

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDING
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

24 June 2025

The meeting took place via Zoom

Present

**Representing Christian denominations and other religious dominations
and beliefs (Group A):**

Wendy Brice-Thompson, Roman Catholic
Om Dhir, Hindu
Peter Feinson, Baptist
Jenny Fox, Salvation Army
Dawn Ladbrook, Evangelical Free Church
Dr John Lester, Baha'i faith
George Prinn, Humanist
John Smailes, Evangelical Free Church

Representing the Church of England (Group B):

Stephanie Ellner
Ruth Everett

Representing teachers (Group C):

Karen Van Coevorden

Representing the Local Authority (Group D):

Councillor David Taylor

Co-opted Member

Sidra Naeem

Professional adviser:

Julia Diamond-Conway

Michelle Morgan – Clerk, Havering Governor Services

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

In the absence of the Chair, JL agreed to Chair the meeting and would be referred to as the Acting Chair (until election of Chair).

Apologies for absence had been received from Corinne Simmons, Councillor Jacqueline McArdle and Councillor Katherine Tumilty, Barry Smith, Kathryn Everitt and Tariq Mahmood MBE

Absence from the following Members was noted: Luthaneal Adams, Nasir Mubasher, Sansar Narwal, Pastor Aloysius Peter, Kamal Siddiqui, Bal Degun, Terry Riches and Councillor Ruck.

The clerk provided an update on some membership changes:

- Councillor Jacqueline McArdle had stepped down from SACRE due to personal circumstances.
- Councillor Katherine Tumilty was currently unwell and it was not known at what point she would return.
- This was the last meeting for Karen Van Coevorden due to her new role at St Paul's Cathedral which had made it difficult to commit to the Havering SACRE, however assurance was given that Karen would remain involved in RE and education in a professional capacity.
- Kathryn Everitt was also looking to step down from Havering SACRE as she was no longer teaching; Kathryn would remain until an alternative Group C member had been identified.

SACRE members wished all departing members well and thanked them for their support and contribution to the Havering SACRE.

2. NEW OR SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Sarah Yeneralski (teacher at Harold Court Primary) would be joining a SACRE meeting to observe in the near future.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

It was noted that the current Chair had confirmed that she would not be looking to run as Chair for a further term.

There were no parties who expressed an interest in either the Chair or Vice Chair role. It was therefore agreed to defer the decision until the autumn term.

ACTION: HGS (for the agenda)

4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2024 AND 24 FEBRUARY 2025 AND MATTERS ARISING

4.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2024 were received and agreed; these had been reviewed in detail on 24 February 2025.

4.2. The minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2025 were received and agreed.

4.3. Matters arising from the minutes, (not included elsewhere on the agenda), were as noted:

4.3.1. Substitute Members (Minute 2, refers): The clerk confirmed that she had advised new SACRE Members about sending representatives.

4.3.2. 5 December 2025 (Minute 4.1, refers): The clerk confirmed that the Minutes had been amended as requested.

4.3.3. Youth SACRE (Minute 4.2.1, refers): Cllr Taylor had been due to attend on 19 June 2025 however the meeting had been cancelled due to the hot weather.

4.3.4. Report (Minute 6, refers): The national update report had been uploaded onto the HES portal.

4.3.5. Ofsted presentation (Minute 7, refers): The Ofsted presentation had been shared as agreed.

4.3.6. Determination process (Minute 10, refers): The proposed process had been agreed.

5. UPDATE ON SCHOOL ACTIVITY

JDC reported that a training day had taken place in March with 11 teachers in attendance from Havering. JDC commented that it was positive to see the strong representation from Havering on the call.

It was noted that moving forward, a member of Group C would be asked to provide a short update on any local activity.

6. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

George Prinn joined the meeting at 5.40pm.

JDC agreed to share a copy of the report with HSIS so that it could be uploaded onto the HES portal.

JDC referred to her report highlighting the Curriculum and Assessment review which was being led by Becky Francis. The RE Community had

submitted a lot of evidence to the review and feedback had been received that the group was aware of the national disparities in terms of religious education. Clarification was provided by JDC, that the issue was not due to the different syllabus' in place but that there was no general agreement regarding the standards that the syllabus had to aspire to. JDC reflected that Havering pupils received a strong RE education as the Agreed Syllabus was of high quality, however ideally, this would be the case across the country. It was expected that an update would be published in the autumn term.

Ruth Everitt joined the meeting at 5.45pm.

JDC encouraged members of SACRE to complete the training required to speak in schools or welcome pupils into their places of worship. The report included details on how to access the online training and how to make the most of such visits. Teachers might also find the training useful.

7. SECONDARY SCHOOL OUTCOMES MONITORING

The secondary school outcomes data had been shared at the previous meeting and SACRE Members had been tasked to review the information provided and identify any perceived areas of improvement required or where schools needed to be congratulated for their good practice.

R Everett referred to the data relating to The Frances Bardsley and advised that the Diocese was already working with the school especially regarding provision at Key Stage 5.

Cllr Taylor referred to 3 schools which had outstanding practice and suggested that it would be worth contacting the school to see what they did differently so other schools could learn from their provision. JDC agreed however highlighted that the outstanding element referred to the overall Ofsted judgement and not RE specifically.

Caution was urged when looking at the data that sometimes it could look like there was no provision for RE in place, however this could be due to the school calling it something different; hence why the GCSE outcomes data was more reliable than the school workforce data. It was highlighted, that school websites would provide further information regarding names of subjects.

SACRE Members Champion; a high level of pupils had taken the GCSE and the school had one of the highest number of hours, however had lower outcomes. JDC explained that the context of each school needed to be known before judgements could be made and that further exploration of the results in other subjects would show whether RE was the outlier. If it

was, then SACRE Members could write to the school to see if there was anything that SACRE could do to support.

The Vice Chair shared a concern regarding Redden Court which had cut ties with its local church. JDC replied that a letter could be sent to the Headteacher again to see if there was any support needed.

JDC advised that due to a change in contract, she would not be able to write the letters on behalf of SACRE, however could share the bank of letters which could be used by members as a template. It was agreed that any letters sent needed to be a SACRE Members' decision. Cllr Taylor agreed to help draft the letters to be reviewed at the next meeting.

ACTION: JDC / Cllr Taylor

8. WORKING PARTY UPDATE – PRIMARY RE CONFERENCE

The notes from the working party meeting held on 15 April 2025 were shared.

It was questioned whether the conference welcomed 2 pupils per school, if it was affordable for the schools to find cover for that member of staff. JDC replied that in the past, schools had brought along 5-6 pupils and if a teacher was not available, had taken an LSA.

The importance of sharing a date with schools was shared especially if looking to hold the conference in spring 2026.

JDC suggested that the HSIS admin team might be able to share the information with the Headteachers and RE Subject Leaders via email. J Fox advised that a new Minister would be joining at the end of July and therefore although it would be fine, final confirmation of the venue would need to wait until their arrival. It was suggested that the working party did not need to wait until the next SACRE meeting to share the information once confirmed. Potential dates were discussed; week commencing 9 March 2026 was agreed as the best fit avoiding other religious dates in the calendar.

Another suggestion was made that SACRE should look to apply for any suitable grants to fund the conference.

George Prinn left the meeting at 6.30pm.

Clarification was sought regarding risk assessments and safeguarding processes and procedures around the event. DBS checks for those running stands would also need to be checked. JDC replied that the working party could liaise with Susan Sutton and/or Amanda Jackson

regarding this. The working party would arrange another meeting to discuss the event details.

ACTION: Working party

9. SCHOOL WEBSITE MONITORING

SACRE Members agreed to complete the outstanding website audits by the end of the academic year.

ACTION: SACRE Members

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

JDC advised that the Agreed Syllabus completed in collaboration with Redbridge SACRE, had gone to Havering cabinet later than Redbridge. Therefore Redbridge only had until 2026, however Havering had until 2027. The first step in the review of the Agreed Syllabus was to ask teachers to complete a survey; it would be useful for Havering and Redbridge to undertake this exercise at the same time. At the next meeting an update would be brought back about the timelines agreed by Redbridge to see if this also worked for Havering.

ACTION: JDC

11. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Meeting dates for the 2025-26 academic year would be shared with the minutes.

ACTION: HGS

The meeting closed at 6.45pm.

Chair.....

Date.....