

## **Constitution of the Waltham Forest Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education [SACRE]**

### **1. Defined Terms / Acronyms:**

Adviser	The LA's professional RE technical lead
Agreed Syllabus	The approved RE syllabus adopted by the LA
DfE	Department for Education
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
LA	The Local Authority known as Waltham Forest Council.
Members	Nominated and approved SACRE person eligible to vote
Ofsted	Office for Standards in education- the sector inspectorate
Other Persons	Any member of public eligible to join SACRE but does not hold voting right solutions for SACRE work topics
Representative	The LA's professional representative from Children's Services
RE	Religious Education
Working Parties	A delegated group from within SACRE tasked with recommending

### **2. The purpose of the Waltham Forest SACRE is:-**

1. **To advise the Local Authority (LA)** on matters connected with collective worship in community schools and the religious education (RE) to be taught in accordance with the local agreed syllabus in community and voluntary aided schools. SACRE also provides advice to Academy, Independent and free schools within the LA boundary.
2. SACRE may respond to other matters regarding religious education which the borough may refer to the SACRE, or as the SACRE may see fit e.g. challenging the provider with regards to opportunities to study the subject, training of staff, and standards of achievement.
3. a. SACRE is the local body to agree a "determination", for a particular school, on application by the Headteacher. Whilst the Law requires the majority of acts of collective worship in schools, to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, the Act also gives to SACRE the power to amend this requirement by a determination and put in its place an alternative form of collective worship, for some or all pupils.  
b. SACRE may appoint a sub-committee to exercise this role which will consist of the chair, the vice chair and one representative of each SACRE group.
4. **To work with and actively support the Borough** in implementing the Waltham Forest Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.
3. The work of SACRE will be achieved in partnership with the interested parties by:-
  - a) Being given information about the existing provision for RE in schools, i.e. levels of staffing, resources, curriculum used, progress data, achievement and results.
  - b) Providing support for RE within the LA and to schools, subject to available resource
  - c) Publicising SACRE's role and function to Headteachers, Governors, Teachers, Parents, Academies, Free Schools, Independent Schools and the wider Faith Communities and the local community as a whole.
  - d) Advising those in d) about the nature of RE, its legal requirement in schools and their responsibilities for ensuring its provision.

- e) Supporting and fostering community cohesion, citizenship and interfaith and cultural links
- f) Encouraging members of SACRE to lead and participate in training activities
- g) Advising resources for the support of the WF Agreed Syllabus and the promotion of good citizenship, community cohesion and interfaith links
- h) The Council keeping up to date with national developments from HMI, Ofsted, and DfE with regard to the development and teaching of RE and provision for collective worship
- i) Offering advice, support and participation in the Borough's complaints procedure when appropriate/on request.
- j) To discuss in a local context national policy in relation to RE.

5. **(i) To publish an annual report** (as per Circular 1/94) which shall:-

- a) Specify any matters in respect of which SACRE has given advice to the borough
- b) Broadly describe the nature of advice given
- c) Where any matter was not referred to the SACRE, give SACRE's reason for offering advice
- d) Report on the public examination results in RE / RS for the previous school year
- e) Report on activities undertaken to promote and develop RE and collective worship in the borough's schools and community
- f) Describe work towards the production of/ review of/modification of the Waltham Forest Agreed Syllabus
- g) Describe work done by SACRE to promote community cohesion in the LA.

(ii) SACRE may appoint a sub committee to carry out this function which must include representatives of all four groups.

### 3. **Membership**

The Waltham Forest Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) shall consist of representative members appointed by Waltham Forest Council (the Local Authority) to represent:

- Group 'A': Christians and other religious denominations as will appropriately reflect the religious traditions of those within the Local Authority (See appendix A)
- Group 'B': The Church of England
- Group 'C': Teachers Associations Recognised by the Authority and Other educational establishments
- Group 'D': The Local Authority and non-faith organisations

The Membership of the SACRE will be reviewed annually at the first meeting of the autumn term.

### 4. **Composition and quorum**

For all Groups the composition of the Groups shall be as presented in Appendix A of this document.

Meetings of the SACRE shall be quorate when at least one representative member from each of the four representative groups are present; four representatives. If the meeting is not quorate, the meeting can continue, but decisions would have to be ratified at the next meeting of the SACRE.

*A Working Party meeting does not constitute a formal SACRE meeting (see paragraph 6).*

## **5. Co-opted Members**

The representative groups on the SACRE may co-opt other persons for such purposes and such length of time as the representative groups on SACRE decide. Co-opted members may resign at any time and may be removed by representative Groups at any time.

## **6. Working Parties**

SACRE may establish and appoint members to Working Parties which may include non-members of SACRE that have the expertise to contribute to a particular subject/topic. Any established Working Party will have a 'terms of reference' for its work leading to recommendations to SACRE rather than the delegation of decision making. The composition for a working party will include a member representative from each Group of the constitution of SACRE.

## **7. Position of Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE**

The elections of the Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE shall be conducted annually by the representative members of the SACRE, at its first meeting of the council cycle.

Each represented member will have one vote for the purposes of the election of Chair and Vice Chair.

The Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE will be appointed from amongst members of Groups A, B, C and D. If there is more than one candidate for either position, the candidate receiving the most votes shall be elected.

In the absence of a Chair and vice chair', an executive member shall be elected to lead SACRE for that meeting.

The prime duties of the Chair, with the support of the Vice Chair are to:

- Manage the meetings of SACRE
- Attend meetings with the LA as necessary
- Represent the WF SACRE to other bodies (e.g. NASACRE) as required and
- To lead on any other matters as agreed by SACRE

## **8. Advisor to SACRE**

The LA will allocate appropriate advisor time to the SACRE. The specific responsibilities of this advisor are to:

- Provide advice to the SACRE and any Working Parties on professional issues
- Advise and update SACRE members on any new government guidance or policy documents
- Support SACRE to carry out its role of monitoring and supporting schools within the LA for the delivery of the RE and Collective Worship curriculums.
- Provide updates and information to the LA as necessary

## **9. Voting Procedures in SACRE**

On any issue to be decided by the SACRE, except as provided in Section 7 paragraph 2, only the four representative groups shall be entitled to a vote and each group shall have a single vote.

Individual representative members cannot vote separately. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote; nor are the advisor(s) to SACRE.

All issues shall be decided by a simple majority vote, there shall not be a casting vote.

All decisions taken by SACRE, including the election of Chair and Vice Chair, shall be recorded by the Clerk in the minutes of the meeting.

#### **10. Voting procedures within each Representative Group**

Before any representative group casts its single vote on any issue to be decided by the SACRE it shall meet to discuss the issue. The decision of the representative group shall be determined by a simple majority vote in which each member of the group has one vote.

Issues shall be decided by a simple majority vote and there shall not be a casting vote. In the case of a tied vote the group shall abstain from voting on the issue in SACRE; this abstention should be recorded by the Clerk.

Where there is an instance when a meeting is not quorate, votes may be polled via email to the Clerk to SACRE, a written proposal must be provided to members in advance of this vote requiring a yes/no vote only.

#### **11. Terms of Office for Representative Members**

The representative members shall hold office until such members' terms of office come to an end or they resign or they become otherwise ineligible for membership.

When a vacancy arises the LA must attempt to appoint a replacement member to the SACRE to represent the same group as the retiring member.

Any representative members may resign at any time.

#### **12. Declarations of Interest**

Interests, whether personal or prejudicial, should be declared annually. If a member has a prejudicial/personal interest they should declare that interest and withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the decision making process.

#### **13. Disqualification**

Members or co-opted members who fail to attend three consecutive meetings without a satisfactory explanation will have their membership reviewed by the SACRE. The Local Authority may remove any representative or co-opted member that has failed to attend three consecutive meetings without valid reason.

#### **14. Administrative arrangements**

The SACRE must utilise its allocated funding to secure a Clerk to SACRE that will:

- Draft an agenda in accordance to requirements and legislation no less than 21 days prior to the meeting
- The agenda must be distributed to all members no less than seven days in advance of the listed meeting; all information shall be sent at least electronically and in hard format as necessary
- The minutes of each meeting shall be produced and approved with the Chair and Clerk within 20 working days of the meeting, the Clerk shall distribute these minutes to all members electronically
- The minutes of each meeting shall be listed on the agenda of the subsequent meeting for approval and shall be re issued to all members with the agenda for the forthcoming listed meeting
- Maintain an attendance register of attendance at SACRE and advise on attendance matters as detailed in point 13 of the constitution
- Publish all documents relating to the SACRE on the LA's website for public scrutiny

**15. Financial Arrangements**

The LA will provide the SACRE with an allocation of funding for the purposes of maintaining the work of the board, securing professional advice as required, resourcing syllabus development and maintaining an overview of the provision in schools.

**16. Disputes and Complaints**

The intention of SACRE is to be collaborative and collective to ensure that no particular sector or member is unduly favoured within Waltham Forest. Any disputes or complaints shall be debated and resolved by SACRE at its meetings. Should any party/parties feel that matters have not been satisfactorily resolved they should reference the Council's Complaints Policy and Procedures for guidance.

## APPENDIX A Current composition of LBWF SACRE

### Group A

#### **Other Christian denominations and other faiths represented in Waltham Forest**

One representative of Christian denominations and other faiths within the local community.  
Currently for LBWF this includes:

*Other Christian denominations eg. Quaker, Methodist, Baptist?*

African Caribbean Free Church	1 representative
Bah'ai	1 representative
Buddhism	1 representative
Free Church	1 representative
Hinduism	1 representative
Islam	4 representatives
Judaism	1 representative
Roman Catholic	1 representative
Sikhism	1 representative
Pagan	1 representative

### Group B

#### **The Church of England**

Appointed by the Diocese of Chelmsford Education Committee with the Synod of the Waltham Forest Deanery

4 representatives

### Group C

#### **The Teachers and Educators of the borough**

**Representatives are** generally appointed or nominated by the JCC or the sponsoring organisation, and can include:

Headteacher ( <i>may be either Primary or Secondary</i> )	1 representative
Early years	1 representative
Primary	1 representative
Special schools	1 representative
A Primary Academy representative	1 representative
A Secondary Academy representative	2 representatives
Secondary School teachers	2 representatives
KS5	1 representative
Higher Education	1 representative
A School Governor	1 representative

### Group D

#### **The London Borough of Waltham Forest and the community**

Elected Members	4 representatives
LBWF Director of Learning (or appropriate nominee)	1 representative
Humanist non-faith representative	1 representative

#### **Additionally**

RE Advisor to WF SACRE	non-voting
Waltham Forest Faith Community Forum	non-voting
Waltham Forest Faith and Community Officer (Met Police)	non-voting