



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest
to create a better borough

Telford & Wrekin SACRE

Annual Report for 2021-22.



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Annual Report for Academic Year 2021/22

1. Introduction

1.1 This annual report of Telford and Wrekin's SACRE and covers the academic year 2021-2022. The report briefly records the work of the Advisory Council in that period and sets out the proposed priorities for the coming academic year, 2022-23.

1.2 This report is being sent to the following organisations.

- National Standard Advisor Council for Religious Education
- Telford & Wrekin's Executive Director for Children's and Family services and the Director of Education and Skills
- Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of all Telford & Wrekin schools
- Borough Councillors
- Department for Education
- NASACRE
- Free Church Federal Council
- Inter-Faith Network, UK
- Local relevant voluntary and statutory organisations

An electronic version of this report will also be made available to parents, teachers and other interested individuals and organisations.

2. SACRE'S role and function

The functions of SACRE are detailed in section 391 Education Act 1996 (as amended). Other responsibilities are outlined in: Religious Education in English Schools: non-statutory guidance 2010; SACRE and Self-Evaluation: A guide (Ofsted 2005); Circular 1/94 (Collective Worship).

These responsibilities are to:

- advise the authority on such matters connected with RE and Collective Worship in Telford and Wrekin Community schools, Foundation schools without a religious character and Voluntary Controlled schools
- monitor the provision and quality of RE taught according to its Agreed Syllabus, together with the overall effectiveness of the syllabus
- provide advice and support on the effective teaching of the Agreed Syllabus
- provide advice to the LA and its schools on methods of teaching, the choice of teaching material and the provision of teacher training
- require the LA to set up a statutory conference to review the Agreed Syllabus if, in the opinion of the SACRE, this becomes necessary
- review and update the Agreed Syllabus every five years; however, a majority of representative groups on the SACRE - other than that consisting of persons chosen to represent the Authority (Group D) - may at any time require a review of the Agreed Syllabus which is currently being used by the Authority

- consider, in partnership with the LA, whether any changes need to be made to the Agreed Syllabus, or in the support offered to schools in the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus, to improve the quality of RE and the learning of pupils
- offer schools and the LA advice concerning how an existing syllabus can be interpreted so as to fit in with wider changes in education
- receive, determine and review applications from headteachers - that the requirement for Collective Worship in community schools to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, shall not apply to the collective worship provided for some, or all, of the pupils at that particular school
- publish an annual report on its work and on actions taken by its representative groups, specifying any matters on which it has advised the LA, broadly describing the nature of that advice, and setting reasons for offering advice on matters which were not referred to it by the LA; this report will be presented to the LA, schools and other appropriate bodies
- develop SACRE's own role, supported by the LA and working with inter-religious bodies, to enhance the important contribution that the study of religion and belief can make to community cohesion and the combating of religious prejudice and discrimination
- offer advice to Telford and Wrekin LA on any matters related to SACREs

In addition to the above the SACRE can:

- require the LA to review its current Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education
- consider applications made by a Headteacher to release some or all of the pupils in a particular school from the requirement for Collective Worship which may be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character

3. How Telford & Wrekin's SACRE works

Appointments to SACRE shall generally be for a term of three years from the date that the new member should have attended their first meeting. Groups can re-nominate members after the end of the three years for consideration by the LA.

- The SACRE shall review the membership annually at the AGM in the autumn term.
- The SACRE appoints a Chair from amongst its members.
- The current Chair was elected in 2019.
- Any voting on the SACRE takes place by the committees, each of which has a single vote.
- Up to four additional members may be co-opted by the SACRE depending on prospective members' particular expertise and possible contribution to the work of SACRE.
- Meetings are held three times a year.
- All meetings are open to the public.

3.1 The SACRE is composed of four committees as follows:

Committee A: Other Christian Denominations / other Faiths active in Telford and Wrekin: *eight members: Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, United Reformed, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh. Each member is nominated by his/her parent body.*

Committee B: The Church of England – *five members:* nominated by the Lichfield Diocese and Hereford Diocese.

Committee C: The Teachers' Professional Associations – five members: nominated by NEU, NASUWT and NAHT.

Committee D: Local Authority – up to five members: nominated by Telford and Wrekin council.

Co-opted Members

Details of the membership during the 2021 – 2022 academic year are shown in below. SACRE was pleased to welcome two new Faith leaders who have supported its work.

4. Telford & Wrekin SACRE – constitutional details

4.1 Chair: Jacquie Osmund-Smith Vice Chair: n/a

4.2 LA Officer: Michelle Parker, Quality Assurance Specialist, School Performance and Development, Education and Skills

4.3 RE Consultant: Dr James Holt, University of Chester

4.4 Clerk: Jayne Clarke, Democratic Services, Telford & Wrekin Council

4.5 Committee A: Other Christian Denominations / other Faiths

Roman Catholic Carol Morgan, School Support Officer

Baptist Church Jacquie Osmund-Smith

Free Church Vacant

Methodist Church Henry White

URC Angela Evans

Jewish Catherine Landau

Muslim Regent Street Mosque

Muslim Sajid Younis

Sikh Oakengates Gurdwara –Inderjit Singh Gill

Hadley Gurdwara

Hindu Shri Radha Krishna Temple

4.6 Committee B: Church of England

Lichfield Diocese Vacant

All Saints Church Rev. Tim Carter

St Nicholas' Church Rev. Merry Smith

Hereford Board Mark Harrington, Education Development Officer

4.7 Committee C: Teacher representation

NEU vacant

NAS/UWT Karl Downes

NAHT position pending
RE Coordinators Shaad Dhillon (Redhill Primary School)
Jon Rawson (Donnington Wood CE Junior School)
Mary Jennings (Ercall Wood Academy)
Diane Whitley (Woodlands Primary School)

4.8 Committee D: Telford & Wrekin Council

Cllr Veronica Fletcher
Cllr Raj Mehta
Cllr Leon Murray
Senior LA Officer Michelle Parker

4.9 Co-opted Members

Humanist Vacant

4.10 Quorum

A quorum shall consist of one member from at least three of the groups, with a total presence of no less than one third of the members.

5. A review of the academic year 2021-2022

- 5.1** The Local Authority continues to provide facilitation for the borough's SACRE without requiring a contribution from the SACRE budget. Telford & Wrekin SACRE benefits from strong ongoing support from across the local authority.
- 5.2** There have been three meetings of the SACRE in the academic year 2021-2022. Although this year Covid restrictions were lifted, attendance at meetings has been affected because of infection rates which have been high in the borough. The autumn term meeting was hosted by Ercall Wood Academy and the Summer Term by Donnington Wood C.E Primary School and provided the opportunity for each school to show case it's RE work and share their good practice with SACRE members. The spring term meeting on 15th March was a Virtual Meeting.

Minutes of all meetings are available the SACRE website and on application to the Clerk, Democratic Services:

Democratic Services
Telford & Wrekin Council
Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way
Telford, TF3 4NT
Email: democraticservices@telford.gov.uk

Website address
https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20794/standing_advisory_council_on_religious_education_sacre/5291/what_is_sacre

Meetings of the strategic working group did not take place this academic year because of the ongoing pressures of Covid on staffing in schools.

- 5.3 RE resources are available on the SACRE website (see link above) together with the new Agreed Syllabus.

6. RE Advisory Support

- 6.1 **Dr James Holt (Senior lecturer in RE at the University of Chester)** has kindly continued to provide support aligned to his core role. He has been given some remuneration for this work.

Dr Holt has also led termly RE Coordinator network meetings through the Severn Training Schools Alliance (STSA).

- 6.2 The main activities this year have been:
- maintaining the website
 - a one day conference for pupils
 - two members of Telford & Wrekin's SACRE attending the virtual annual NASCRE conference

- 6.3 **SACRE Conference** – *“Every one of us has the power to make changes and make them now”* (David Attenborough), held on 23 March 2022 via Microsoft Teams and free of charge to all Telford & Wrekin schools. The aim of the conference was to explore Climate Change from a Faith perspective.

The conference was attended by 13 schools and approximately 440 pupils.

Pre-teach materials were sent into every participating school, which included a short film - *‘Climate Change: the Facts’* (BBC iPlayer) with accompanying questions to support the young people in attaining some secure knowledge before they joined the key note speaker session.

The key note address was delivered by Dr John Reade of Harper Adams University, who engaged delegates with ideas about how they could reduce their carbon usage and the imperative as to why it is important for us all to take action - an urgency stressed in light of current scientific research that was shared at the recent United Nations' Cop26 (2021) global conference.

Following the key note address delegates were divided by their schools to go into one of six faith workshops, covering Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and Sikhism. We were very fortunate to have Amandeep Maan as our Sikh spokeswoman, representing Eco Sikh. Amandeep spoke at Glasgow's Cop26 summit in November 2021.

All Faith leaders were asked to talk about:

- how different faiths describe the moral imperative to act to meet the challenges posed

- the difference between 'needs' and 'wants'

Delegates returned to their school groups to brief each other, discuss what they had learned and agree pledges and actions they could all undertake.

Schools nominated a delegate to report back and share their pledges to the whole conference. The range of delegates' ideas were amazing and included:

'We would like to write to our MPs to ask for more help from the government'

'We will try to stop wasting food – maybe I can eat that spotty banana!'

to

'We will turn off taps when we brush our teeth'

and

'We will try and look at labels in supermarkets to see where our food comes from and pick the most local. We could also encourage our parents to shop at markets instead of the big stores'

Delegates also came up with some catchy and thought provoking slogans, including:

'Save the Earth, Save Yourself' (Ercall Wood Academy)

'Turn off before our planet does' (Holy Trinity Academy)

'Foot Friday' (i.e. walking to school) (John Fletcher of Madeley Primary School)

'We may only be small, but together we can make a big difference' (Lawley Primary School)

'Green is more than just a colour' (Lilleshall Primary School)

'If we don't make a change today we won't have a tomorrow' (Tibberton CE Primary School)

Delegates have been asked to feedback to their governing board on their pledges and each participant has received a certificate from SACRE commending their participation and commitment.

SACRE would like to thank all the staff in schools who supported the conference and helped to ensure it was such a success, as well as

Jacquie Osmund Smith, SACRE Chair, who drives things forwards, and stepped into any part of the conference to keep it running and kindly made the closing remarks.

Sue Dyson, Traded Service Specialist, who kept us on track and did all the organising of both delegates and presenters, tirelessly kept on top

of all the meetings, and generally ensured we were able to have a conference.

Qamar Maqsood, from the Multicultural Development Team (MDT) who kindly stepped in at short notice to run the workshop on Islam.

Ant Snowden, Teaching & Learning Specialist and LA ECT Induction Manager, who kept everything running smoothly on the day, prepared all the pre-teach materials and managed the 'tech', as well as interviewing the delegates.

We are also indebted to:

Lauren Hands - Telford and Wrekin's Climate Change & Sustainability Project Support Officer, for opening the conference.

Dr John Reade, from Harper Adams University in delivering the key note.

All the Faith leaders for sharing their faiths with delegates, John Marder for Buddhism, Liz Mackay for Christianity, Alison Appiah for Hinduism, Cathy Landau for Judaism and Amandeep Mann for Sikhism.

Thank you for the time and commitment you gave to the conference to provide all the delegates with a first-hand understanding of why they need to take action and what they can do, and for demonstrating how faith and science can work together.

Following the conference, Telford & Wrekin's *Leading* magazine for school governors featured an article about the conference.

6.4 The Primary RE network (no longer part of the local authority) holds termly meetings, organised through the STSA and led by Dr Holt, and these have continued throughout the pandemic. SACRE members were able to attend a termly event this year.

6.5 Prayer Spaces in Schools

Prayer spaces in schools continue to support pupils with the opportunity for quiet reflection.

6.6 Secondary RE results

GCSE results will not be known until mid-August 2022.

6.7 Determinations during the 2021-2022 academic year

SACRE received no applications from schools wanting to be completely or partially exempted from collective acts of worship which are wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

6.8 Complaints

As in the past, no formal complaints regarding the provision of collective worship in schools have been received by SACRE or the LA.

7. Priorities for the coming year

- 7.1 SACRE to continue to canvass the other faith groups to build upon the faiths who regularly attend and ensure the council fully represents the faith community of Telford & Wrekin.
- 7.2 To develop links with Telford & Wrekin's Equality and Diversity initiative.
- 7.3 Maintain the SACRE website to ensure it is used by schools to support the teaching of RE.
- 7.4 Organise a series of SACRE-led visits to a range of places of worship for all faiths, together with some supporting materials for school visits.
- 7.5 Trial a small number of SACRE visits to look at RE in our schools and report back to full SACRE.
- 7.6 Organise an annual conference, if possible following up the Cop 26 conference, linking to the RE curriculum in schools.

8. The Policy Framework

8.1 RE: statutory requirements and curriculum information

The national curriculum states the legal requirement that:

'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- *promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils; and*
- *prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life*

*All state schools ... must teach religious education ... All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online'.
(National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, DfE, September 2013, p.4)*

The RE curriculum is determined by the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), which is responsible for producing the locally Agreed Syllabus for RE.

Those schools that are not designated with a religious character must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the

main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'

Schools with a religious designation may prioritise one religion in their RE curriculum, but all schools must recognise diverse religions and systems of belief in the UK both locally and nationally.

RE must be included in the curriculum for all registered pupils, including all pupils in reception classes and sixth form, but excluding:

- *pupils in nursery schools or nursery classes in primary schools*
- *any person aged nineteen or above for whom further education is being provided at school, and*
- *any person over compulsory school age who is receiving part-time education*

9. Consultation

9.1 NASACRE (National Association of SACREs)

Telford & Wrekin SACRE has been affiliated to the NASACRE and considers it to be an important and valuable link. It welcomes the significant role played by NASACRE in providing us with a national voice on issues impacting on the future developments of Religious Education and Collective Worship.

9.2 SACRE is fully committed to the support and development of RE as essential to pupils' education in Telford & Wrekin.

Acknowledgements

The SACRE is greatly indebted to the continued and unstinting support and hard work of the following colleagues:

Professor James Holt for his continued advice and guidance.

RE Lead Teachers – who continue to tirelessly support the work of SACRE, particularly:

Shaad Dhillon from Redhill Primary Academy
Mary Jennings from Ercall Wood Academy
Jon Rawson from Donnington Wood Church of England Junior School
Diane Whiteley from Woodlands Primary School



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