KENT STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

CONSTITUTION and TERMS OF REFERENCE

Notes: References to Kent throughout this document relate to the area served by Kent County Council.

Kent SACRE seeks to ensure that all pupils in our schools develop spiritually, academically, emotionally and morally, as well as socially, culturally and physically, so that they are able to understand themselves and others and cope with the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of living in a rapidly changing world.

Kent SACRE aspires to:

- Enhance the quality of religious education and collective worship in Kent schools; and
- Celebrate the religious and cultural diversity found in Kent

Our vision is:

For schools to be able to:

- provide challenging learning through the RE Curriculum;
- promote an inspirational and aspirational ethos through meaningful and engaging Collective Worship; and
- contribute to community cohesion by engaging the whole school community in an exploration of identity and community in the local, national and global context.

For the Local Authority to:

- place a high priority on the role of RE and Collective Worship in schools;
- aim to provide sufficient resource to support schools in the above;
- work in partnership with SACRE to build links between schools and local faith communities.

For SACRE members to:

- represent their constituents in the spirit of promoting educational RE and Collective Worship within statutory regulations;
- represent fairly the views of their constituents as far as this is possible;
- work with other members of SACRE to model and promote respect for and understanding of different beliefs and lifestyles and a universal search for what it means to be human.

Our Aims:

To work with the Local Authority to:

- place a high priority on the role of RE and Collective Worship in schools;
- aim to provide sufficient resources
- work in partnership with SACRE to build links between schools and local faith communities.

To support schools in:

- raising standards of pupil attainment in RE to equate to national expectations of performance levels in other core subjects
- developing the spiritual dimension of the school
- improving the quality of collective worship
- making appropriate provision to meet the needs of all pupils represented within their school community.

Statutory Main Duties:

Kent SACRE is expected to:

- require the local authority to review its current agreed syllabus
- advise the local authority on matters connected with RE given in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and collective worship in authority schools
- offer advice particularly on methods of teaching, the choice of resources and the provision of training for teachers
- consider any application from a school for a 'determination' to lift the requirement for the majority of acts of worship in that school to be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character"
- publish an annual report giving details of its work, advice given by SACRE to the local authority, and deal with matters about which the authority has sought advice from SACRE.

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. The SACRE will consist of the members appointed by the Local Authority ("the Authority") to represent respectively:

a. Christian denominations (other than the Church of England) and other denominations and religions as in the opinion of the Authority reflect the principal religious traditions in Kent. The number of representatives approved under the category shall, so far as is consistent with the efficient discharge of this group's functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area.
b. The Church of England
c. Teacher Associations having regard to local circumstances.
d. The Local Authority

NB. With reference to 'local circumstances', SACRE believes that it is of paramount importance that, across the Teacher Associations, representation is professionally focused on RE.

2. The list attached as Appendix 1 outlines the composition of the SACRE in Kent.

3. The length of membership as determined by the Authority is 4 years. Any member of the SACRE appointed by the Authority may be removed if in the opinion of the Authority:
(i) he/she ceases to be representative of the denomination or association he/she was appointed to represent or;
(ii) he/she ceases to be a member of the Authority.

NB. Failure to attend 2 consecutive meetings without good reason may be deemed as ceasing to represent the appointing body.

4. Any member may resign his/her office at any time.

5. A SACRE may also include co-opted members. Co-opted members will be appointed to the most appropriate group and will have a voice but not a vote within that group (as appropriate).

6.
(i) Co-opted members must fulfil a particular role or offer particular expertise that is not otherwise available through SACRE
(ii) A co-option is for a period not exceeding 2 years. If the group wishes to extend the period of co-option this must come to SACRE for approval and where appropriate to recommend to the LA to confirm the appointment.

7. The Authority will appoint the Chair of SACRE whose term of office will be for a period of 4 years. The Vice-Chair of SACRE will be appointed by the SACRE.

8. Meetings of the full SACRE will be open to members of the public except when items of a confidential nature are to be discussed.

B. TERMS OF REFERENCE

B.1 DUTIES

9. SACRE can advise the Authority upon matters concerned with religious worship in maintained schools and religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus. These matters (which the Education Act 2006 provides can include teaching methods, teaching materials and teacher training) can be referred by the Authority or may be determined by the SACRE. The advice offered by SACRE carries no statutory force, but the LA should give careful consideration to advice offered.

10. The broad role of the SACRE is to support effective provision of RE and Collective Worship in schools. The Authority will work with its SACRE to review existing provision for RE and Collective Worship and consider any action which might be taken.

11. SACRE has 2 particular functions: it can require the Authority to review its current agreed syllabus; and secondly it may determine, on application by a Headteacher of a maintained school after consultation with the Governing Body, that the requirement for collective worship in his/her school 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 in the school.

12. Each SACRE must publish an annual report on its work. This should:
(i) Specify any matters on which it has advised the Authority
(ii) Broadly describe the nature of that advice
(iii) Set out its reasons for offering advice in any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the Authority

N.B. Kent SACRE publishes its Annual Report on the SACRE section of Kent.gov.uk. web page, and the RE pages on Kenttrustweb, in addition to sending a copy to The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

B.2 PROCEEDINGS

13. SACRE will meet as a full body for half a day 3 times a year. It will be for the SACRE to decide whether further meetings of the full SACRE, representative groups or sub-committees are needed.

14. The Authority will provide specific resources as follows:
(i) A Clerk to organise and minute meetings and to co-ordinate working parties and initiatives.
(ii) The Education, Learning and Skills Group to provide the services of a specialist RE advisor / consultant to support the SACRE in fulfilling its role.
(ii) Funding to service the formal meetings of SACRE and associated running costs for the delivery of its functions.

15.
(i) Each constituent group will elect a Convenor. The Convenor will normally represent the group on the SACRE steering group.
(ii) The group will agree who will represent them on SACRE working parties, as required.

16. On any questions to be decided by the SACRE, only the representative groups listed in Appendix 1 have a vote and each such group has a single vote. Decisions within a group about how that vote is to be cast do not require unanimity. Each group is to regulate its own proceedings. In the event of a tied vote the issue will be decided by the casting vote of the Chairman.

    Representatives of the Authority appointed under group 1 (d) above cannot vote on the question of whether to require the Authority to review the Agreed Syllabus. In the event of a tied vote the issue would fall and similarly any new initiative will not proceed.

17. 'In order for the SACRE to be quorate a minimum of one member from group A, B, C and D must be present, providing that one of those members is from a religious denomination that is not Christian.'

18. The validity of proceedings of the SACRE or of the members of the SACRE of any particular category shall not be affected:
(i) By a vacancy in the office of any member of the SACRE
(ii) By a member of the SACRE no longer representing the appointing body.

APPENDIX 1: KENT STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MEMBERSHIP

GROUP A: CHRISTIAN AND OTHER RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS REFLECTING THE PRINCIPAL RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS OF THE AREA (14 seats)

Baha'i (1 seat)

Buddhism (1 seat)

Free Church (4 seats)

Greek Orthodox Church (1 seat)

Hinduism (1 seat)

Humanism (1 seat)

Islam (1 seat)

Judaism (1 seat)

Roman Catholic (2 seats)

Sikhism (1 seat)

GROUP B: CHURCH OF ENGLAND (6 seats)

Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education (3 seats)

Rochester Diocesan Board of Education (3 seats)

GROUP C: TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS (5 seats)

Kent Primary Head Teachers Executive KPHE (1 seat)

Kent Secondary Head Teachers Executive KSHE (1 seat)

National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (1 seat)

National Education Union (2 seats)

Co-opted Teachers

GROUP D: LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY (4 seats)

Local Authority (Kent County Council Members) (4 seats)