

**KENT STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(SACRE)
CONSTITUTION and TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Notes:

1. References to Kent throughout this document relate to the area served by Kent County Council
2. Those items marked * are required by statute

PREAMBLE

We seek to ensure that all pupils in our schools develop spiritually, academically, emotionally and morally 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.

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.

Vision Statement:

Kent SACRE aspires:

- To enhance the quality of religious education and collective worship in Kent schools, and
- To celebrate the religious and cultural diversity found in Kent

Goals:

To support schools in:

- raising standards of pupil attainment in religious education to equate with national expectations of performance levels in other core subjects
- developing the spiritual dimension of school life
- improving the quality of collective worship

• making appropriate provision to meet the needs of all faith groups represented within their school community

Statutory Main Duties:

Kent SACRE is expected:

• To require the local authority to review its current agreed syllabus

• To advise the local authority on matters connected with religious education given in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and collective worship in authority schools

• To offer advice particularly on methods of teaching, the choice of resources and the provision of training for teachers

• To 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”.

• To 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 four years following the County Council cycle. 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 two consecutive meetings without good reason will 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 have no voting rights. Co-opted members will be appointed to the most appropriate group.

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 two 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 four 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 two 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

B.2 PROCEEDINGS

13. SACRE will meet as a full body for half a day three 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) An officer from the Advisory Service with strategic responsibility for RE to support the SACRE in fulfilling its role.
- (iii) An officer from the Children, Families and Education Directorate to support the decision making process by Kent SACRE.

(iv) 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.

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 fail and similarly any new initiative will not proceed.

17. In order for the SACRE to be quorate a minimum of one-third of the representatives from groups A, B and C and one member of Group D must be in attendance at the meeting.

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.