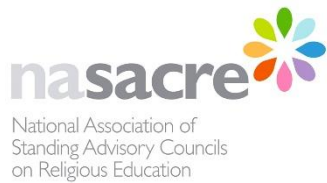


Latest news and updates from NASACRE



NASACRE NEWS

Essential reading for SACREs

Issue: 1

This issue includes:

- Chair's Welcome
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Chair's Welcome

If you don't mind me saying this, as a former teacher and life-long educationist: Happy New Year! Amongst all the different faith calendars it behoves us well to celebrate the academic calendar! Teachers and young people will be returning to school after what we hope will have been a

restorative break. Fresh students ('Freshers') will begin their course of study in Higher Education or career at work; all contributing, wittingly or otherwise, to building our future together. As SACREs, we have our role to play in this. RE is the area of the curriculum in which young people (and their teachers) raise some of life's fundamental questions and explore what it means to be human and what kind of a community and world we want to live in. Collective Worship provides an opportunity for a school to gather together and explore what is of fundamental worth in schools, society and the world, sharing values, a sense of purpose and reflecting on our identity-in-difference as humans. Both RE and Collective Worship should be challenging, can be engaging and really do matter. They should make a difference in schools, society and the world. As SACREs, we can and must, through local determination of RE, support schools and work with LAs and other partners to breathe life and soul into education and the future that we are building together. SACREs still shape the nature and content of RE through local determination, considering the questions "What does it mean to be me? What does it mean to be you? What does it mean to be human?"

The Executive has continued to work for you since the last 'Briefing' and over the summer break. The good thing is that we are now doing so with an Executive Officer in post to provide invaluable support and work. In case you have not heard, we appointed a former Chair of NASACRE and champion of SACREs, Paul Smalley, to this vital role. As I am typing this, Paul is working on ensuring that NASACRE has all the policies we need in our new life as a CIO. Rather him than me! Paul introduces himself below, for those who do not know him, and explains a little about his new role.

It is great to have new life injected into the Executive and our four new members bring a wealth of experience to support our work. Many thanks to their SACREs for nominating them at the conference and to them individually for volunteering. Two introduce themselves below and two will do so in the next newsletter. Details of the whole Executive can be found on our website page '[about NASACRE](#)'.

The website has been updated with a new version of the SACRE Handbook along with a host of support materials on the [Managing SACREs](#) section of the website. It is worth drawing your members' attention to this section, especially those who are new to SACRE.

The summary of the analysis of Annual Reports below is useful to consider as you prepare your annual report 2024-25. A question we need to ask more rigorously is 'why are we writing these and what do we want to come out of them?' How can we use these to improve RE and Collective Worship?

Denise, Claire and I met with Lord Khan in July. He is very interested in the role and work of SACREs and keen both to learn more and to proactively support this. We will be following this up this term and hope to update you in the next Newsletter.

Upcoming things of note

- The webinar programme for this year contains some important and helpful topics. The link is in the newsletter and we encourage SACREs to subscribe so that all your members can attend. There is one on the new Oak Academy Curriculum which is particularly interesting in terms of how it might be used with a locally agreed syllabus.
- Inter Faith Week begins on Sunday 9th November. See the article below and on the website.
- We are expecting the final report from the Curriculum and Assessment Review before the end of term and NASACRE will respond when it is published. RE has featured in their work so far, so it will be interesting to see what comes of this.
- Holocaust Memorial Day on 27th Jan 2026 has as its theme 'Bridging Generations'

The Executive is meeting in the second week of term to discuss and plan our priorities. This is an important time for RE and we will continue to support and advocate for your work.

Many thanks and have a good first term,

Bill Moore
Chair

The new Executive Officer - Paul Smalley introduces himself

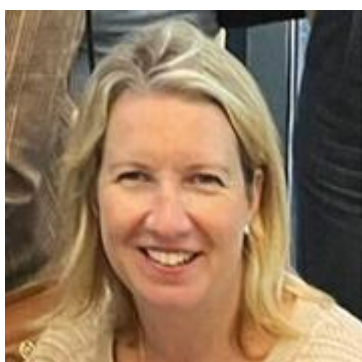
I am delighted to have been able to take up this new role and become NASACRE's first Executive Officer. It is strange to be introducing myself when so many readers will already know me well.

For those who don't know me, I have been involved with NASACRE as Vice-Chair, Chair, Assistant to the Chair and Co-Chair for the last 10 years, and earlier this year I took the decision to step away from the executive once we have finally completed the incorporation of NASACRE as a CIO. I had worked at Edge Hill in Initial Teacher Education since 2006 but was unexpectedly made redundant in May. Since then, I have begun to put together a portfolio career, and the first pieces of this are the EO role with NASACRE, mentoring on the Culham St Gabriel's Leadership Programme and some teaching on the PGCE RE at Liverpool Hope University.



Meet the New Exec

With a new academic year and new status as a CIO, we have new members of the [Executive Committee](#). Two of the new members introduce themselves here:



Claire Ramalli says:

"I serve as an Adviser to East Sussex, Hackney, and Sutton SACREs. I operate as an independent Religious Education and Worldviews Consultant and am a member of AREIAC, where I hold the position of Treasurer. I am an alumna of the CSTG Leadership Programme, through which I conducted research and development work on a Core RE curriculum for Key Stage 4 and sharing best practice in RE at Key Stages 1 and 2 with secondary practitioners.

During the 2024–2025 academic year, I contributed to the Oak National Academy as a lesson creator for both the primary and secondary RE teams.

My responsibilities included the development of GCSE-level content, specifically on Buddhism: Beliefs and Practices.

In addition to consultancy work, I lead professional development programmes for educators across the primary, secondary, and sixth form phases, supporting teachers of RE with subject knowledge enhancements, curriculum design and the effective delivery of RE and Worldviews education."



Justine Ball says:

"I am delighted to be joining the NASACRE executive and look forward to working with all the other tremendous volunteers at NASACRE who work so hard on behalf of all the SACREs in England.

I work for Hampshire County Council as their County Inspector for RE and History and I also am the South-East lead for RE Hubs. I have been the Professional Adviser to Hampshire SACRE and the Isle of Wight SACRE for some years now and I was nominated for the executive by the Isle of Wight SACRE. I also have close links with Portsmouth SACRE and Southampton SACRE as we all share the same Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE, Living Difference IV.

I specialise in primary RE and provide professional support across Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight. Before joining Hampshire, I worked in a primary school, where I taught across a range of infant and junior classes. I have also taught for ten years in Adult Further Education specialising in Human Resources and Employment Law. Recently I was the joint Chair of AREIAC alongside Julia Diamond Conway.

I look forward to meeting and working with many of you in the wonderful training webinars that NASACRE deliver and of course at the conference next year. I am passionate about RE and the support that SACREs can provide for a high quality RE experience for every child which reflects their local context. The work of NASACRE is vital in supporting this.

I am joining many very experienced colleagues and have no doubt that I will learn a lot from them and bring my own experience of SACRE work to the team too.

Looking forward to the year ahead!"

Webinars to support effective SACREs

NASACRE provides a comprehensive programme of webinars to develop SACRE members.

Download the 2025-2026 [programme](#) along with details of pricing and share with SACRE members.

To book a place on any of these sessions please email: admin@nasacre.org.uk

Autumn term Sessions:

17 September 2025: 6:30-8pm & repeated on 25th June 2026: So, you've joined your local SACRE...

A free session for any SACRE member to attend but aimed specifically at new or inexperienced members of SACRE. This will look at the roles and responsibilities of SACREs and the Local Authorities, as well as what it means to be an effective member of a SACRE.

20 October 2025, 7-8pm: How can SACREs make strategic use of the New Oak National Curriculum?

This session will look at the Religious Education material on the Oak National Academy website and consider how best SACREs can make use of these new resources.

This session is free to SACREs who have bought the annual webinar package. The cost is £25 for a subscribed SACRE and £35 for a non-subscribed SACRE

November 2025 (various), 6:30-8pm: NASACRE in Conversation (regions)

This session is free for all SACREs. Each SACRE is invited to send their Chair, Vice-Chair, SACRE consultant and LA link officer to participate in the conversation about issues facing SACREs. In conjunction with RE Hubs.

4 December 2025, 4-5:30pm: Supporting your SACRE as a Professional Adviser

Advisers of SACREs are invited to attend this webinar which will explore the role of the adviser. This is ideal for those new to role, or about to take up the position. This event is free for SACREs that have signed up to the training package, or £25 for a subscribed SACRE and £35 for a non-subscribed SACRE.

Is your SACRE subscribed?

Subscribed SACREs have access to additional material on the NASACRE website as well as savings on training webinars, AGM attendance and voting rights. The cost for the annual subscription is kept as low as possible. On the website there is a [document](#) listing all the advantages and giving details of how to subscribe if you are not already subscribed. Subscribed SACREs should look out for the new username and password for the academic year 2025-26.

Sharing Good Practice

Subscribed members have access to the Shared Materials pages. Many SACREs have shared documents that they have produced to help other SACREs. Currently there are shared resources under these headings:

Managing SACRE	+
Collective Worship	+
Withdrawal from RE and Collective Worship	+
Other Guidance from SACREs to schools <i>(including Ramadan)</i>	+

SACREs are welcome to contribute documents that demonstrate good practice. SACREs are also welcome to use the shared materials to inform their practice. NASACRE requests that the origin of documents is acknowledged and the providing SACRE contacted to thank them.

Please note that the inclusion of any material does not denote the formal approval of any documents by NASACRE. Each SACRE should evaluate the effectiveness of each item for their context.

If you want to submit something, send the document with a covering email to admin@nasacre.org.uk. Please note that submission to the website indicates a willingness for documents to be shared and used as the basis for work by other SACREs.

Summary of the Annual Report Analysis

Each year, NASACRE commissions an analysis of the Annual Reports that SACREs are required by law to submit to NASACRE and the DfE. Below is the executive summary followed by the key recommendations from the 2023-24 reports.

1 Executive Summary

1.1 In 2025 Sixty-nine SACREs submitted their Annual Report for 2023 – 2024, the same number as in 2024 for the previous reporting year. Whilst the same number were submitted it did not follow that these were the same SACREs in each reporting year. Of those submitting reports since 2020 only 8% of SACREs submitted reports in each year and 14.1% of SACREs submitted a report once in the same period.

As noted in the previous analysis there is no clear reason why this is the case and there is a need for the DfE to contact those SACREs that have not submitted a report to the Secretary of State as required by the Education Act 2011 Schedule 8 .

1.2 In previous reports the impact of the Covid-10 pandemic on the work of SACREs was noted. In 2021 – 2022 89.9% of reports included reference to the pandemic and in this reporting year the figure has dropped to 34.8%, much of this relating to historical gaps in data.

1.3 A notable feature of the reports for 2022 – 2023 covered in the previous report was the issue of vacancies. In 2023 – 2024 the percentage reporting vacancies had dropped to under 50%. It is clear that a number of SACREs have a considerable list of vacancies to be filled.

1.4 Collective Worship remains the most problematic area for SACREs relative to their statutory responsibilities. It is clear though that SACREs are actively looking at this issue and finding inventive ways of monitoring Collective Worship. At times, though, this is not helped by annual reports including data from SIAMs reports.

1.5 SACREs continue to collaborate widely, with almost 90% reporting on their relationships with other bodies. Just over 50% mention diversity and its importance within the local authority area. What impact those relations and levels of diversity have on the work of SACRE is not always clear.

1.6 The impact of local government reorganisation on SACREs and ASCs is not always noticed. Two reports stand out, one where SACRE was formed independently of the new local authority and after a number of years now has clear LA involvement. One authority in a largely rural area was divided in two. In the previous reporting year 2022 – 2023 only one of the new authority's SACRE submitted a report, in this year one report was submitted for both authorities as they appear to share a SACRE. This would indicate that not enough thought had been given to processes coming under the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on a policy area that comes under the Department of Education. Given the current government's drive to further devolution this is an area that needs careful thinking by His Majesty's Government.

1.8 It was noted in previous reports that SACREs rarely reported the local authority's response to its advice, with the exception of the need for a locally agreed syllabus. 10% of SACREs noted how the local authority had responded to

their advice, as required by legislation.

2. Recommendations

2.1 NASACRE and support for SACREs

- i. That NASACRE should undertake a short review of newly created local authorities and how they are meeting their statutory responsibilities to appoint and adequately fund a SACRE and, where necessary, an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- ii. That the NASACRE produce case studies which exemplify the ways that SACREs can work together to benefit religious education and collective worship across those authorities, including challenges that may emerge.
- iii. To work with SACREs on development planning, costings and how those relate to SACRE budgets.

2.2 Department for Education

- i. To work with MHCLG on the implications for SACRE when decisions are being made on local government changes, not least emphasising the importance of the proper constitution of SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences.
- ii. Advise local authorities that their SACREs are required to submit an annual report to the Secretary of State each year as set out in the 2011 Education Act.
- iii. Advise local authorities that it is the authority that adopts an agreed syllabus not a SACRE. Therefore, emphasising the role that local authorities have in supporting an agreed syllabus conference and ensuring that its reports and syllabus are in the public domain as required by UK Statutory Instrument 1304 1994: The Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994 (see footnote 2).

2.3 Advice to LAs co-produced by NASACRE and DfE

- i. To produce advice for newly formed local authorities on establishing a SACRE.
 - ii. A number of SACRE reports note that public examination results could not be reported on due to their unavailability at the time of reporting. NASACRE and the DfE could helpfully produce guidance on managing this situation as the access to and analysis of results are the responsibility of local authorities, which appoint SACREs.
 - iii. Produce a statement which makes it clear that local authorities must pass on data to SACREs to inform members on standards in religious education and religious studies so that SACREs can give appropriate advice as necessary.
-

NASACRE's priorities for the coming year

NASACRE's main priority is to ensure that we grow and develop the support and advocacy work we do on your behalf in our new structure as a CIO. We will have greater resource and freedom to develop our strategic role with our other RE bodies.

We will:

- build on our relationship with the DfE and the Ministry of Housing and Local Government so that RE, Collective Worship and community cohesion are on their agenda
 - engage with the RE Council to ensure the voice of SACREs is heard
 - develop the information and training that we provide to SACREs
-

Forward planning

Celebrating Inter Faith Week in Schools

<https://www.interfaithweek.org/>

“The role of RE and interfaith education in schools is central to building a cohesive society. I am proud to support our educators as they foster not only knowledge, but also the values of tolerance, respect and understanding. These are the values that will help children build confidence in their identity and will help them thrive in our diverse country.”

Lord Khan of Burnley, Minister for Faith

Carrie Alderton, Interim CEO of the Faith & Belief Forum invites SACREs to promote Inter Faith Week for Schools ([IFW4Schools](#)). This year it runs from **9–16 November 2025.**

Organised nationally by the Faith & Belief Forum (F&BF) in partnership with key Religious Education organisations – NASACRE, AREIAC, REC, RE Today, NATRE, RE Hubs, the Culham St Gabriel's Trust, Facing History & Ourselves UK, and The Feast – IFW4Schools helps children and young people explore different faiths and

beliefs, reflect on their own values, and discover what it means to live well together in a diverse society. Inter Faith Week in 2025 (which the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government intends to fund) is being organised by a steering group of national interfaith organisations, take a look at www.interfaithweek.org for more information.

This year's theme, "**Community: Together We Serve**", highlights how people of different beliefs contribute to the common good, and how service and social action build bridges of understanding.

Why SACREs are central

SACREs are uniquely placed to champion Inter Faith Week locally, connecting schools with diverse voices and helping ensure that celebrations are inclusive, meaningful, and impactful. By taking an active role, SACREs can:

- **Support schools in finding speakers:** drawing on your local contacts across different faiths and beliefs
- **Visit schools yourselves:** offering insight into the work of SACREs and encouraging reflection on the importance of local interfaith cooperation
- **Promote whole-school participation:** encouraging schools to ensure that every RE class engages with IFW resources during the week, and involvement is encouraged across subjects
- **Inspire creativity and dialogue:** guiding schools to take up activities such as interfaith feasts, speaker panels, faith trails, bunting projects, and cross-curricular celebrations (see below for examples)

How you can get involved

As SACREs, your involvement is vital. You can:

- Encourage every school in your area to celebrate Inter Faith Week and make use of the new resources
- Act as a bridge between schools and local communities of faith and belief
- Share your plans and successes with us, so we can spotlight the impact across the country

Inter Faith Week is a chance not only to celebrate diversity, but also to showcase the vital role SACREs play in bringing communities together.

Key Information

- **Dates:** 9–16 November 2025
- **Theme:** Community: Together We Serve
- **Organisers:** Faith & Belief Forum, with national partners and RE partners (including NASACRE)
- **Website (from 1 September):** www.interfaithweek.org
- **Contact:** info@faithbeliefforum.org

We would love to hear what your SACRE has planned. Please get in touch with our team at info@faithbeliefforum.org for support in developing activities or to share your events so we can amplify them nationally.

Together, we can make Inter Faith Week 2025 a truly memorable celebration for schools and communities across the country.

Holocaust Memorial Day 2026: For a better future

<https://hmd.org.uk/this-years-theme/> and <https://hmd.org.uk/resource/take-action-for-a-better-future/>

The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 2026 is 'Bridging Generations' a reminder that the responsibility of remembrance doesn't end with the survivors - it lives on through their children, their grandchildren and through all of us. This theme encourages us all to engage actively with the past - to listen, to learn and to carry those lessons forward. By doing so, we build a bridge between memory and action, between history and hope for the future.

As the years pass, we're growing more distant in time from the Holocaust and from the other, more recent genocides that are commemorated on HMD.

Bridging Generations highlights the crucial role of the next generation in preserving the memory of the Holocaust and carrying it forward. It highlights the power of intergenerational dialogue – of listening to those who came before us and of sharing those stories with those who come after. In doing so, we don't just preserve memory – we connect it to the present.

Items for your next Agenda

- Check that your SACRE has subscribed and paid to the correct bank account
- Check that all the details for your SACRE are correct on the NASACRE [contacts page](#) and inform admin@nasacre.org.uk of any changes needed
- Consider whether to review your constitution, membership and Code of Conduct for the new academic year
- Book SACRE members for appropriate training
- Begin to plan for Inter Faith Week and Holocaust Memorial Day
- Discuss the summary of the Annual Reports and the recommendations.
- Check out the [NASACRE website](#) for all the latest news and information