



Monday, 16th September 2024

Dear Lilian,

I am writing as Chair of Nottingham City SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) to raise the important issue of high-quality religious education (RE) and collective worship in our local schools.

A SACRE is a statutory body set up by each local authority to provide for and to monitor RE and collective worship in local schools. SACREs are funded by government through the central school services budget (CSSB), specifically the schools and education allocation.

SACREs comprise a microcosm of the local community and democratic organisation, comprising faith, church, teaching union and local authority representatives.

Context

Recent reports, especially the [Ofsted subject report for RE](#), have highlighted both the importance of RE and the need for better support for the subject in both primary and secondary schools. British society is multi-faith and multi-secular and poses both challenges and opportunities for living in a cohesive society. RE and collective worship, when appropriately understood and implemented, provide essential elements of schools' educational purpose to prepare students for life in Britain today.

Nottingham City SACRE believes that:

- good RE develops 'religious literacy' which can contribute towards mutual understanding between people from different beliefs and values
- high quality RE is about and for people of different religious beliefs and those of none
- high quality RE provides opportunities to discuss sensitive and philosophical issues in a safe learning environment
- high quality RE asks pupils to reflect on their own and others' beliefs, attitudes and ways of living

Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education

Councillor for Bulwell Forest

Loxley House
Station Street
Nottingham
NG2 3NG

0115 87 63786

07525917344

Cheryl.Barnard@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk

- high quality collective worship enables schools to develop a strong ethos and values and opportunities for the whole school community to reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural values
- RE and collective worship contribute significantly to the promotion of Fundamental British Values and the development of respectful, informed and positive citizens of the 21st century.

Action is urgently needed

Nottingham City SACRE calls upon our MPs to pledge to work towards ensuring that RE and collective worship in schools have appropriate structures and funding, so that:

- **student teachers** receive sufficient training in RE
- **teachers** in all phases and stages of their career have high quality training opportunities
- **SACREs** have adequate funding to support schools in their provision of high quality RE and educationally inspiring collective worship.

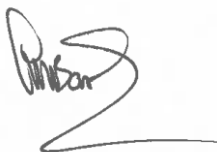
We would love you to visit the Religious Education Stand F12 at the forthcoming Labour Party Conference to join the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) call for a national plan for RE and investment at all key stages.

We would also like the Government to reconsider the statutory allocation of Committee groups that constitute a SACRE composition, and in particular to review and amend the current priority given to the Church of England (Group B) in light of demographic and cultural changes since these were set in legislation.

We would be happy to meet and discuss further, and share the work of our local SACRE

With many thanks and best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Cheryl Barnard
Labour Councillor for Bulwell Forest

Chair of Nottingham City SACRE

cc Rt Honourable Bridget Phillipson, MP Department for Education

Heidi Shewell-Cooper, LA SACRE Officer