



Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date Thursday 4 June 2015
Time 1.30 pm
Venue Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham

Business

Part A

**Items during which the Press and Public are welcome to attend.
Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chairman's
agreement.**

1. Introductions, Welcome and Apologies
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2015 (Pages 1 - 6)
3. Declarations of interest, if any
4. Matters Arising
5. Chairs Comments
6. RE Inspector Report
7. Report of Working Groups
8. SACRE Draft Annual Report 2014 (Pages 7 - 20)
9. Initial Teacher Training providers for Religious Education
10. Date of the next meeting
11. Any other business
12. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public during the discussion of items containing exempt information

Colette Longbottom
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham

27 May 2015

To: **The Members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

1. Church of England

N Chapman, D Mowbray-Pape and K Passmore

2. Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

J Bainbridge	- Methodist Church
N Barker	- The Salvation Army
S Brown	- Assemblies of God
V Gallant	- Judaism
W Gray	- Buddhism
B Guymer	- Baptist Church
J Kidd	- Methodist Church
J Nicholls	- Society of Friends (Quaker)
I Osborne	- Roman Catholic
J Pallister	- Roman Catholic
S Purba	- Sikhism
Bhakti Rasa Dasa	- Hinduism
C Spencer	- Bahá'í Faith
M Stephenson	- United Reform Church
M Turner	- Islam

3. Teachers Associations

V Bain	- RE Curriculum Group
S Baker	- NUT
A Hartley	- NASUWT
P Lamb	- SHA
S Lupton	- RE Curriculum Group
P Welch	- NUT

4. County Council Representatives

Councillors P Brookes, M Dixon, S Iveson and W Stelling

Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)

Isobel Short

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held in Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham on Thursday 5 March 2015 at 1.30 pm

Present:

P Welch (Chairman) In the Chair

Church of England

N Chapman and K Passmore

Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

J Bainbridge	- Methodist Church
W Gray	- Buddhism
J Kidd	- Methodist Church
J Nicholls	- Society of Friends (Quaker)
I Osborne	- Roman Catholic
Bhakti Rasa Dasa	- Hinduism
C Spencer	- Bahá'í Faith
M Stephenson	- United Reform Church
M Turner	- Islam

Teachers Associations

V Bain	- RE Curriculum Group
P Welch	- National Union of Teachers (NUT)

County Council Representatives

Councillor M Dixon

Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)

Isobel Short

1 Introductions, Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting in particular M Turner who had been appointed as the Islamic representative on Durham SACRE. Everyone introduced themselves and gave a brief description of their background.

Apologies for absence were received from N Barker, S Baker, S Brown, Councillor Brookes, V Gallant, A Hartley, S Lupton, D Mowbray-Pape and J Pallister.

The Chairman advised members that S Brown had asked that SACRE consider his resignation for the reasons given. Members considered the resignation and indicated that they would like him to remain as a member of SACRE and asked that their best wishes be conveyed to him.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in relation to items of business on the agenda.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2014, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to minute no. 1 been amended to read as follows:-

“Students from King James I Academy and Wellfield Community School attended the SACRE meeting to give members a presentation on the work undertaken on the Enquiry Project”.

4 Matters Arising

J Bainbridge suggested that the working groups meet again after Easter. The Chairman indicated that this item would be discussed in greater depth under agenda item no. 9.

The Chairman advised members that the draft annual report was ready to be considered by the working group.

He also advised members that he had written to the schools involved in the Enquiry project to thank them on behalf of SACRE.

5 Chairs Comments

The Chairman referred to the demonstration by the Pegida UK group held in Newcastle on Saturday 27 February 2015. He attended the demonstration as part of the counter demonstration group that had been set up. He advised members that approximately 3,000 people marched against the demonstration and that there were approximately 500 demonstrators.

SACRE members discussed the demonstration, in particular how it showed communities standing together.

The Chairman indicated that 2014 had been a harsh year for Religious Education but 2015 was looking better with the introduction of the bursary scheme for the recruitment of high-quality RE teachers in 2015/16.

SACRE members discussed the possibility of a Humanist to sit on Durham SACRE. It was agreed that the Chairman invite a member of the Humanist Society to come to a future SACRE meeting to talk to members.

The Chairman referred to a letter he had received from Discovery RE who are a company who sell primary schools an RE scheme of work mapped to the local

agreed syllabus. He advised members that they did not have access to Durham's Agreed Syllabus for copyright reasons.

6 RE Inspector Report

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education presented the circulated report which was the RE Inspector Report for the Spring Term 2015 (for copy see file of minutes).

The report looked at the following:-

- Durham RE Networks
- Re Contracts
- REImprove Group
- Christianity: The Big Picture
- Enquiry Project: Phase 2
- New GCSEs in Religious Studies
- Trojan Horse Conference
- Alan's Blog
- Moving House

Members discussed the contents of the report and the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education advised members that the course on Christianity which was to be held in October 2015 would now be held in the Spring Term.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

7 Revised GCSE Content

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education talked to members about the government's revision of the GCSE and AS/A2 in all subjects to make them more vigorous. The new arrangements would see AS and A2 levels being decoupled meaning you would need to decide on an AS or A2 qualification as you would not be able to change. The changes would commence in September 2016 with the first exam in 2018.

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education circulated a copy of the consultation response on the reformed GCSE and A level subject content, a copy of which can be located at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-and-a-level-reform--2.

Members discussed the contents of the report and the impact of the changes in particular that they now needed to demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of two religions at GCSE level.

It was suggested that this could be an area that SACRE could monitor.

Resolved:

That SACRE monitor the reformed GCSE for Religious Education.

8 SMSC Conference June 2015

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education referred to the discussion at the last SACRE meeting on the increased emphasis on SMSC development in schools and focus on promoting British values and preparing children for life in modern Britain.

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education wishes to provide a training opportunity for SACRE members on SMSC and British Values. She is also contributing to an SMSC workshop on spiritual development for senior school leaders on 2 October 2015 and asked SACRE members if they would be willing to come along to the workshop to talk about the work of SACRE.

Resolved:

- i) That a training event be arranged to look at SMSC and British values.
- ii) That SACRE support the SMSC conference for senior leaders.

9 Report of Working Groups

The Chairman indicated that he had written to SACRE members to seek volunteers to sit on the working groups and he had managed to allocate groups. A meeting had taken place on 28 January 2015 but unfortunately some members were unable to attend due to other commitments.

An updated copy of the structure which detailed allocations to the various working groups had been circulated to members at the meeting (for copy see file of minutes).

The External Relations Working Group had met and looked at producing a response to the letter received from Lord Nash to all SACREs which was to be discussed under agenda item no. 10.

K Passmore and N Chapman sought approval to send the response to Lord Nash following approval from the Chairman and the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education rather than in collaboration with all SACRE members due to the time scales involved. Members agreed to this and asked that they received a copy of the response for information.

10 Letter from Lord Nash to SACRE

A copy of a letter on the important role of SACREs and local authorities from Lord Nash, the Minister who is responsible for faith schools was circulated to SACRE members (for copy see file of minutes).

K Passmore went through the details of the response which the working group had drafted to Lord Nash's letter.

Resolved:

It was agreed that the working group continue with the letter of response to Lord Nash which would be sent following approval from the Chairman and the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education.

11 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of SACRE would be held on 4 June 2015.

12 Any other business

Councillor Dixon sought member's thoughts on a combined authority for SACRE.

The Chairman responded that they had worked with South Tyneside SACRE on the enquiry project and have good working relations with other SACRE's through the work that the Local Authority Specialist Inspector for RE undertakes.

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**Durham County Council
Standing Advisory
Council on Religious
Education**

Annual Report 2014

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Background	2
2.1	Legal requirement for Religious Education (RE)	2
2.2	Durham County Council's statutory responsibilities	3
2.2.1	Establish a permanent standing advisory council on RE (SACRE)	3
2.2.2	Convene an occasional agreed syllabus conference (ASC)	3
2.2.3	Agreed syllabus	3
2.2.4	Required membership of SACRE and ASC	3
2.2.5	Funding and resources	4
3	Monitoring of RE and collective worship	4
3.1	Limitations in monitoring	4
3.2	Responses to requests for information	5
4	Advice and support for RE and collective worship	5
4.1	RE support contracts	5
4.2	Enquiry project	5
4.3	Secondary school RE networks	6
4.4	Primary school RE networks and courses	6
4.5	External and specific support	7
5	Status of ASC and agreed syllabus review	7
5.1	Launch in 2012	7
5.2	Status in 2014	7
6	Local, national and emerging issues in RE	8
7	Management of SACRE, working in partnership	8
7.1	SACRE membership and meetings	8
7.2	SACRE funding and support	9
7.3	External relationships and activities	9
	Appendix – SACRE membership 2014	11

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

1 Introduction

Durham County Council has statutory obligations relating to Religious Education in the county. This report summarises those statutory requirements and sets out key aspects of how they have been met in 2014, against a background of reduced funding and national challenges.

This annual report has been prepared by the Durham County Council Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE). Members of SACRE are representatives of churches and non-Christian faiths in the region, teachers associations and elected councillors. SACRE members donate their time and are not paid for their services. They work closely with the authority's Specialist Inspector for Religious Education, who provides technical advice, and liaises with Education Development Service (EDS).

Religious Education is required by law and also contributes to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

2 Background

2.1 Legal requirement for Religious Education

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RE, sex education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The key document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally agreed syllabus within the Local Authority (LA), although schools designated as having a religious character are free to make their own decisions in preparing their syllabuses.

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

2.2 Durham County Council's statutory responsibilities¹

2.2.1 Establish a permanent standing advisory council on RE (SACRE)

The Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to constitute a permanent Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). The statutory functions of SACRE are to:

- a) Advise the local authority on matters connected with:
 - Religious Education given in accordance with an agreed syllabus; and
 - Religious worship in community schools and in foundation schools that do not have a religious foundation.
- b) Carry out the functions conferred on them by section 394 (determination of cases in which requirement for Christian collective worship is not to apply).

2.2.2 Convene an occasional agreed syllabus conference (ASC)

Every local authority must also establish an occasional body called an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to review the Agreed Syllabus for RE adopted by the local authority.

2.2.3 Agreed syllabus

The local authority must institute a review of its agreed syllabus within five years of the last review, and subsequently every five years after the completion of each further review.

Local authorities must ensure that the agreed syllabus for their area is consistent with Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996, which requires the syllabus to reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

2.2.4 Required membership of SACRE and ASC

The ASC is a separate entity from SACRE but may have common membership. The local authority appoints representatives to each of four committees that make up the ASC and, in Durham's case, the ASC has the same membership as SACRE.

The four groups of SACRE (four statutory committees of ASC) are:

- A Christian churches (other than C of E) and other faiths

¹ See 'Religious Education in Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010' issued by Department for Children, Schools and Families for further information

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

- B Church of England (C of E)
- C Teaching associations
- D Local authority

The local authority must ensure that the composition of group A on SACRE and committee A on ASC is broadly representative of the proportionate strengths of the denominations and religions in the area.

The authority is also required to take all reasonable steps when appointing a person to be a member of a group on a SACRE or a committee of an ASC to represent any religion, denomination or association, to ensure the person appointed is representative of the religion, denomination or associations in question.

2.2.5 Funding and resources

Local authorities are required to fund and support a SACRE and ASC satisfactorily in line with the duty to constitute or convene each of these bodies and to enable them to carry out their duties effectively.

3 Monitoring of RE and collective worship

In order to fulfil the responsibility to advise the local authority on matters to do with RE and collective worship, SACRE seeks to monitor provision, standards, teaching and learning in RE. SACRE monitors by requesting information from the local authority (e.g. standards, information about monitoring visits undertaken by the Specialist Inspector (RE) or carrying out their own survey work (e.g. through questionnaires).

3.1 Limitations in monitoring

SACRE have noted that OFSTED no longer undertake any subject scrutiny visits in RE. In the past these were useful for analysing national issues of importance.

SACRE's capacity to conduct direct monitoring has always been limited and has been reduced still further in 2014 by the reduction in technical support referred in section 7.2 below.

The Specialist Inspector for RE has visited some secondary school RE departments in order to monitor provision, standards, teaching and learning, leadership and management of RE. However, this is at the request of individual schools or academies: there is no longer a pattern of local authority monitoring of

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

RE in all County Durham schools. This has resulted in a gap in SACRE's knowledge of the status of RE in schools.

3.2 Responses to requests for information

SACRE were asked this year to provide the local authority with the number of schools who provided alternative acts of collective worship (determinations) for groups of students in their schools. This was a freedom of information request. No such applications for determinations have been made and no schools currently have been issued with a determination.

SACRE have received a number of queries from parents and schools in relation to collective worship e.g. about parental right of withdrawal of their children from collective worship, the use of prayer in acts of collective worship, and statutory requirements. SACRE will continue to monitor the situation and may consider offering written guidance in the future.

4 Advice and support for RE and collective worship

SACRE uses information received through monitoring procedures to identify ways in which SACRE and Durham County Council Education Development Service (EDS) can support schools. It notes the following advice and support for schools provided through EDS and SACRE.

4.1 RE support contracts

A number of primary and secondary schools have requested contracts for support RE as part of their service level agreement with EDS. These have mainly been fulfilled by the Specialist Inspector for RE and have included staff meetings and support of individual teachers and groups of teachers. The Specialist Inspector for RE regularly provides a report on her work to SACRE.

4.2 Enquiry project

Following on from the success of previous interfaith week activities Durham SACRE (in collaboration with South Tyneside SACRE) applied for a bursary from the National Association of Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE). This was to run an enquiry based learning project supporting schools and academies around the issue of religious diversity in the local area and the North East. Schools and academies applied to participate in this project over the 2013/14 academic year.

The enquiry project was undertaken as a joint project with South Tyneside SACRE in order to forge greater links and to engage schools in different areas of the region in working together collaboratively.

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

SACRE supported the project by inviting schools and academies to bring their students to a morning or afternoon conference to meet people of faith and beliefs, to hear about their lives and beliefs and ask questions which had been planned as part of the overall enquiry. This programme involved several SACRE members and members of local faith communities. Evaluations from students, teachers and faith members rated the conference highly.

Following this conference, the next phase of the project involved a visit outside the region in order to compare religious diversity. Those schools and academies involved in the project visited Bradford, choosing to visit a combination of a Mandir, Gurdwara or Mosque tailoring the input to reflect on their enquiry. Students have since had the opportunity to finalise their enquiry and put together a presentation of outcomes and learning which was given in the November 2014 SACRE meeting.

A SACRE member has been involved in leading and managing the project together with the Specialist Inspector for RE. SACRE has been regularly updated about the impact of the project and the range of the enquiry throughout the academic year. An opportunity exists to develop the project enquiry group of teachers and middle leaders into a North East Hub for Religious Education.

4.3 Secondary school RE networks

Secondary RE network meetings have continued to be held termly and have been well attended. The Specialist Inspector for RE provides local and national updates and explores current issues with colleagues, e.g. provision at key stage 4, planning and sharing of good practice. Various papers and reports have been presented and discussed, e.g. Ofsted's 'Religious education: realising the potential'

Networks have been established for special schools. Although attendance is low, it has been useful to tailor the session in order to meet needs and included developing some planning materials for use in special schools. Some of the items discussed have been the three elements of RE in special schools, adapting planning for special schools, good practice case study.

SACRE continue to discuss other ways to support colleagues through recommending new networks and courses.

4.4 Primary school RE networks and courses

Primary school networks have continued to be held termly and have been very well attended. The Specialist Inspector for RE provides local and national updates and explores current issues with colleagues. In addition visitors have been invited to make presentations on the use of story in RE. Some items discussed have been using Philosophy of Children to develop critical thinking in RE, creating planning materials on "What do Christians believe about God?"

In addition to termly network meetings a course was held throughout the year entitled "Being an outstanding RE coordinator." This was attended by RE

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

coordinators from Durham, Darlington and Sunderland. As a result of this course some delegates have continued to meet and work together creating an “RE Improve” group. With the support of the Specialist Inspector for RE they meet regularly to discuss issues, share good practice and develop materials to use across the region.

4.5 External and specific support

The Specialist Inspector for RE has continued to receive requests to support some Durham schools in their selection process for teachers and leaders in RE. She has been involved in lesson observations and interviews and offered advice and guidance where appropriate.

The Specialist Inspector for RE has been asked to provide some advice and guidance to schools outside the local authority. She has undertaken RE monitoring visits in schools, been part of selection panels and offered advice to another local SACRE on the procedure for revising the locally agreed syllabus. Within this year the Specialist Inspector for RE has provided professional support to South Tyneside SACRE and has been advisor to the agreed syllabus conferences of Darlington and Sunderland local authorities. These activities result in income for Durham County Council.

Durham SACRE fully support this collaborative and partnership working and the adoption and adaptation of Durham agreed syllabus by other local authorities.

5 Status of ASC and agreed syllabus review

5.1 Launch in 2012

The most recent Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Durham was agreed by an ASC with the same membership as SACRE and launched in May 2012. This agreed syllabus has also been purchased and adapted by other local authorities in the region, providing income to Durham County Council.

The next review of the agreed syllabus must be carried out by 2017.

5.2 Status in 2014

All Durham schools and academies have bought into the agreed syllabus. Durham County Council’s Specialist Inspector for RE has continued to provide additional training and planning materials to support the delivery of the agreed syllabus. It is anticipated that further planning and resources could be produced if schools contract with Education Development Service (EDS).

In 2014 SACRE was concerned to hear that Durham Diocese had issued directives to voluntary controlled schools as well as aided schools about the use of the

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

diocesan syllabus for RE. Whilst aided schools may follow the diocesan agreed syllabus, voluntary controlled schools are required by statute to follow the local authority agreed syllabus. This matter has now been resolved, as the Specialist Inspector for RE met with the Assistant Diocesan Director of Education to clarify the requirement and revised guidance was issued to the affected schools.

The Specialist Inspector for RE also wrote to head teachers to remind them of the statutory obligation to use the agreed syllabus for teaching of RE in community and voluntary controlled schools.

6 Local, national and emerging issues in RE

The Specialist Inspector for RE informed SACRE that she had received a high volume of calls from parents asking to withdraw from RE and collective worship. Members sought clarification about whether the calls were from a particular geographical area in the county which appears not to be the case.

SACRE has been carefully following national updates and developments in Religious Education. Members of SACRE received a summary of the report 'The Truth Unmasked.' This was produced by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education following an inquiry into resources and provision for teacher training in Religious Education. Durham SACRE had contributed evidence towards this inquiry and encouraged Durham schools to do likewise.

Ofsted published its long report on Religious Education in October 2013 entitled, "Religious education: realising the potential". The report was based on findings from RE inspections in primary and secondary schools undertaken across the country between 2009 and 2012 (a report was published every three years). The report highlighted several areas of weakness, including the role government has played in undermining RE, as well as poor subject knowledge and lack of understanding of purpose of RE amongst teachers. Alan Brine, HMI and Ofsted's National Adviser for RE is the author of the report and gave input to the Durham RE conference in March 2013 ensuring that teachers in the region were already aware of some of the key issues which were raised through Ofsted monitoring of RE.

7 Management of SACRE, working in partnership

7.1 SACRE membership and meetings

SACRE met as planned in March, June and November 2014. All meetings take place in a committee room at County Hall, in order to be visible to all and easy for members of the public to attend.

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

The membership of Durham County Council's SACRE is listed in the Appendix. Membership in each of the four groups remains strong and all meetings have been quorate.

7.2 SACRE funding and support

In June 2013 the Durham County Council SACRE received notification from the council's Head of Education that the amount of professional support offered to SACRE by the would need to be reduced due to budget pressures. The calendar year 2014 was thus the first full year of this 50% reduction in professional support.

A SACRE task group met throughout the year to review the issue of working with reduced support. These discussions have focused on new ways of working and the greater involvement of SACRE members. The Specialist Inspector for RE continues to provide SACRE with a national and local update at each meeting; this is used as a basis for discussion and evaluation.

So far the impact of this change has been mitigated somewhat due to the body of experience represented within SACRE. However there has been an impact on SACRE's project work and monitoring, reported above. As new members join SACRE and as the time of the review of the agreed syllabus approaches these challenges will grow.

SACRE has been well supported by the clerk to SACRE, provided by Democratic Services.

7.3 External relationships and activities

SACRE continues to work with local partners and stakeholders. The Specialist Inspector for RE is a member of The North East Religious Learning Resources Centre (NERLRC). The Director of NERLRC has provided input to network meetings. The Director of NERLRC has become a member of SACRE representing the Church of England. Links with the diocese have been further strengthened through the appointment of the Diocesan RE consultant joining SACRE who also represents the Church of England (at time of writing).

SACRE was notified by the SACRE chairman (Senior Tutor in RE at Durham University ITT) that the PGCE Religious Education programme would be closed in Durham University at the end of the 2013/14 academic year. This means that there is no provision in the North East to train secondary RE teachers). In response to this the Specialist Inspector for RE commissioned a questionnaire to RE teachers in Durham to assess the long term impact of this closure.

SACRE is kept informed of local faith issues by Ian Hunter Smart, Community Development Officer (with responsibility for faiths and beliefs) through his attendance at SACRE meetings. Durham Faiths Network have been very supportive of the SACRE Interfaith conferences this year with members of the network offering to lead workshops.

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

Durham SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

The council's Specialist Inspector for RE is a member of AREIAC (Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants). She uses this membership to keep SACRE and teacher groups informed of developments and good practice.

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

Appendix – SACRE membership 2014

Group	Representing
A	Christian churches (other than C of E) and other faiths
B	Church of England (C of E)
C	Teaching associations
D	Local authority

Name	Representing	Group
Bhakti Rasa Adhikhara	Hinduism	A
Ms V Bain	RE Curriculum Group	C
Miss J Bainbridge	Methodist Church	A
Mrs S M Baker	National Union of Teachers (NUT)	C
Major N Barker	Salvation Army	A
Cllr Brookes	Durham County Council	D
Mr S Brown	Assemblies of God	A
Canon L Burton	Church of England	B
Mrs C Callaghan	National Union of Teachers (NUT)	C
Ms N Chapman	Church of England	B
Cllr Dixon	Durham County Council	D
Mr V Gallant	Judaism	B
Mrs W Gray	Buddhism	A
Mr W S Guymer	Baptist Church	A
Ms A Hartley	National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)	A

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

Name	Representing	Group
Cllr Iveson	Durham County Council	D
Rev. J Jewsbury	Church of England	B
Mr J G Kidd	Methodist Church	A
Mr P Lamb	Association of School and College Leavers (ASCL, formerly SHA)	C
Mrs D Mowbray-Pape	Church of England	B
Ms S Lupton	RE Curriculum Group	C
Ms J Nicholls	Society of Friends (Quaker)	A
Mrs I Osborne	Roman Catholic Church	A
Mrs J Pallister	Roman Catholic Church	A
Ms K Passmore	Church of England	B
Mr Purba	Sikhism	A
Miss C Spencer	Baha'i Faith	A
Cllr Stelling	Durham County Council	D
Mrs M Stephenson	United Reformed Church	A
Mr P Welch	National Union of Teachers (NUT)	C

Specialist Inspector for Religious Education

Mrs I Short

Representative from Community Development

Mr I Hunter Smart

Vacancies in 2014

Group	Representing
A	United Reformed Church (1) Islam (1) (vacancy filled in 2015)

Durham County Council SACRE – Annual Report 2014

C	NASUWT (1) NAHT (1)
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