



Constitution

Cumbrian Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

February 2016

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Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Working for Cumberland Council and
Westmorland & Furness Council

Cumbrian SACRE supports schools in Cumberland and across Westmorland and Furness Local Authorities. Our aim is to enrich the quality of learning in religious education and collective worship for all Cumbrian pupils.

1. The Duties of the Local Authorities:

This SACRE has been established under the provisions of Section 390 – 397 of the Education Act 1996. Each LA is legally obliged to ensure:

- that there is a functioning SACRE with all four groups represented
- that there is professional and financial support in place for SACRE to carry out its duties
- that there is an Agreed Syllabus for RE which is reviewed at least once every five years
- that it consults with SACRE on any issues to do with RE and collective worship
- that it takes note of, and responds to, any advice it receives from SACRE

2. The Duties of the Cumbrian SACRE are to:

- Provide advice to each LA and schools on collective worship and RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
- Advise each LA on how to monitor the provision and quality of collective worship and RE across Cumberland and/or Westmorland and Furness community schools and foundation schools without a religious character.
- Advise each LA on any complaints concerning RE or collective worship.
- Consider any requests from community schools or foundation schools without a religious character to lift the legal requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship of a broadly Christian character for some or all the pupils at that school. Such applications are to be made by the headteacher after consultation with the governing body. If SACRE agrees, the school is granted a 'determination' for five years, after which the school can reapply, and the determination must be reviewed. An application for a new determination must be made in writing to the Clerk for discussion at a full SACRE meeting. Applications must be made at least 42 days before the meeting.
- Require the LA to review the agreed syllabus by convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 31 to the Education Act 1996.
- A conference must be convened within five years of the adoption date of the previous curriculum.
- Publish an annual report about its work.

3. The Membership of Cumbrian SACRE:

Legally the LAs are the appointing bodies and members are appointed to one of four groups:

- **Group A:** people to represent Christian denominations (other than the Church of England) and other religions as, in the opinion of the LAs, appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area
- **Group B:** people to represent the Church of England
- **Group C:** people to represent teachers' professional associations
- **Group D:** people to represent the LAs

Cumbrian SACRE aims to have representatives:

Group A: from Catholicism, Methodism, Quakerism, United Reformed, non-conformists, Free Churches, Churches Together along with other faiths and beliefs including, but not limited to, Baha'i, Buddhism, Humanism, Hindu Dharma, Judaism, Islam, and Sikhi.

Group B: nominated by the Diocesan Board of Education

Group C: nominated by teacher unions and other professional bodies

Group D: Elected Members, from both sovereign authorities, appointed by each Councils.

4. The Appointment of Representatives to SACRE:

Term of Office of Representative Members:

Representative members of SACRE are nominated following consultation with the appropriate body. Nominations are reviewed by the linked LA officers before any appointments are ratified.

Members continue to serve until they resign in writing or their LA, following consultation with the nominating body, suspends their membership at which time they will cease to be a member of SACRE.

Members who fail to attend three consecutive meetings without good reason will have their membership reviewed through the Clerk and in consultation with the appointing body. This consultation may result in their membership of SACRE being suspended or terminated.

Co-opted members:

It is open to SACRE to co-opt people who may be able to contribute to its work. Co-optees are not members of any of the four groups and do not have voting rights. Co-opted members serve for the remainder of the academic year in which they are appointed, but they can be co-opted repeatedly. Such co-options will be reviewed annually at the first meeting of the academic year.

Elected members:

Elected members are appointed by each Council. Each LA appoints two members.

Substitutes:

A member who is unable to attend a SACRE meeting can be represented at that meeting by a substitute from the same group e.g., a member of the same teacher union/professional association or another member of the Diocesan Board of Education. The member should inform the Clerk of the name of the substitute prior to the meeting.

5. SACRE Working Practices:

Quorum: SACRE will be quorate when at least one member of EACH of the 4 groups are present.

** If an item on the agenda is particular to one LA, to be quorate for this item only, an elected member from that LA must be present.*

Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair:

The Chair and Vice-Chair of SACRE are nominated by SACRE and appointed by the LAs. The appointment is for two academic years. Election of a chair will take place at the first SACRE meeting of an academic year if required. If the chair steps down during an academic year, then the Vice Chair will take on the role as interim chair until the next academic year.

The Chair or Vice Chair can serve for a maximum of two, two-year terms before an interregnum must be taken. Definitions for each role can be found on the NASACRE website. [Managing SACREs: guidance - NASACRE](#)

Working Groups:

SACRE can create working groups on behalf of the full SACRE to undertake specific tasks. Each working group will nominate a lead who will report the results of the work of that group to the full SACRE.

Voting Arrangements:

As far as is practical, items will be discussed fully, and issues decided by consensus. If a formal vote is necessary, each of the 4 SACRE groups has one vote.

It may be necessary for the four groups to meet separately to determine how their collective vote will be cast. To facilitate such a vote each group may elect a Chair. A groups vote will represent the majority within that group. In any vote of the groups, a majority of 3 carries the vote but if the vote is split (2-2) the status quo applies because the Chair of SACRE doesn't have a casting vote. Co-opted members do not have a vote.

Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC):

The LAs must convene an ASC every five years to review the agreed syllabus and where necessary produce a new agreed syllabus. The agreed syllabus is the statutory document for RE which community, foundation (without a religious character) and voluntary-controlled schools, must follow.

Extraordinary Meetings:

The Clerk to SACRE, following consultation with the Chair, may convene an Extraordinary Meeting. The Clerk must always consult with the Chair if requested to do so by five SACRE members. At least seven days' notice must be given to members of any such meeting.

Appendix 1:**Meetings:**

Cumbria SACRE aims to meet on at least three occasions during the school year (normally one meeting per term).

Non-members are welcome to attend, to observe SACRE meetings.

Agenda:

Matters for the Agenda should be sent to the SACRE Clerk at least 21 days in advance of the meeting. The agenda should be distributed at least seven days in advance of meetings. The minutes of meetings are published on the relevant LA websites.

Annual report:

SACRE's annual report should be emailed to each LA, Cumbrian schools, academies, DfE and NASACRE.

Code of Conduct of members:

Cumbria SACRE encourages all its members to:

- Attend all SACRE meetings and take a full and active part in its work and discussions.
- Appoint a substitute if unable to attend a meeting. (See Non-attendance above)
- Consult actively with the organisation you represent so that debate is fully informed.
- Listen with respect to the views of other members. Express views and opinions openly and sensitively, recognising others may have different views. Never denigrate or mock the views of others.
- Seek reasoned consensus where views diverge.
- Develop their understanding of the different faiths and beliefs represented in Cumbria and contribute to the wider community cohesion agenda.
- Remember that SACRE's aim is to improve the quality of provision in RE and collective worship for Cumbrian pupils.

Appendix 2:

Joint working arrangements between both Local Authorities.

- One LA to take the lead role and support SACRE by ensuring that statutory business functions such as clerking are available. The other LA to support the costs associated with this role.

To appoint a mutually agreed Professional RE Adviser (as outlined in NASACRE guidance <https://nasacre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/SACRE-officers.pdf>) to support Cumbrian SACRE and jointly fund costs associated with this role.

- All materials to use the LA agreed joint branding.
- Each LA to provide elected representatives for Cumbrian SACRE.

The authority with the lead role is currently **Cumberland**.