SB queried adviser days on SDP which RB clarified. Hindu Dharma working group – RB and Chair SH updated SACRE on working group which made positive progress through conversations listening to concerns, developing understanding and making improvements to support our schools regarding diversity.	PW RB	June 25 April 25
12.	Self-Evaluation Tool Agreed syllabus review (section 3, p.17) – RB briefed SACRE groups to discuss section 3 in break out rooms and report back on feedback to capture how SACRE felt process had gone. RB put evaluation tool in the meeting chat and launched 4 break out rooms at 5.45pm. Groups came back to meeting at 5.58pm – due to time groups to send summary of feedback to Clerk. Action: Group Chairs to email self-evaluation feedback on Agreed Syllabus Review to Clerk. To add as agenda item for summer meeting to discuss feedback receive.	Group Chairs	April 25
13.	AOB/ Close: Implications of SCC unitary restructure on SACRE – RH briefly outlined what know currently. Consultation taking place on what structure will look like – won't know outcome until Autumn 25. Will likely be either 2 or 3 unitary bodies with elected Mayor - elections in May 2027/28. PW commented in some restructured counties still have one common SACRE. Chair SH commented Berkshire now has four SACREs. Realistically one is best way forward. RB requested RH to bring up SACRE in conversations where relevant. Action: RB to ask for update from JK at summer SACRE meeting on SCC unitary restructure. NASACRE Conference & AGM – taking place on 19th May in Stratford. PW expressed interest in attending. Action: Clerk to send details to RB, Chair SH and PW and book places Dates of 2024/25 SACRE Meeting: Next meeting Summer 25.06.2025 Action: Clerk to send calendar invite and papers for Summer SACRE meeting 25.06.2025 – to be hybrid at new CHG Stag Hill, Guildford. Chair SH thanked RB and LM for organising online meeting and SACRE members for attending.	RB/JK Clerk Clerk	June 25 April 25 April/ May 25

The meeting closed at 6.09pm

Signature:ⁱⁱ ____ Approved by Surrey SACRE Committee / *S Harris* (Chair) ____ Date: ____ 25.06.2025 ____

Minutes to be circulated to:ⁱⁱⁱ SACRE Committee, Local Authority SACRE Officers, Diocese and being also published in the public domain via cofeguildford.org.uk

Summary of Actions^{iv} 12/03/2025

Item	Action on	By whom	By when
2.	Apologies for Absence: Action: Chair SH asked Clerk to follow up members who gave no RSVP for 12.03.2025 meeting.	Clerk	April 25
5.	Chair's Actions: Action: RH to approach contacts again to try to recruit LA members who are able to attend SACRE. Action: Clerk to update SACRE membership records Action: RB/Chair SH to discuss with SCC possible amendment to Constitution to address Quoracy issues	RH Clerk RB/Chair SH	June 25 June 25 June 25
6.	Surrey SACRE Annual Report 2023-24: Action: Clerk to circulate Annual Report exam data document to SACRE with minutes post meeting. Action: RB to circulate final copy of Annual Report 23-24 with exam data inserted as presented in meeting to Surrey SACRE members to distribute to sponsoring bodies represent. Clerk to send Annual Report to DfE, NASACRE and post on Diocesan SACRE website.	Clerk RB/Clerk	April 25 April 25
7.	Surrey SACRE Membership Updates: Action: SM to advise when new Baha'i representative found for Group A. Action: London Diocesan Board for Schools to advise when new representative found for Group B. Action: Clerk to invite Fiona Lewis and Naomi Ezzard to summer SACRE meeting in Group C. To remove AP as Surrey SACRE member.	SM LDBS Clerk	June 25 June 25 June 25
8.	Understanding Diversity and Worldviews: Action: develop comms for Schools Bulletin on diversity of different faiths	RB & SACRE	June 25
9.	National Updates: Action: SACRE send feedback about national or locally agreed curriculum review to Clerk for Chair SH and RB to take to NASACRE Conference in May. Action: RB to ask JK to provide update on sale of syllabus for June meeting.	SACRE RB/Chair SH RB/JK	June 25 Spring 25 June 25
11.	Surrey SACRE Development Plan: Action: RB to share list of maintained Surrey schools with PW for website monitoring sub-committee. Action: PW to progress monitoring of schools websites with AT, DJ, SS and SI. Action: RB to obtain MAT lead contacts/operating MATs in Surrey to reach out to. RB to speak to JK at next SCC contract feedback meeting on 22.4.25.	RB PW RB	April 25 June 25 April 25
12.	Surrey SACRE Self-Evaluation Tool: Action: Group Chairs to email self-evaluation feedback on Agreed Syllabus Review to Clerk. To add as agenda item for summer meeting to discuss feedback receive.	SACRE Group Chairs	April/June 25
13.	AOB: Action: RB to ask for update from JK at summer SACRE meeting on SCC unitary restructure. Action: Clerk to send details for NASACRE AGM and Conference to RB, Chair SH and PW and book places Action: Clerk to send calendar invite and papers for Summer SACRE meeting 25.06.2025 – to be hybrid at new CHG Stag Hill, Guildford.	RB/JK Clerk Clerk	June 25 April 25 April/May 25