

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for Bath and
North East Somerset

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE Annual Report September 2024- August 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 From the Chair: Welcome to our Annual Report 24-25

This report covers the period September 2024 to August 2025. We have had another successful year of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) work with the Council: continuing to meet online with an in person meeting in the summer.

Visiting schools in person has continued, especially where either Ofsted or School Inspection of Anglican and Methodist School (SIAMs) reports suggested support was needed, and several schools were encouraged to apply for the Widening Inclusivity in Religious Education (WIRE) award (See 3.1). Other support included on-line teacher training.

The SACRE meetings in general had reasonable attendance, although there were concerns at some absences, and the year saw some changes in membership. We are actively seeking to recruit when vacancies arise (see 5.2). There is a good link with the local Bath Interfaith Group, active in the area for over 30 years, and represented on the SACRE by myself. Local RE teachers are kept informed of local interfaith events, and can obtain or have access to speakers or visitors for their schools.

During this period we completed the review of the SACRE Constitution, and it was approved at the October 2024 SACRE meeting – the next review in 4 years' time (2028).

A substantial review of B&NES SACRE Guidance on Collective Worship was completed by a working group of several SACRE members. There was some lively discussion about how collective worship is implemented in local schools, suggesting that in time the legal requirement may need to change (see 3.2). Unfortunately we were unable to carry out our usual monitoring in this area (by school website reviews) due to time constraints etc.

Two changes ahead for the next year are the decision taken at the end of this period to discontinue maintenance of our SACRE website (see section 2.5), and the change of contract away from RE Today (see 5.1: we would like our RE Advisor to contract directly with the LA).

We are looking forward to further work with the local schools, developing our SACRE membership and continuing support for schools next year. In addition, with the start of the process for revision of our Agreed Syllabus this year (see 1.3), this review will form a significant part of our activities in the coming year.



Jane O'Hara

Chair of Bath and North East Somerset SACRE

January 2026

1.2 Overview – SACRE

A Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is legally constituted by a Local Authority with the responsibility for overseeing Religious Education and Collective Worship in community, Voluntary Controlled Foundation schools, schools without a religious character and Trust schools. SACRE's key role is to advise the Local Authority (LA), monitor how this advice has been acted upon and then feedback. B&NES SACRE use an action log to support this process and keep track of the effectiveness of how this advice has been acted upon.

SACRE has met three times in the last academic year. Two meetings were held online and one was held 'in person' at the University of Bath. All meetings were quorate.

In meetings the following aspects were discussed:

- SACRE membership
- National Content Standard
- Standards in RE and Collective Worship
- WIRE award
- Local, Regional and National updates
- Agreed Syllabus Conference

1.3 Overview – Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE has developed and shares a locally agreed syllabus with partner SACREs in Bristol, North Somerset, and the London Borough of Haringey. The current syllabus (Awareness Mystery and Value) was launched in March 2022 and it will run for a period of 5 years to 2027.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference reconvened to consider the options for the next syllabus review which will be due in 2027. An Agreed Syllabus Conference was formed in this academic year (2024-25) and work began on reviewing and updating the Agreed Syllabus, ready for schools to use in September 2027. During this year, teacher surveys were carried out in order to gain an understanding of how the current agreed syllabus is working in schools and to gather opinions about what teachers and pupils would like from a future Agreed Syllabus. Three meetings were also held regionally with other local SACREs (Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Swindon) to begin looking at options that could be used moving forwards. This decision making process will now continue into the academic year 2025-26.

2. Religious Education

2.1 Locally Agreed Syllabus

The locally agreed syllabus in schools is Awareness Mystery and Value ([Awareness Mystery Value](#)). This is shared by Bristol, North Somerset and the London Borough of Haringey. It is utilised by many schools across the authority, including Academies. However many academies are using alternatives in order to teach their own RE curriculum. This will need to be investigated further as part of the Agreed Syllabus Conference process.

2.2 Standards and Monitoring of Religious Education: Ofsted and SIAMS Reports

SACRE accesses Ofsted reports on local schools throughout the year. During the period of this report (2024-25), 21 schools received inspections. The following table highlights where RE or Collective Worship was noted. Where relevant, schools were contacted to celebrate success, encourage them to apply for the WIRE award or to offer support with their RE curriculum.

School	Date of inspection	Comments that might be of interest to SACRE
Stanton Drew Primary School	1 and 2 October 2024	“Pupils benefit from a rich and diverse education underpinned by a comprehensive personal development provision. They demonstrate tolerant and respectful attitudes to others. Pupils are knowledgeable about culture and faiths that differ from their own.” Some comments on content and sequencing of curriculum (not RE specific).
St Mary’s Catholic School	1 and 2 October 2024	No specific mention of RE or CW
Norton Hill School	8 and 9 October 2024	“The school community does not tolerate behaviours that are not inclusive. Pupils and students speak up against injustice.”
St Mary’s C of E Primary School	15 and 16 October 2024	No specific mention of RE or CW
St Philip’s C of E Primary School	5 and 6 November 2024	Some comments about essential

		knowledge (not RE specific).
Farmborough Church Primary School	19 and 20 November 2024	“The school is inclusive and welcoming to all.” Pupils are committed to their learning. Some comments about curriculum sequencing (not RE specific).
Combe Down CofE Primary School	19 and 20 November 2024	“The school has worked with the trust to develop and strengthen the wider curriculum. Some subjects are more securely embedded than others. For example, the curriculums for history and religious education set out the knowledge for pupils to learn and the order in which to learn it.”
Welton Primary School	10 and 11 December 2024	“Pupils reflect on the lives of others. They learn about cultures from around the world, including through international links. They welcome visitors from India and Ukraine. This helps pupils to understand the lives of others and the commonalities they have as well as recognising and celebrating differences. “
St Mary’s Church of England Primary School, Writhlington	10 and 11 December 2024	No specific mention of RE or CW
Newbridge Primary School	17 and 18 December 2024	“Pupils are proud of how they support all pupils to treat everyone with respect. They learn about each other’s faiths and the beliefs that they have. They discuss how everyone is different, and how this makes them unique.”
Wellsway School	17 and 18 December 2024	No specific mention of RE or CW
High Littleton CofE VC Primary School	21 and 22 January 2025	“Pupils have a strong appreciation of the challenges that some people face due to things such as their gender or race. They admire the positive contributions made by those who have challenged injustice or have come to Britain from other countries.”
Fosse Way School	14 and 15 January 2025	No specific mention of RE or CW

Bathford Church School	21 and 22 January 2025	“They (pupils) make pertinent connections between different religions. For example, pupils explain thoughtfully that most religions are ancient and usually have a higher power than humans.”
Oldfield School	21 and 22 January 2025	No specific mention of RE or CW
Whitchurch Primary School	4 and 5 February 2025	No specific mention of RE or CW
Oldfield Park Junior School	4 and 5 February	“The curriculum is engaging and ambitious. It sets out the essential knowledge pupils need to learn. This knowledge is connected, enabling pupils to revisit important content. For example, in Year 4, pupils learn why a mosque is special to Muslims. In Year 6, they study the Five Pillars of Islam and visit a mosque. However, the curriculum does not provide effective opportunities to extend pupils’ knowledge and deepen their understanding.”
Paulton Junior School	4 and 5 March 2025	Some areas of the curriculum need further development (not RE specific).
Widcombe C of E Junior School	18 March 2025	“Pupils demonstrate impressive knowledge of different cultures and ways of life. They show an extraordinary understanding of the protected characteristics and understand why discrimination is wrong.”
Oldfield Park Infant School	1 and 2 April 2025	No specific mention of RE or CW
Farrington Gurney Church of England Primary School	29 April 2025	No specific mention of RE or CW

In addition to Ofsted inspections, all Church of England schools are inspected as a designated church school through the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS). The schools inspected during the timescale of the annual report are detailed below:

Date of inspection	School	LA & Trust	Previous outcome	Outcome
16/06/25	Trinity Church School	MSNP BANES	RI	J1
12/06/25	St Andrew's Church School	BWMAT BANES	Outstanding	J1
17/10/24	St Julian's Church School, Wellow	MNSP B&NES	Good	J1
17/10/24	St Stephen's Church of England School, Lansdown	BWMAT B&NES	Outstanding	J1

All schools inspected received Judgement 1 (J1): *'Through its vision and practice, the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish'*.

2.3 Standards and Monitoring of Religious Education: Public Examination Results in Religious Studies

Our thanks to NATRE who have provided the KS4 data for 2025 below:

School Name	KS4 Entries Full Course (Percentage)	Percentage 9-4
Beechen Cliff School	12	47.6
Chew Valley School	1.9	100
Hayesfield Girls' School & Mixed Sixth Form	11.1	72
Norton Hill School	13.9	72.5
Oldfield School	16	88.6
Ralph Allen School	18	73.7
Somervale School	22.9	36.7
Saint Gregory's Catholic College		
St Mark's Church of England School	71.2	70.3
Wellsway School	6	76.9
Writhlington	8.4	90.9
Broadlands Academy	0	
Somerset Studio School	0	
Isambard Kingdom Brunel Studio School	0	
Aspire Academy	0	
Fosse Way School	0	
Three Ways School	0	

SACRE notes the following from the results:

- St Mark's entered the largest cohort for GCSE RS (71.2%) and attained pass rates of 70.3%.

- Hayesfield, Norton Hill, Ralph Allen, Chew Valley, Wellsway, Oldfield and Writhlington also obtained high pass rates.
- Chew Valley School obtained 100% 9-4 but only entered 1.9% of their cohort.
- 6 schools did not enter any students for GCSE RS.

As part of its monitoring role, SACRE will be congratulating those schools who have achieved excellent results, whilst working with other schools to ensure that – even if they are not offering all students the chance to study for GCSE – they are meeting the legal requirements to teach RE in Key Stage 4.

2.4 Support for Teachers and Schools: Syllabus Teaching Materials

The Agreed Syllabus website [Awareness Mystery Value](#) contains a wealth of resources for teachers as well as the statutory programmes of study.

2.5 Support for Teachers and Schools: SACRE Website

The SACRE website <http://banes-sacre.com/> was maintained and updated during the year. A co-opted member of SACRE receives a small stipend for managing the site and ensuring it is kept up to date. As well as information about SACRE, the site contains ideas for RE specifically for Bath and North-East Somerset schools, including lists of resources available to borrow, and reports on the use of local visits and visitors to support the agreed syllabus for RE. However, at the end of this reporting period the decision was taken to discontinue maintenance of this website, as apparently it is now little used by teachers, and domain and other costs have increased, making it less sustainable.

However, we do have a presence on the Bath and North-East Somerset local authority website, and we will use this to enable members of the public to have access to SACRE information via the link to our website: [Standing Advisory Council on RE \(SACRE\) | The HUB \(bathnes.gov.uk\)](#)

In addition the new RE Hubs [<https://www.re-hubs.uk/>] website is dedicated to supporting Religious Education (RE) teachers and practitioners in the UK. They have created a neutral platform that brings all stakeholders together - until now, there hasn't been a single place to equip, enable, and signpost everyone within the community. This is an excellent resource superseding what we could offer.

2.6 Support for Teachers and Schools: Communication and Complaints

Termly newsletters have continued, with all schools receiving a SACRE newsletter three times per year. The newsletter contains contact details for various communities and resources, as well as ideas for the classroom and information on upcoming events and CPD.

The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints concerning RE nor was it notified of any disputes relating to withdrawal for RE. We are not aware of any teachers exercising their right not to participate in Collective Worship.

3. Collective Worship

We completed a substantial review of our Guidance on Collective Worship, and the updated version was approved in October by SACRE. It was circulated to all schools including CEOs, MAT Head Teachers and LA maintained School Head Teachers to raise awareness of the requirements, and of the specific role SACRE has in monitoring and evaluating.

Next review September 2029.

3.1 Training and Support

No training on Collective Worship was organised by SACRE during the year but information from other local providers, such as the Diocese of Bath & Wells was circulated to all schools through the newsletter.

The Wire Award - the Widening Diversity in Religious Education (WIRE) award is an opportunity available to all schools in the B&NES SACRE area. To achieve the Wire award a school must:

- Send a teacher to at least one continuing professional development (CPD) opportunity for RE. This could be the conference, or a local RE hub.
- Put on a 'faith day' or a celebration of RE to which a local SACRE member can be invited. Or a school might enter a national RE competition.
- Take pupils on a visit to a place of worship that is not the majority religion of their school. For most schools in B&NES, this will be from a faith other than Christianity.

The Award has been created to further SACRE's priority to encourage mutual understanding of different faiths, and to break down stereotypes and barriers. In the year 24-25, one school (Widcombe Infant School) met the criteria for the award.

3.2 Determinations

The updated guidance on Collective Worship clarifies the legal obligations including the right to withdrawal and explains the rich opportunities that collective worship offers students for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It explains that parents do have the option to withdraw their children from collective worship. In addition, if a school believes that it is not appropriate to hold mainly Christian acts of worship, it can seek a Determination from SACRE which will allow it to plan its acts of worship around a system of belief which is other than Christian.

B&NES SACRE recognises that some schools use the term 'assemblies' to refer to daily acts of collective worship, and we acknowledge that what is important is what happens during this time, ensuring that it is inclusive for their particular context and community.

However, the current situation presents some difficulties for SACRE since it is one of our responsibilities to monitor both Determinations and Collective Worship. No Determinations were brought to SACRE (and have not been for many years) and in some instances it is very difficult to understand how the content of 'assemblies' fulfils the requirement of daily acts of collective worship.

The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints about the provision of RE, and there were no requests from schools to vary the legal requirement for Collective Worship. Information for schools on how to do this can be found at: <http://www.banes-sacre.com/collective-worship>

4. Links with Other Organisations

4.1 National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on RE (NASACRE)

The SACRE retains an annual membership of this organisation which provides access to important updates on national issues, training opportunities for SACRE members, and the use of recommended templates for policies and guidance documents.

The annual NASACRE Conference in May 2025 was attended by one member of SACRE (as well as the adviser) who then gave feedback to members at the next SACRE meeting.

4.2 Regional

Two SACRE members attended the online South-West Conference for SACREs in February, which featured a keynote address by Bill Moore on the future of SACREs. A full report on the conference was shared with SACRE members and implications for future SACRE work noted.

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE continued to take part in the regional Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) project, aiming to provide training in religious education, especially through the building of communities of RE teachers across the region. The LTLRE conference ran in June 2025.

A member of SACRE represents the C of E Diocese of Bath and Wells and ensures we are updated on current training available from this source, as well as any updates and news of the SIAMS inspections of local Church of England schools.

The SACRE Adviser has worked closely with both the Diocese of Bath and Wells and other local MATs to ensure high-quality RE is being taught and that up to date CPD is available.

4.3 Local: Learn, Teach, Lead RE

The Bath and North East Somerset Hub is led jointly by Mary Patterson (Hayesfield School) and Paul Marvin (Farrington Gurney Primary school). Hub leaders have access to high quality training and facilitate three Hubs per year aimed at both primary and secondary teachers, and teaching assistants.

Two out of three meetings have happened online and have been mostly well attended. Feedback has been incredibly positive and there is a real sense of a shared RE community in this group with some innovative exciting ideas shared and visits to local places of worship undertaken.

4.4 Local: Faith Communities

We are fortunate to have representatives from a diversity of local Faith communities sitting on SACRE: Baha'i, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and Humanist. We are in the process of approaching those who do not attend regularly to see if they are able to suggest another representative to attend in their place.

The current Secretary of Bath Inter Faith Group sits on SACRE and gives regular updates on local activities, which are circulated. The representation from local faith communities is a useful resource for RE teachers, and will be invaluable as a resource for review of materials in the review of the Agreed Syllabus.

5. SACRE Arrangements

5.1 Organisation and Support

Bath and North East Somerset Council contracts with an RE Adviser who offers professional advice to SACRE, arranges and clerks the meetings, maintains the website, organises monitoring of RE and Collective Worship, and writes the Annual Report. Rebekah Guy began as RE Adviser in November 2023. The contract is with RE Today Services, although they informed us they want to discontinue with the contract from September 2025, and we are hopeful the LA can contract with the RE Advisor directly. This has been confirmed from September 2025.

SACRE has instigated an Action Log to track communications with the LA. It was agreed that the information from the Action Log throughout the year will feed into the SACRE Annual Report which can then report on advice from SACRE submitted to the LA and how it was responded to.

The action log has been particularly useful as a working document for both the Adviser and the LA. For example, it has been used to record recommendations such as schools that might benefit from support with curriculum development or congratulating following an Ofsted inspection or exam results (see 2.2 and 2.3). Other areas that are recorded via the action log are SACRE membership and schools achieving the WIRE award.

5.2 Membership and Recruitment

Chair – Jane O’Hara

Vice-Chairs – Kevin Burnett and Dr Yuktेशwar Kumar

Local Authority link officer – Olwyn Donnelly, Head of Education Commissioning

Further recruitment for representation is needed on all Groups – see current composition below:

Composition of Committee A: 9 members: Bahá’i, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Hindu (2 members), Humanist, Muslim (2 members), Jewish. [Vacancies: Buddhist, Free Churches Group, Sikh]

Composition of Committee B **Church of England**: 2 members: one RE Teacher, one from Diocese of Bath and Wells [vacancy for 2 more]

Composition of Committee C Teachers’ Associations: 2 members: one Learn Teach Lead RE, one from National Association of Headteachers [vacancy for 2 more]

Composition of Committee D Local Authority: 3 members: one Head of Education Commissioning, two Councillors

5.3 Financial Report: 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

Expenditure is shown below (Development Plan for 2024-2025 is in Appendix A).

There was a budget of £17,853.50 for SACRE to meet its responsibilities.

Note that we were able to cover the expenditure expected from our Development Plan below, as we had £3,478.50 brought forward from the previous year.

Expenditure

Agreed Syllabus Review & Development	1300
Members' training, expenses, fees & NASACRE subscription	1024
Support for Primary and Secondary Schools	3980
Resource Centre	262.50
Monitoring of RE and collective worship and production of newsletters and annual report	1900
SACRE and Agreed Syllabus websites hosting and management	687
WIRE Award - transport grants	2000
Training for Holocaust Memorial Day	750
Professional fees	5950
TOTAL	17,853.50

Rebekah Guy

SACRE Adviser

November 2025

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Appendix A: Bath & North East Somerset SACRE Development Plan 2024-25

Priorities	Targets	Payment	Cost £
A. To maintain and develop the Agreed Syllabus and began the review process	i. Clerking tasks: attend and minute agenda-setting and full SACRE meetings; prepare agendas, financial statements and book venues; distribute minutes, agendas and papers to members; liaise with Chair, Senior advisers and Support assistant; correspond with schools, partner and representative organisations; respond to inquiries on SACRE matters. Arrange members' attendance at training events and make payments to schools and members	RG	5950
	ii. To work with the AMV family of SACREs, or other SACREs, in the development of materials and online resources for the Agreed Syllabus (review by September 2027)	RG	1300
B. To improve teaching and learning of RE within the authority	i. To provide support for Primary and Secondary schools, through a choice of activities (requested through the newsletter)	Venue, presenters, admin, schools	3980
	ii. Pro-actively build relationships with schools to act as 'friendly inquisitor' (e.g. meeting with Trust leads through School Standards Board, offering of Governor training)		
	iii. Reactive support for schools (in terms of Ofsted reports, website monitoring, or those raised by local authority). Schools to be offered 2.5 hour diagnostic to look at curriculum and suggest improvements in ordering and sequencing of knowledge.	RG	
	iv. Online training offered to school offering subject knowledge webinars to build teacher confidence in teaching key knowledge and progression.	RG	
	Resource Centre		262.50
	v. To enable B&NES schools to visit places of worship through the	Schools	2,000

	creation of a Travel Grant Fund to which schools could bid for up to £200 funding for Travel costs		
	vi. Increase teachers' self-confidence in combatting antisemitism through training event linked to Holocaust Memorial Day. Hold event with speakers and ideas for teachers	RG, Speakers, venue	750
C To develop the capacity of SACRE to monitor RE, CW, the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus and standards of teaching and learning	i. To fill the vacancies on the council		0
	ii. To develop the capacity of SACRE members to participate in the work of the council [Training, NASACRE subscription, travel expenses, room hire]	Members, venues	1024
	iii. To continue the cycle of regular monitoring of RE teaching and collective worship across the authority using self-evaluation and website surveys and to follow-up with schools as required	RG	1000
	iv. To Inform and update schools about local, regional and national RE developments through the Annual Report and the SACRE website	RG	900
	v. To develop and maintain the SACRE & Agreed Syllabus websites [Sam Cavender £120; SACRE Domain £193; Management £127]	MP / AR / Sam Cavender / Domains	687
	TOTAL Development Plan		14,375.00
	SACRE budget before deductions		15,000.00
	Bath & North East Somerset 'Matrix' fees & charges @ 5%		- 675.00
	Total:		14,325.00
	Brought forward from 2023-24		3,478.50
	TOTAL available for SACRE:		17,853.50