

**THURROCK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**(SACRE)**

**CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

# THURROCK STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

(SACRE)

## CONSTITUTION

REVISED SEPTEMBER 2013

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In accordance with the Education Act 1996 and circular 1/94, Religious Education and Collective Worship, the Local Authority (“LA”) has a duty to establish and set up a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (“SACRE”) and an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- 1.2 If there is a conflict between these Terms of Reference and the law, the SACRE shall comply with the law.

### **2.0 Functions and Responsibilities**

- 2.1 To advise the Local Authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which do not have a religious character and the religious education to be given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus. This may include, in particular, methods of teaching, choice of teaching material and the provision of training for teachers.
- 2.2 To publish an annual report on its work specifying any matters on which it has advised the Local Authority, broadly describing the nature of that advice, and setting out the reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the Local Authority.
- 2.3 To publish its annual report by the end of the academic year and send to local schools and other persons and organisations it sees fit.
- 2.4 To encourage the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and in this regard to monitor the production of teaching resources and support material.
- 2.5 To support the Local Authority in reviewing provision for religious education and collective worship in schools within the Borough.
- 2.6 To disseminate an understanding of the educational role of religious education and collective worship and to encourage the active involvement of local religious groups and organisations.
- 2.7 To keep under review the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Agreed Syllabus until such time (and no later than 5 years after the publication of the last agreed syllabus) it decides to require the Local Authority to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to institute a formal review.

### **3.0 Membership and composition of SACRE**

3.1 SACRE will comprise members of four representative groups appointed by the Local Authority as follows:

**Group A** 9 members

1 Free Church Christian member (nominated by the Free Church Federal Council)

1 Roman Catholic member (nominated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood)

1 Jewish member (nominated by the Board of Deputies of British Jews)

2 Muslim members (nominated by the Muslim Council of Britain)

1 Sikh member (nominated by the Local Gurdwara)

1 Hindu member (nominated by the National Council of Hindu Temples)

1 Pentecostal member (nominated by the Local King's Family Centre)

1 Buddhist member (nominated by the Buddhist Society)

**Group B** Church of England

4 members nominated by the Diocese of Chelmsford

**Group C** Teachers Associations

6 members nominated by the Professional Associations Group representing as far as is practicable, primary, secondary, special schools and academies.

**Group D** The Local Authority

3 members nominated by Council.

### **3.2 Co-Opted Members/Attendees**

3.3. SACRE shall have the right to co-opt additional non-voting members who shall remain co-opted for as long as SACRE deems necessary or until such time as the co-opted member resigns.

- 3.4 Co-opted members may resign at any time and may be removed by the representative groups at any time or the LA.
- 3.5 It shall be open to SACRE to invite people of expertise or special interests to attend on an occasional basis.

#### **4.0 Term of Office**

- 4.1 Members of Committees A, B, C and D are appointed for a period of four years, but shall thereafter be eligible for re-nomination by their nominating bodies.
- 4.2 A member shall cease to be a member of SACRE if:
- a) They reach the end of their term of office
  - b) They write to the SACRE or the Clerk and tender their resignation;
  - c) They were appointed by virtue of being representative of the religion, denomination or associations which they were appointed to represent, but in the opinion of the LA, they cease to be such a representative, or to be representative of the authority;
  - d) The other members of their representative group notify the LA that the member should no longer act as one of its representatives on the SACRE and the LA agrees to their removal;
  - e) The LA determine, on reasonable grounds, that the member is unable, unwilling or an unsuitable person to continue these duties.
- 4.3 Any member of SACRE may at any time resign his/her office and a replacement be sought from the relevant nominating body.
- 4.4 The SACRE shall review the membership annually at their Autumn Term meeting.

#### **5.0 Chair and Vice Chair**

- 5.1 The Chair and Vice Chair of SACRE shall be appointed by Members in attendance at the first meeting of each Academic Year, or any meeting during the year when the position is vacant. The voting will be by a simple majority.
- 5.2 Each of the representative groups A, B, C and D shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair for the respective representative group. Each representative member having one vote. These chairs will be appointed annually at the Autumn Term meeting (or first meeting of the Academic Year).
- 5.3 In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson will take the chair and in the absence of both of these a member will be elected for one meeting.
- 5.4 The Chair will be responsible for:
- a) The management of meetings;
  - b) Representing the SACRE to other bodies;

- c) Such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.

5.5 The Vice-Chair will be responsible for:

- a) Deputising for the Chair as required;
- b) Representing the SACRE to other bodies in the absence of the Chair or by agreement with the Chair;
- c) Such other duties as the SACRE considers appropriate.

5.6 The LA shall appoint a Clerk to:

- a) Attend the meetings of SACRE
- b) Take appropriate minutes and notes at meetings;
- c) Maintain and update the records of SACRE and its meetings;
- d) Perform any other necessary administrative duties; and
- e) Provide a copy of the minutes to the Members of the SACRE and LA.

## **6.0 Vacancies**

6.1 In the event of a vacancy on the SACRE the Clerk shall:

- a. Advise the relevant appointing body of the vacancy;
- b. Where appropriate, refer any nomination to the LA; and
- c. Where such nominations are agreed, record the person as a member of SACRE.

6.2 In the absence of nominees from a representative group, the LA may nominate and appoint any person that it considers to be representative of that group and it deems appropriate, to fill the vacancy.

## **7.0 Arrangements for Meetings**

7.1 Meetings will be convened by the Local Authority.

7.2 Special meetings may be called by the Chair and the Local Authority acting jointly.

7.3 There will be 3 meetings of SACRE held each academic year, normally one per academic term, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Chair.

7.4 Matters for the Agenda of any meeting shall be sent to the Clerk at least 21 days in advance of the meeting.

7.5 The draft minutes of the previous meeting shall be circulated to Members no later than one week before the next meeting takes place.

7.6 The Clerk will no later than 5 working days before the meeting, circulate the agenda and supporting papers to the SACRE members.

## **8.0 Attendance at meetings**

8.1 The membership of any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without good cause will be considered to have resigned their position from SACRE and a replacement or reinstatement be sought from the nominating body.

## **9.0 Quorum**

9.1 For the purposes of meetings, the SACRE will be deemed quorate when at least one member of three representative groups are represented and not less than a third of the total membership are present.

9.2 If the meeting is not quorate, either business shall not be transacted or the meeting could continue but decisions would have to be ratified at the next SACRE meeting.

## **10. Voting Rights**

10.1 Each representative group within SACRE shall have one vote. Groups are to determine their own internal voting arrangements. Decisions within a group about how that vote is to be cast do not require unanimity. Individual representative members cannot vote separately. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote. Each group is to regulate its own proceedings including provision for resolving deadlock.

10.2 A proposal shall not be deemed to be carried unless it has been approved by at least three of the representative groups unless otherwise required by law or guidance.

10.3 In the interests of achieving consensus SACRE should only take a vote of the four groups when it is necessary to make a formal record of a decision, or if there are opposing views.

## **11.0 Access to meetings and documents**

11.1 Meetings of the SACRE will be held in public and members of the public will be encouraged to attend meetings as observers except where matters under discussion are considered by SACRE to be confidential. Members of the public cannot take part in discussions nor have any voting rights.

11.2 Copies of agendas and reports for meetings of SACRE will be made available for inspection on the Committee Management Information System found on the Local Authority's website.

## **12.0 Constitutional Change**

12.1 The Local Authority can alter these terms of reference but must consult SACRE before doing so.