

Durham SACRE

Self Evaluation & Next Steps

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good working relationships, active and work in meetings and between meetings.• Meetings are usually quorate with County Councillor representation.• Renewed connections with the Local Authority, senior officer.• Colleagues who report back to faith communities & who they represent (two- way dialogue).• Humanist representation – full member of SACRE.• Actively reviewed and evaluated SACRE.• Keeping up to date with contemporary changes in RE – Religion & Worldviews• Support the LA (e.g. School absence and religious observance).• Clerking support & Education Durham support.• Access to NASACRE and LA training and support.• Offer support schools with faith speakers, places of worship, networking opportunities.• Agreed Syllabus / Agreed Syllabus Conference, quality. Impact – other LA's.	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance at meetings is sometimes poor and there is a concern with meetings almost being unable to proceed due to quorum rules and legal advice.• Membership of SACRE is a concern, colleagues move on from roles or successors and new representatives are not appointed.• SACRE needs to review meeting timings and whether it could be held in a hybrid way would possibly improve attendance.• Changes in the Education landscape (Academisation) means that it is increasingly difficult for SACRE to fulfil part of its statutory obligations.• Access to quality data was also considered to be a current weakness making it difficult to advise the Local Authority.
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chance to become more inclusive and open, especially to review membership to be inclusive of other groups.• Opportunity for SACRE to put a greater emphasis on worldviews.• Opportunity for training and support for new members would be beneficial.• Should seek to publicise Durham SACRE online and via social media.• Opportunity to create a stronger link with colleagues who attend RE network meetings.	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The biggest threat to SACRE's would be RE being added as a national curriculum subject.• A lack of religious diversity in Durham is a threat to the strength and vibrancy of SACRE because it makes it hard to recruit active Faith members who live locally and can serve more easily.• Lack of authority / opportunity to collect information on the teaching of RE and implementation of the Agreed Syllabus in schools is a threat to the ability of all

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to share best practice and utilise the LA to better effect to communicate with schools. • To organise conferences where pupils and teachers can meet and share with people from a range of Faiths and other world views to learn more about how Faith affects daily life. 	<p>SACREs to do what they are legally supposed to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial constraints (lack of direct budget for SACRE and increasingly tight school budgets) mean that it is difficult for teachers to get time and permission to attend SACRE meetings, leading to a further reduction in our knowledge of RE teaching and issues in schools. • Financial constraints can also limit the ability of SACRE to establish conferences where pupils and teachers can meet and share with people from a range of Faiths and other world views to learn more about how Faith affects daily life. • Constraints / changes within Education Durham, which have led to the loss of a full-time Inspector for RE mean that the departments resources, including time, are much more restricted when it comes to revising the Agreed Syllabus, giving less opportunity for SACRE members to input to the process. • The COVID-19 pandemic is still a threat to SACRE (and to the teaching of RE) because it disrupted the launch of the Agreed Syllabus, which eventually took place virtually. • The increasing proportion of schools which are now academies is a threat to SACRE as there is no formal role for SACRE to be involved with them.
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Next Steps

Short-term planning 2024-2025

- Improve and renew SACRE membership – to include a membership review with the support of the Clerk, Chair and Professional Support from the LA.
- Provide support to schools and review the impact of SACRE in the classroom – through inviting teacher input from different phases on the impact of the Agreed Syllabus, further evaluation of the Agreed Syllabus, standing item on the SACRE meeting agenda to share best practice.
- Further work needed on religious and non-religious worldviews to feed into Agreed Syllabus review. Opportunity to re-establish working group.
- Agreed Syllabus review – preparation and convening of the Agreed Syllabus Conference, involvement of SACRE members in the review process. Launch event and involvement of SACRE members.

Long-term planning 2026-2027

- Improve SACRE attendance, look to bring in members of faith to meetings for purposes of presentation – a learning and sharing experience.
- Collaboration with other regional SACRE's or a North East SACRE to share resources and expertise and working alongside the Regional RE Hub.
- Research the possibility of a Youth SACRE to collaborate more with stakeholders, carefully considering the role of SACRE in schools beyond a speaker resource base.
- Attending network meeting to share best practice. Create opportunities for RE conferences and events in collaboration with Education Durham.
- Evaluate the launch and assess the impact of the next Agreed Syllabus in the classroom.