

Public Document Pack

To all Members of the

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

AGENDA

Notice is given that a Meeting of the above Committee
is to be held as follows:

VENUE Room 309 - Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster
DATE: Tuesday, 6th June, 2017
TIME: 4.00 pm

Items for Discussion:

1. Appointment of Chair.
2. Appointment of Vice-Chair.
3. Welcome and Introductions.
4. Apologies for absence.
5. Declarations of Interest.
6. Minutes of the last meeting held on 6th March 2017 (attached). 1 - 8
- A. A. Reports where the public and press may not be excluded.**
7. Membership and Attendance (attached). 9 - 10
8. Update on preparations to review ways of working of SACRE from September 2018.

Jo Miller
Chief Executive

Issued on: Friday, 26 May, 2017

Governance Officer Andrew Sercombe
for this meeting: Tel. 01302 734354

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------|
| 9. | Update on collaborative work and preparation/working party for agreed Syllabus 2018. | |
| 10. | Information Exchange | 11 - 12 |
| 11. | NASACRE Bulletin. | 13 - 24 |
| 12. | Date, time and location of the Summer term meeting. | |

Members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Local Authority Representatives

Councillors Andrea Robinson, Kevin Rodgers, Smith and Jonathan Wood

Christian and other religious denominations

Mrs J Gessler, Jewish

Mr Bruce Gillham, Balby (Doncaster) Society of Friends

Mr R Iball, Methodist

Mrs P Kaur, Sikh

Reverend Tom McCready, Unitarian (Doncaster Interfaith)

Ms S Norburn, Humanist

Lucy Saxton, Roman Catholic

Mrs M Sivaanbu, Hindu

Mr S Syed, Muslim

Mr B Teimoori, Baha'i

Vacant, Baptist

Vacant, Buddhist

The Church of England

Ms J Crowther

3 Vacancies

Teachers' Associations

A Nicholson, National Union of Teachers

T Griffiths, National Association of Headteachers Edge

Vacant, Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Vacant, Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Vacant, National Union of Teachers

Agenda Item 6

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

MONDAY, 6TH MARCH, 2017

A MEETING of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) was held at the 007A AND B - CIVIC OFFICE on MONDAY, 6TH MARCH, 2017, at 4.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Chair – Reverend Tom McCready – Unitarian (Doncaster Interfaith)
Vice-Chair – Mr Bruce Gillham (Balby (Doncaster) Society of Friends)

Councillor Sue Knowles.

Mrs J Gessler, A Nicholson, Mrs M Sivaanbu, Ms J Stephenson and Mr B Teimoori.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nuala Fennelly and Councillor Majid Khan, and Ms S Norburn and Mr S Syed.

25 QUORUM

As there was no quorum present at the time specified on the summons, Members agreed to wait for five minutes in order to await the arrival of the Church of England representative (Group B).

Further to this meeting being inquorate for the second consecutive occasion, the Chair sought guidance from Officers as to whether the Church of England representative from Group B, had to be a person ‘in authority’ or a practising Anglican (a representative from the Anglican community). The Governance Officer, having referred to the Membership and Terms of Reference of SACRE, confirmed that whilst there was no specific reference that the representatives from the four Groups had to be a person of official standing, and in view of Officers not having the Regulations to hand at the meeting to confirm whether it was prescriptive in the Regulations, the Chair indicated that he would speak to Reverend David Stephens from the Church of England Diocese to secure a representative to attend future meetings.

Subsequently, as there was no Church of England representative present after the expiry of five minutes, the meeting was therefore, declared inquorate. However, it was agreed that the meeting continue on an informal basis and the recommendations be ratified at the next quorate meeting of SACRE.

26 INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Reverend Tom McCready welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. The Chair, on behalf of the Committee extended a warm welcome to Jonathan Sharp, Senior Education Standards and Effectiveness Officer, who was attending his first meeting of SACRE and had taken over Ralph Hedley’s

role. Jonathan gave a brief description of his background; a former Headteacher for 9 years having worked in a successful and outstanding school.

27 DECISION SUMMARY AND MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29TH NOVEMBER, 2016

RECOMMENDED that the minutes of the inquorate SACRE meeting held on 29th November, 2016, be noted and approval of the minutes be deferred for ratification at the next quorate meeting.

28 MATTERS ARISING

Minute No. 20 – SACRE Briefing 12

In relation to the 'Tell Mama Annual report 2015 on Hate Crime', the Chair informed Members that a new Police Officer from South Yorkshire, Police Constable Alison Atkinson, had been recently appointed and was to be responsible for the coordination of responses to Hate Crime and would be attending one of the events that he had organised with the grant funding he had received.

29 MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

Further to the above Minute, the Committee received a document providing details of Members' attendance for the meetings held from November, 2015 to May 2016.

Representation from Group B: Church of England at SACRE meetings continued to be a concern. The Chair, Reverend Tom McCready, gave an undertaking to speak to Reverend David Stephens from the Church of England Diocese, to make enquiries as to the health of Ms Crowther and her non-attendance at SACRE meetings.

Councillor Knowles informed the Committee that this was her last meeting as a member of SACRE as she had not been selected to stand as a Labour candidate in the forth-coming Borough Council elections in May. The Chair and Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Councillor Knowles for her contribution made to the work of the Committee.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the document regarding Members attendance at meetings, be noted; and
- (2) Reverend Tom McCready contact Reverend David Stephens from the Church of England Diocese, regarding the health of Ms Crowther and speak to Reverend Stephens with regard to securing an Anglican representative to attend future meetings.

30 PREPARATION/WORKING PARTY FOR AGREED SYLLABUS 2018 (DOCUMENTS TO BE TABLED AT THE MEETING)

Members briefly discussed the work and processes involved in preparing for the Review and the establishment of a working party for an Agreed Syllabus 2018.

In light of the fact that the document to be tabled, had not been made available for the Committee's consideration at this meeting, and that the meeting was inquorate, it was

RECOMMENDED that the Preparation/Working Party for Agreed Syllabus 2018, be deferred for consideration at the next quorate meeting of SACRE.

31 CHALLENGING RE CONFERENCE - ROTHERHAM

Members received details of the South Yorkshire RE Hub's Third Annual Day Conference 'Challenging RE Conference: Imagination, British Values, Thinking and Assessment' to be held in Rotherham on 14th March 2017.

Jonathan Sharp advised that he was unable to attend the conference due to a prior engagement. He reported that he had been contacted by Vanessa Gregory who had advised that the invitation Flyer to the Challenging RE Conference had been forwarded to all Doncaster schools on two occasions; the last being on 14th February and to date, there had been a limited response from RE teachers to attend the Conference. He advised that due to the limited number of confirmed attendees, it was doubtful whether the conference would take place. It was felt that the low take up was possibly due to lack of funding. The Vice-Chair, Bruce Gillham, confirmed that whilst he was happy to attend the Conference, he commented that as SACRE was looking to involve pupils more directly in the work of SACRE, felt that it would be beneficial for a teacher representative to attend the Conference to explore the situation with people in the whole of South Yorkshire. Therefore, the Vice-Chair asked Jonathan Sharp to explore whether it would be possible for the local authority to fund the attendance of Alison Nicholson at the Conference. Subsequently, the Chair, Reverend McCready, proposed that he was willing to make a contribution towards half of the cost to the Conference on the understanding that the local authority would match his contribution. Jonathan Sharp suggested that he would speak to the Chair on this issue outside of the meeting.

In addition, the Chair requested that Alison Nicholson to diarise her attendance at the "Meet Your Muslim Neighbour" event at Doncaster College on Monday, 27th March, 2017, commencing at 6.00 pm, which was open to all Members of SACRE to attend.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) Jonathan Sharp contact Vanessa Gregory to ascertain the number of RE teachers who had confirmed their attendance and as to whether the Conference was still going to proceed;
- (2) Jonathan Sharp to explore whether the Local Authority was willing to provide match funding to facilitate teacher attendance at the Conference; and
- (3) The Chair agreed to make a contribution from grant funding towards the costs to fund a teacher to attend the Conference, subject to the Local Authority matching this contribution.

32 NASACE AGM - 16 MAY, 2017 YORK: PREPARING FOR LIFE IN BRITAIN TODAY: THE CONTRIBUTION OF RE

The Committee received details of the NASACE Conference and AGM 'Preparing for Life in Britain Today: the Contribution of RE', to be held in York on 16th May 2017.

In view of a decision being required imminently for a Member to attend the Conference, which would take place before the next scheduled meeting of SACRE, the Chair sought the Committee's approval to attend the Conference on 16th May 2017. The Group agreed that in the circumstances, the Chair attend the Conference to be ratified at the next meeting.

RECOMMENDED that the Chair Reverend Tom McCready to attend the NASACE Conference and AGM to be held on 16th May 2017, which was to be ratified at the next meeting.

33 INFORMATION EXCHANGE

(a) Newsletter Working Party

Jonathan Sharp sought clarity from Members regarding the preparatory work to be undertaken for the E-Newsletter. Members of SACRE were asked to submit any ideas or suggestions of items for inclusion in the Summer Term SACRE E-Newsletter, which was expected to be published in June.

During discussion on the content of the newsletter, it was suggested that the newsletter be adapted to meet the relevant target audience i.e. primary, secondary, free schools and Academies. Members felt that teachers should be encouraged to write short informative articles and include issues that were to impact upon young people. In addition, it was suggested that the newsletter could include a learning piece, informing schools about different religious festivals and forthcoming events. Members emphasised the importance of the newsletter and spoke of the need to highlight in the Newsletter the importance of RE and for schools to understand the role and purpose of SACRE.

The Vice-Chair, Bruce Gillham, agreed to meet with Jonathan Sharp at the Civic Office prior to the next meeting, to provide assistance in putting the newsletter together. The Chair confirmed that he was also happy to contribute material for the newsletter.

RECOMMENDED that Jonathan Sharp and the Vice-Chair Bruce Gillham meet to discuss the preparation and content of the newsletter.

(b) Building Outreach Capacity

Members were asked to consider looking at ways to build outreach capacity in schools. The Vice-Chair, Bruce Gillham, referred to a successful model adopted by the Group two years previously, which had involved Members of SACRE visiting a primary schools in the Borough, introducing children to the six different faiths. Members expressed their enthusiasm for this model to be offered to all schools in the Borough on a regular basis. It was agreed that Jonathan Sharp, Senior Education Standards and Effectiveness Officer explore the feasibility of putting arrangements in place, for an offer to be made to both primary and secondary schools, for Members of SACRE to visit the schools and that a further report be submitted to the next meeting of SACRE.

The Chair suggested that it would be beneficial to highlight this particular model of good practice at the Challenging RE Conference on 14th March, 2017. It was also suggested that an article on this initiative be included in the Summer Term

E-Newsletter sent out to schools in order to promote the role and work of SACRE.

RECOMMENDED that a scoping report exploring the proposal for Members of SACRE to visit schools in the Borough, be submitted for consideration and ratification at the next meeting of SACRE.

- (c) Grant of £4000 for a project bringing Christians and Muslims together (as noted at the end of Rev Tom's Chair's introduction in the draft SACRE Annual Report).

The Chair reported that he had been successful in securing a grant of £4,000 from the Common Good Fund for a project bringing Muslims and Christians together in support of refugees and asylum seekers.

The Chair outlined the various planned events on how the grant money was to be spent which included:-

- "Meet your Muslim Neighbour" - Monday, 27th March, to be held at the Waterfront Restaurant, Doncaster College at 6.00pm. Members were informed that this event had arisen out of people's mis-understanding of Muslim and Hallal food and Hallal slaughtering. This event had received support from the Muslim community. 50-60 people had been invited to attend, including speakers from the Muslim faith. The Chair encouraged all Members of the Committee to attend in particular, an invitation was extended to Alison Nicholson. He added that Doncaster College was his first choice as the preferred venue for the event, in order to engage with college students who would be providing the catering and would learn about Hallal catering at the same time. In conjunction with this event, it was reported that a colleague of the Chair would be attending the event to provide cultural training on understanding Islam to college staff who had also been invited to attend.

Jonathan Sharp confirmed that he was to attend this event at Doncaster College on 27th March. Jonathan's attendance was welcomed by the Chair.

- "Multi faith Vegetarian Dinner" on St. George's Day, Sunday, 23rd April 2017, at 6.00 pm. The Chair reported that the Vice-Chair, Bruce Gillham, was to attend this event and if any other Members of the Committee wished to come along, there were some places available. Invitations had been extended to the Civic Mayor and his wife, Bishop Peter and Police Constable Alison Atkinson.

The Chair advised that there would be no events involving food and music during Ramadan due to poor attendance of people last year.

- Benefit Concert of "Songs of Freedom and Justice" on Sunday, 14th May, 2017 for refugees and asylum seekers.
- "African Drum Workshop" on Wednesday, 24th May, 2017
- Muslim Festival "Eid in the Park", hosted by a group of young Muslims.

The Chair advised that he would provide Jonathan Sharp with full details of the dates and times, in order to invite SACRE Members to the events. Jonathan agreed to communicate this information to Members via email.

RECOMMENDED that Jonathan Sharp to send details of the dates and times of all of the events to Members of SACRE via email.

34 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

AGREED that the public and press be excluded from the remainder of proceedings of the meeting, as the reports contained exempt and confidential information.

35 DRAFT SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Members received and noted for information, the draft SACRE Annual report for 2015/2016.

Members welcomed the report and it was agreed that thanks be conveyed to Pat Cassidy for her efforts in compiling a very useful and extensive piece of work.

The Chair indicated that he would invite Pat Cassidy to attend one of the forth-coming SACRE events.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) that the draft SACRE Annual Report 2015/16, presented to Members for information, be received and noted; and
- (2) the Committee's thanks be conveyed to Pat Cassidy for her efforts in compiling a very useful and extensive piece of work.

36 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Vice-Chair, Bruce Gillham, commented that Pat Cassidy who had since left the authority, had been a valuable resource to the work of SACRE, having a wealth of knowledge and experience. Therefore, he felt that it would be useful for the Group to be provided with a list of SACRE Members and Officer contact details, including telephone numbers, in order for the Vice-Chair to speak to Pat and Officers in an advisory capacity and to facilitate inter-Member communication. Whilst this was welcomed by some Members, concerns were raised with regard to confidentiality, data protection and the security of people's personal information. It was agreed that Jonathan Sharp would speak to Susan French to provide Members of SACRE with a list of email contact addresses.

RECOMMENDED that SACRE be provided with a list of SACRE Members email addresses.

Minute No. 16 - Pre Meeting Item

Further to the above Minute of the last meeting, the Vice-Chair, Bruce Gillham, advised that he was intending to apply for grant funding for the next Academic Year to facilitate the development of pupil involvement in resourcing the Moral Curriculum and

if Members were supportive of this approach, he would bring back the proposal to the Committee in due course. This was welcomed by Members.

37 DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF SUMMER TERM MEETING

RECOMMENDED that the next meeting of SACRE be scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 6th June, 2017, in Meeting Room 7a and b Civic Office, Waterdale, commencing at 4.00 p.m.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____

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Name	Faith Group/Association	26-Nov-15	* see note 23-Feb-16	25-May-16	29 Nov 16	6 March 17
Committee A Members (Christian & other religious denominations)						
Vacant	Buddhist					
Gessler J	Jewish	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Sivaanbu M	Hindu			Yes	Apologies	Yes
Norburn S	Humanist	Yes		Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Saxton L	Roman Catholic			Apologies		
Iball R	Methodist	Yes		Yes	Apologies	
Syed S	Muslim	Yes		Yes	Yes	Apologies
Teimoori B	Baha'i	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Gillham B	Balby (Doncaster) Society of Friends	Yes		Apologies	Yes	Yes
McCready T Rev	Doncaster Interfaith	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Pahani Kaur	Sikh			Yes		
Stephenson J (Resigned on 06/03/17) Vacant	Baptist	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Committee B (The Church of England)						
Scovell K – left Vacant		Apologies				
McGuigan M (Resigned on 31/01/17)		Yes		Yes	Apologies	
Ms J Crowther		N/A	N/A	N/A	Apologies	
Committee C (Teachers' Associations)						
Nicholson A	National Union of Teachers			Yes		Yes
Cassidy P – left Vacant	National Union of Teachers	Yes		Yes	Yes	

Name	Faith Group/Association	26-Nov-15	* see note 23-Feb-16	25-May-16	29 Nov 16	6 March 17
Coward J – left Vacant	National Union of Teachers					
Walker N – left Vacant	Association of Teachers and Lecturers	Apologies				
Griffiths T	National Association of Headteachers Edge				Apologies	
Williams M – left Vacant	Association of Teachers and Lecturers	Apologies				
Committee D (Local Authority Representatives)						
Current members						
Councillor Fennelly N		Yes		Yes	Apologies	Apologies
Councillor Hart J		Apologies		Yes	Yes	
Councillor Knowles S		Apologies		Yes	Yes	Yes
Councillor Rodgers K		Yes		Resigned	-----	-----
Councillor Khan M (replaced Councillor Rodgers 13 May 2016)				Yes	Apologies	Apologies
In attendance at the meeting						
John Duhig - Clerk to SACRE			Yes			
Akeela Mohammed - Faith and Culture Sub-Group (Pre-Meeting)			Yes			
Rosie Faulkner - Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board (Pre-Meeting)						

The 2017 Aurora Humanitarian Index surveyed nearly 6,500 people in 12 countries.

In the UK it found:

- 56% of people felt local culture was threatened by ethnic minorities.
- 24% felt migrants took jobs away but half believed their impact was neutral.
- 34% thought minorities took more from society than they contributed.

Ruben Vardanyan, co-founder of the index, said: “The sense of apathy towards humanitarianism today highlights an urgent need for engagement in every sector.

“However, this negativity is counter-balanced by the incredibly positive attitudes of youth towards humanitarianism and the individual impact on the refugee crisis.”

“All of us need to educate and motivate the young people around the world so they not only understand their capacity for meaningful impact, but are inspired to act upon it.”

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SACRE BRIEFING

Issue: 14

This issue includes:

- [Welcome from the chair](#)
- [NASACRE Constitution and Executive Vacancies](#)
- [The BIG NASACRE Survey](#)
- [The Commission on RE](#)
- [APPG RE](#)
- [NASACRE Conference and AGM 2017](#)
- [NASACRE and the Inter Faith Network \(UK\)](#)
- [Teachers of RE and Humanities asked to complete survey on RE provision](#)
- [The Great Get Together](#)
- [The Commission on RE: Rudolf Elliott Lockhart, CEO of the RE Council](#)
- [Religion or belief: dress codes and religious symbols](#)
- [Items for your Summer SACRE Meeting](#)

Welcome from the Chair

It is good that we are beginning to have more of a dialogue with some of our member SACREs, thereby celebrating successes and enabling us as an organisation to reflect your views. For example, I was delighted to read about fantastic work going on in Nottinghamshire SACRE, where they are linking with children from 10 primary schools to consider "British Values,

human values: investigating what matters” at the National Holocaust Centre. This is exactly the sort of collaboration that all SACREs should be looking for opportunities to develop, and it would be great to hear what SACRE is doing, so please drop me an [email](#) or send a tweet @NASACRE and let us know about what your SACRE is doing.

Congratulations to Brent and the other commended SACREs for their ACCORD inclusivity awards, which Paul Pettinger writes more for SACREs. You can read this report on our website from [this link](#).

Good luck to those SACREs who have submitted an application for one of the NASACRE Westhill awards, the closing date for which was 31 March.

The focus of much of NASACRE’s work this coming term is the AGM and Conference in York on 16 May: ***Preparing for life in Britain today: the contribution of RE***. You can read more of the details below, but it promises to be as informative and thought-provoking as always, as we think about the contribution of RE to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.

The ***Religions are not Monoliths*** conference, held jointly with AREIAC in March, went well; evaluations were excellent and it is hoped that the collaboration with AREIAC will continue and other similar joint events will take place in the future. Summaries of the presentations by the two keynote speakers, [Dr Abdullah Trevathan](#) and [Bob Reiss](#), have been prepared by Dilwyn Hunt.

We believe these are valuable opportunities to develop expertise and hope to be able to provide more opportunities in the future.

NASACRE Constitution and Executive Vacancies

We have now closed the vote on the new constitution. All 42 responding SACREs agreed to the new constitution and so we consider that was passed unanimously by all SACREs. What this means is that, at our AGM we will be looking for some new members for the Executive Committee. These are voluntary unpaid roles, with travel expenses being paid. Your Executive usually meets in London, once each term, from 11.00-15.30 on a weekday. Much of our work is done electronically.

We have a pressing need for a Vice-Chair (having been without one for almost a year). This role is a six-year commitment, as the Vice-Chair becomes Chair after two years and then has a two-year tenure as Executive Assistant. The Vice-Chair supports the chair in representing NASACRE at meetings with various bodies such as the REC, and the DfE and giving direction to the work of the Executive.

We have four other Executive Committee vacancies. We are looking for people who, as well as having a good knowledge of the SACRE system, have skills in some specific areas. These are:

- Editing the SACRE Briefings – so someone with attention to detail and able to remind me of deadlines!
- Some knowledge of websites – we have technical support so an in-depth knowledge of HTML or CSS is not required, but a logical mind and an eye for style and detail is.
- Financial awareness – someone who can handle spreadsheets, invoicing and balance sheets.
- Conference organising – essentially able to project manage and liaise between venues, the Exec, speakers and others.

We do have people who are currently filling all these roles on the Executive committee, so it would be a case of shadowing an 'experienced hand' and taking over a role gradually. Officially these roles are for a three-year term of office (which can be renewed) and are defined in the Constitution as:

- 5.2 A Membership Secretary who shall monitor the membership, keep up-to-date records and work with the Treasurer to ensure members have paid their fees on time
- 5.3 A Communications Officer who shall have oversight of the Association's communications strategy and communications, including the NASACRE briefings sent to member SACRE
- 5.4 A Conference Organiser who shall have oversight of the Annual Conference in partnership with the Secretary and the Treasurer
- 5.5 A Development Officer who shall oversee the production of a development plan and report to the Executive and Council on its progress

Please find nomination papers on the [website](#)

The BIG NASACRE Survey

There has been a steady flow of responses to the [Big NASACRE Survey](#) – thank you to those who have responded so far. We appreciate the time and effort that member SACREs are taking to help us better represent your views at a national level. If your SACRE has not yet responded, then please do so before the deadline of 30 April, even if you can only answer some of the questions.

We realise that the survey is quite detailed, but at this time it is more important than ever that we are able to represent you from a position of knowledge. The data will take some time to analyse, especially as we have given space for individual views, but it is hoped to have a few 'headlines' at least by the time of the AGM, and for a fuller publication later in the year.

The Commission on RE

You will have noticed that the online survey has now closed and the first live evidence-gathering session has occurred. It is our understanding that there will be further live evidence-gathering sessions which SACREs may be invited or volunteer to attend by [emailing](#) the Commission's project manager, Jon Reynolds. The first of these is in [Birmingham on the 4th May](#).

Evidence can still be submitted via the [Commission website](#).

In an [item below](#), Rudolph Elliott Lockhart provides more information about the Commission and its desire for information from SACREs.

APPG RE

The All Party Parliamentary Group for RE (APPG RE) held its latest session recently entitled *Mainstreaming Religious Literacy*. The speakers were:

- Professor John Wolffe, Department of Religious Studies at the Open University
- Professor Joshua Hordern, Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at the University of Oxford, Oxford Healthcare Values Partnership
- Kamran Malik, Senior Partner at Ernst and Young, working with Coexist House

All three spoke about the vital role of teachers (not just RE teachers) to promote good religious literacy as a way to change how religion is viewed by (social) media

and society. It was most surprising to hear how Ernst and Young value religious understanding.

Our Chair, Paul Smalley, represented NASACRE at the meeting with a further four executive members present, representing other interests but with a definite eye on ensuring members were aware of SACREs and their work. Paul suggested that Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards could be tweaked to ensure all teachers have a commitment to promoting Religious Literacy. This was warmly welcomed by all present in the room, and Chair of the APPGRE, Fiona Bruce MP, promised to raise this with ministers.

NASACRE Conference and AGM 2017

Preparing for life in Britain today: the contribution of RE

Bookings are coming in steadily for our **NASACRE Conference and AGM 2017** on 16 May at the York Hilton, 1 Tower Street, York, YO1 9WD.

£100 per delegate from NASACRE member SACREs

£125 per delegate from non-member SACREs and interested others

Kosher meals should be booked and cannot be guaranteed after 28 April.

SACRE Clerks should book on behalf of their delegates - please check your Clerk has done so. Fire regulations at the venue mean we have to monitor numbers carefully and keep to the stated number of attendees.

Bookings: [**Conference and AGM 2017**](#)

Booking deadline: 9 May

Driving and parking are greatly discouraged in York city centre, but there are a limited number of parking places available at the hotel at £12 per day and £19 for 24 hours for overnight guests.

Castle Car Park is opposite the Hilton at £2.40 per hour; Park & Ride at £2.70 return.

For those who may wish to stay overnight on Monday 15 May, we have negotiated a guaranteed reduced rate at the Hilton. A limited number of places, which may be cancelled up to 24 hours before, are available:

£105 - room only

£115 - bed and breakfast single room

£125 - bed and breakfast double room

Book [online](#) or ring 01904 464712 (Mary) or 01904 464722 (Andy) during weekday business hours.

Other hotel booking websites may offer lower rates for the Hilton, but these may be advance purchase and non-refundable and prices are often room only.

NASACRE and the Inter Faith Network (UK)

NASACRE is in membership with the IFN in the Educational and Academic Bodies section. Members in this category, which includes WASACRE, meet at least once a year ([click here](#) for details). NASACRE also has the opportunity to take part in the consultations undertaken by the IFN and to inform and shape its policies towards education and Religious Education.

Part of IFN (UK)'s remit is to promote a better understanding of RE and its website publications under the heading EDUCATION, includes a page on RE across the UK, what expected of different sorts of schools and a page on understanding SACRES. In this way IFN is attempting to [promote better religious literacy](#).

IFN has a wealth of publications. Three in the last year have sections for schools and are worth being aware of:

- The Inter Faith Week Toolkit
- Inter Faith Learning, Dialogue and Cooperation: Next Steps
- Let's Talk: Practical Pointers for Inter Faith Dialogue

All three are free to [download](#).

Michael Metcalf has helpfully produced some reflections for NASACRE members on the IFN, NASACRE and what we can learn from their respective histories. More especially he looks to the future with a real sense of optimism at what NASACRE,

SACREs and IFN can achieve in partnership. His paper can be found by following [this link](#).

Teachers of RE and Humanities asked to complete survey on RE provision

The REC and NATRE have invited all secondary teachers of RE and Humanities in England and Wales to complete the *State of the Nation* survey, to let them know about the level of RE provision in schools. Their aim is to use the results of the survey to produce an accurate report on how all 4,500 state-funded secondary schools in England and Wales are making provision for religious education.

Schools have been sent a formal request via email for the required information, including a link to the survey, with a reminder in March, but a further reminder from SACREs would be helpful.

The results will create a snapshot picture of compliance across the country that will highlight examples of best practice and innovation that can be shared, as well as identify under-performing areas where additional future support can be targeted. The data collected online during the spring will be collated and critically assessed, with the findings published during the summer term.

Please forward the [survey](#) to teachers of RE, Humanities and SLT and encourage them to complete it.

The Great Get Together

On 22 February, the Jo Cox Foundation launched The Great Get Together to commemorate the murder of the MP as a way of bringing communities together to build better community cohesion. The event, which will take place over the weekend of 17 -18 June 2017 has its own [website](#) where events can be registered.

An issue for many schools is that this event falls during the month of Ramadan for Muslims. Hence, schools that want to participate in the event ought to think carefully about how the issue of - secondary - pupils fasting would exclude them from such events, especially as Jo Cox was seen as a [champion of the rights of Muslims in her constituency](#).

SACREs wishing to give advice to schools on **The Great Get Together** should consult their appointed Muslim members to see how Muslim communities are planning to be involved in this event, if at all.

Where Muslim communities are involved in **The Great Get Together** they will, on the whole, be integrating this into interfaith iftars, but not necessarily joining with those of others where this would compromise the fast.

The Commission on RE

Rudolf Elliott Lockhart, CEO of the RE Council

The [Commission on Religious Education](#) (CoRE), established in mid-2016, is picking up momentum. After a very positive response to the call for evidence with over 2,000 people responding, CoRE is exploring additional ways to hear from stakeholders in RE. Commissioners have now met for a second residential meeting and are considering a wide range of evidence on which to base their interim report. This is a substantial project with the potential to create some of the most exciting developments in religious education for decades. [14 commissioners](#) with a wide range of expertise and experience have been appointed to review the legal, education, and policy frameworks for RE. The Government is watching with interest, waiting to hear what the commissioners will recommend.

This is a vitally important time for RE: academisation has put the SACRE system under substantial pressure, and CoRE offers a way to make recommendations that could transform the situation and ensure that RE has strong foundations. It is therefore critically important that everyone with an interest in RE should feel able to engage with CoRE. It is particularly important for the commissioners to hear from SACREs and from people working with SACREs. As the bodies with a statutory role overseeing religious education, SACREs have a crucial role to play in any discussion over the future legal, educational and policy frameworks for the subject.

There are many ways to get in touch with CoRE. Some SACREs have already sent evidence to CoRE as a result of the online call for evidence that CoRE ran from December 2016 to February 2017. It is still possible to [submit evidence via the CoRE website](#). It is also possible to give evidence orally at one of a series of public evidence-gathering sessions. We have already run one session in London,

but there will be further sessions in Birmingham, Manchester, Exeter, Durham, as well as a second London session (the dates for these sessions will shortly be announced: check the CoRE website and [twitter feed](#) for updates). To get a flavour of the public evidence session, you can read an [account of the first session by one of the commissioners here](#), along with links to some of the presentations. If you would like to give evidence at any of the upcoming sessions please get in touch with CoRE's project manager on enquiries@commissiononre.org.uk.

The commissioners are also keen to learn more by getting out and about, meeting and talking with as many people working in RE as possible. If you'd like to invite a commissioner to a SACRE meeting, or to attend an event your SACRE is running, please [get in touch](#).

An interim report from CoRE will be published later on this year, after which there will be a further consultation where again, a range of views from SACREs will be vital. The final report is due out in mid-2018.

For CoRE to be a success it will need to build on the wisdom within the RE community. CoRE needs to hear about what works (and what doesn't) on a local level.

The Commission on RE is therefore the chance for every SACRE to explain what is necessary to secure a strong future for RE.

Religion or belief: dress codes and religious symbols

In March, the European Court of Justice advised the Belgian government that companies, and in this case G4S, could have a policy that forbade the wearing of religious symbols in the work place. The Court recognized that companies had a right to project a neutral image and that they were within their rights to have policies which upheld that right. This was not deemed to be discriminatory. The advice can be used by judges in EU member states to inform decisions that they make where it has alleged discrimination has taken place, direct or indirect.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has stated: 'Following a ruling from the Court of Justice of the European Union, employers can ban staff from wearing visible religious symbols, but must have a relevant policy in place before

doing so.'

The latest advice can be found [here](#).

Religious dress and schools

The Department for Education, based on case law here, is quite clear that schools in England can determine their own dress codes and that they should do this in consultation with parents. It is not expected that this will change. What may be affected is the right of staff to wear religious dress in school, where a school wished to project a 'neutral' image.

SACREs and the ruling

SACREs may be asked for advice on this matter, especially where there are no interfaith groups that might be consulted. SACREs are advised to look closely at the Equality and Human Rights Commission website for the latest advice from them.

The ruling and Brexit

It is not clear what will happen to such a ruling when the UK leaves the EU in just under two years. The European Court of Justice is an EU institution, as opposed to the European Court of Human Rights which is a Council of Europe Institution, and there will be some adjustment made in terms of its impact on UK law when the UK leaves the EU.

Items for your Summer SACRE Meeting

- **Check** your NASACRE membership status for 2016-17 and if necessary arrange payment of membership fee.
- Decide who will be attending the AGM and Conference on 16 May... and ensure your clerk books them onto the conference!
- Consider seriously whether your SACRE could nominate a member to serve on the NASACRE Executive.
- If not already completed, discuss and respond to **The BIG NASACRE Survey**. You may decide to hold an additional/extraordinary meeting for this, before 30 April.
- Consider if there is any evidence your SACRE could send to the Commission on RE. Encourage individuals to respond.
- Consider if your SACRE has any training needs that might be met by

using the NASACRE resources on the website.

- Ensure that your **Annual Report** is completed and sent to the DfE and NASACRE.
- Email **chair@nasacre.org.uk** with details of any events you are holding during this term and next.



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