

Swindon SACRE 1st November 2016

# Digest of National RE Updates for SACRE

## A. New proposed Constitution for NASACRE

Proposed constitution 2016

Below is the proposed constitution to be discussed at the 2016 AGM. The current constitution page can be found from the menu on the NASACRE website.

### 1. The Name of the Association:

The name of the Association shall be the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE).

### 2. The Aims of the Association:

The aims of the Association shall be:

2.1 To assist the Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) to fulfil their responsibilities

2.2 To represent their common concerns to other bodies

2.3 To assist in the training and mutual consultation of SACRE members

2.4 To encourage the development of SACREs

2.5 To undertake such other activities, appropriate to SACREs, as may benefit RE and collective worship

### 3. Basis of membership and duties:

3.1 Each SACRE shall be invited to join the Association, membership being renewable annually on payment of the annual subscription in place at that time. These member SACREs constitute the Council.

3.2 The Council shall meet at least once annually; this meeting shall be known as the Annual General Meeting (AGM). It will be deemed to be quorate when one quarter of member SACREs is represented.

3.3 Each member SACRE shall be entitled to send any number of representatives to the meetings of the Council, but on any matter on which the Council takes a vote, each member SACRE shall be entitled to cast one vote only.

3.4 The Council shall be responsible for review and amendment of the Constitution, as appropriate.

3.5 A majority of one half plus one of the Council shall be necessary for any amendment to the Constitution.

#### **4. The Honorary Officers:**

Honorary Officers shall be nominated by a SACRE and must be an officer to, or a member or co-opted member of, that SACRE.

These shall be elected for a period of two years and shall comprise:

4.1 The Chair

4.2 The Vice Chair

4.3 The Assistant to the Chair

4.4 The Secretary

4.5 The Treasurer

The Vice Chair / Chair / Assistant to the Chair is a 6 year term of office with 2 years in each Officer role, the Vice Chair being elected to automatically move into the next role after two years. At any one time, 3 officers will be on the Executive at different stages of these roles. If at any time, one of these Officers is unable to continue, the Executive may appoint a temporary substitute from the other two post holders until the next AGM, when the position will be regularised.

An Honorary Officer may relinquish their office at any time. If an Honorary Officer is absent from three consecutive Committee meetings they shall be deemed to have relinquished their office and would need to seek re-election at the next Council AGM if they so desired.

#### **5. The Executive Committee (the Committee):**

Committee members shall be nominated by a SACRE and must be an officer to, or a member or co-opted member of, that SACRE. Similarly, a person co-opted by the Committee would normally be an officer to a SACRE or a member of a SACRE, but in some cases their specific area of expertise might be deemed more significant than the aforementioned criteria.

The Committee shall comprise the elected Honorary Officers together with no more than eight other members elected by the Council. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to three additional members. The Committee shall include the following:

5.1 The Assistant to the Chair who shall be the previous Chair and shall assist for a period of two years

5.2 A Membership Secretary who shall monitor the membership, keep up to date records and work with the Treasurer to ensure members have paid their fees on time

5.3 A Communications Officer who shall have oversight of the Association's communications strategy and communications, including the NASACRE briefings sent to member SACREs

5.4 A Conference Organiser who shall have oversight of the Annual Conference in partnership with the Secretary and the Treasurer

5.5 A Development Officer who shall oversee the production of a development plan and report to the Executive and Council on its progress

With the agreement of the Committee, the roles set out in 5.1 – 5.5 may be shared between members of the Committee. Members of the Committee shall serve for a period of three years, at which time they must seek re-election by the Council at the appropriate AGM. Normally, members of the Executive Committee should not serve more than six years consecutively. Co-opted members shall normally serve for two years when a review by the Committee will take place; they may serve as a co-opted member for up to six years consecutively.

If a member of the Committee misses three consecutive Committee meetings they shall be deemed to have left the Committee.

The Committee shall be responsible for the planning of other activities and events in fulfilment of the aims of the Association.

## **6. Subscriptions and Finance:**

There shall be a membership fee, which shall be fixed from time to time by the Council. This fee shall not be deemed as the payment for the Annual Conference for that part of the Conference that is not the Council.

## **7. Winding-up:**

If for any reason the Association were to be dissolved, any assets remaining in the Association's bank account(s) shall be divided equally between those SACREs which were members at the time of the dissolution of the Association, once all other debts outstanding had been cleared.

### **Action: to vote**

#### **Our SACRE has been asked to vote :**

Does your SACRE agree to the new NASACRE constitution?

Yes

No

Date of SACRE Meeting at which this was agreed.



## B. The REC launches independent Commission on RE

An independent Commission has been established by the Religious Education Council (REC) to make wide-ranging recommendations in relation to Religious Education (RE) in schools.

The Commission has been asked by the REC to review the legal, education and policy frameworks for RE in all primary schools, secondary schools and further education colleges in England. The establishment of the Commission comes at a critical time for RE, and its work may well be influential.

Further information and discussion will occupy SACRE time later in the year.

**Action : to note**

## C Post BREXIT hate crimes :

### The place RE can play in trying to prevent hate crimes

A letter sent to Justine Greening <http://nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/1-74-crpvcollagreedstatement.pdf>

Bristol local unit of work about preventing hate :

<http://www.bristol.anglican.org/2016/educating-to-challenge-hate-crime/>

**Action : to note and to ask what can SACRE suggest through its remit in advising and supporting RE in Swindon Schools to challenge hate crime in the area?**

## D. Tell MAMA Annual Report 2015

The [Tell MAMA Annual Report](#) was launched in Parliament on 29th June this year. It highlights hate crime against Muslims in the UK. The report, entitled: *The Geography of Anti-Muslim Hatred*, looked at where Muslims reported hate crime against them. A number of interesting things were revealed:

- The majority of hate crimes were directed at women who were visibly Muslim
- The majority were perpetrated by white males
- The majority occurred on or near an A Road or transport hub

There was no correlation between places that Muslims were attacked and places of high unemployment or social deprivation.

11% of attacks were in places of education. In relation to this one of the comments in the report is: It is important that headteachers, teachers, and safeguarding leads in schools are trained to deal with Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate (page 29).

The report also noted:

Given that schools are an important place for educating and socialising young people in multicultural settings, the fact that there are more incidents in educational institutions than took place against Muslim institutions is troubling. (page 39).

SACREs may wish to look at this [report in full](#)

[http://tellmamauk.org/wpcontent/uploads/pdf/tell\\_mama\\_2015\\_annual\\_report.pdf](http://tellmamauk.org/wpcontent/uploads/pdf/tell_mama_2015_annual_report.pdf) and ask the local authority what it is doing in light of the report. It may also want to ask how the local authority is working with transport providers to ensure that pupils who are identified as Muslims are being kept safe from bullying, intimidation and hate crime. What is clear is that girls and young women are much more vulnerable than their male counterparts so the question arises: what is the local authority and schools within the authority's area doing to ensure that these pupils are kept safe.

Of course there is a further question worth asking: if so much time is being given in many schools to the teaching of Islam in RE, why isn't this having a more positive impact on the lives of Muslims in Britain? If RE teachers are proud of their contribution to promoting shared values and community cohesion why is the percentage of hate crime against Muslims so high in schools?

David Hampshire

## **E. APPG on Religious Literacy**

<http://nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/1-971-appg-on-re-improving-religious-literacy-full-report.pdf>

Action : to note

**Action : How should this report inform the support we offer schools in teaching Islam ?**

## **F Accord Award for SACRE**

Get recognition for your SACRE's work in national Award

I am writing to you as RE Advisor to the Swindon Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education to urge that it consider applying for the [2017 Accord Inclusivity Award](#), which is seeking to reward those SACREs that work hardest in their area towards boosting the

growth of inclusion, cohesion and mutual understanding between those of different religions and beliefs. If your SACRE takes these aims seriously then please don't miss out on this rare opportunity for it to be recognised for its work. Until now the Award - which has run every year since 2010 - has rewarded schools in England and Wales that excel on these grounds. For the 2017 Award however judges have decided to only invite nominations for SACREs, given the important role SACREs can play through their work in promoting respect, empathy and social cohesion.

Religious Education has always been of key importance for Inclusivity Award judges, who have consistently rewarded schools for excellence in the subject (and often thanks to recommendations from SACREs). For example, the first placed school in 2013, Little Heath School in Redbridge, won [strong praise](#) from judges for its approach to RE which was later [highlighted](#) by Ofsted as an example for other special schools to follow. Newbury Park Primary School in Ilford came first [in 2014](#) for its 'Ambassadors of Faith and Belief' scheme that was supported by its SACRE and which served to help improve pupils understanding of the nature of faith and belief as a real life experience. The winning school in the 2016 Award, the Chestnut Grove Academy in Balham, [stood out](#) for the way in which its RE deepened and extended pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion and belief while simultaneously dealing with a range of controversial issues, such as around sexual diversity, homophobia and gender. But this coming year presents a chance for SACREs themselves to shine.

The Award is free to apply for. The full line up of another respected and experienced panel of experts will soon be announced. Previous judges have included former Secretary of State for Education, Lord Baker; the Chair of the Education Select Committee, Neil Carmichael MP; the then Chair of the Religious Education Council of England, John Keast OBE; the Bishop of Buckingham, The Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson, and journalist Polly Toynbee.

RE is subject to many demands and pressures. If your SACRE works hard at trying to ensure local schools provide inclusive and high quality RE and assemblies that take seriously the promotion of the growth of mutual understanding between those of different beliefs and backgrounds, then please make sure someone is mandated to submit a [completed nomination](#) on its behalf.

For more information on the Award please visit Accord's website at <http://accordcoalition.org.uk/inclusivity-award-2017/>. The deadline for entries is Monday

December 12th and prizes will be announced in the New Year. Please contact Accord's National Coordinator, Paul Pettinger, at [paul@accordcoalition.org.uk](mailto:paul@accordcoalition.org.uk) or on 020 7324 3071 with any queries.

Every winner of the Inclusivity Award has received national press coverage for their success. Don't miss this chance to draw attention to you and your colleagues' efforts.

Yours sincerely,

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain MBE

**Action : Does SACRE feel we should apply for this award - does anyone have the capacity to make the application?**