

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

1 Introduction

1.1. The Local Authority is required by the provisions of Section 390 – 397 of the 1996 Education Act to constitute a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). These arrangements set out the framework within which the SACRE should function, and the content of this Constitution meets the requirements of the 1996 Act. The constitution also reflects the requirements of Circular 194 for the SACRE to broadly represent the proportionate strength of local religious groups.

2 Functions of the SACRE

The SACRE has a range of advisory and executive functions as follows:

2.1 Advisory Functions

2.1.1 To advise the Executive Board upon such matters connected with religious worship in City Schools as the Executive Board may refer to the SACRE or as the SACRE itself may think fit.

2.1.2 To advise the Executive Board upon such matters connected with the religious education to be given, in accordance with an 'Agreed Syllabus' that the Executive Board may refer to the SACRE, or as the SACRE itself may think fit. This could include methods of teaching, the choice of the materials and the provision of training for teachers.

2.2 Executive Functions

2.2.1 To consider and determine, in accordance with Section 390 – 397 of the Education Act 1996, applications from City Schools in relation to the requirement of Christian collective worship to apply at that school.

2.2.2 To consider a review of any 'Agreed Syllabus' adopted by the Executive Board.

2.2.3 To publish an annual report on its work, especially where advice has been given to the Local Authority, including reasons for that advice.

3 Membership of the SACRE

3.1. There are two kinds of SACRE membership:

- Those nominated by the appropriate sponsoring Groups and formally appointed by the local authority, and who work within one of the 4 Groups (A-D)
- Those co-opted by SACRE

3.2. The SACRE shall include representative members as detailed in section 4.3 below and may also include co-opted members (see section 4.8).

4 Representative Members

4.1 The number of representative members in Groups A, B and C in 4.3 below shall be determined by the Corporate Director for Children and Education Services, in consultation with the Executive Member responsible for education. The individual appointments shall be made by the SACRE after taking all reasonable steps to assure itself that the individual is representative of the denomination or association concerned.

4.2. Nominations of elected members from Nottingham City Council are made by the Corporate Director for Children and Education Services, in accordance with the wishes of the majority group.

4.3 Membership of SACRE consists of the four groups of representative members ('representative groups') as below. Elected members from Nottingham City Council must include the Executive member with responsibility for education matters.

GROUP A (17) Christian denominations, other than Church of England, other religions and their denominations reflecting the principal religions & worldviews in the area

Baptist	1 member
Buddhist	1 member
Orthodox	1 member
Hindu	1 member
Humanism	1 member
Islam	2 members
Jehovah Witness	1 member
Jewish	1 member
Majority Black-Led Churches (MBLC)	1 member
Methodist	1 member
Quaker	1 member
Roman Catholic	1 member
Salvation Army	1 member
Seventh Day Adventists	1 member
Sikh	1 member
United Reformed Church	1 member

GROUP B (6) - Church of England.

GROUP C (6) - Teacher and Head Teacher Associations, and others representing educational interests, including when possible two teachers of religious education

GROUP D (6) – The Local Authority: Elected members of Nottingham City Council.

4.4. The representative members shall hold office for a period of four years from appointment. They can be reappointed for a further term or replaced.

4.6 An individual representative member may be removed from membership by the SACRE if in its opinion (s)he ceases to be an appropriate representative.

4.7 Any individual representative member who has failed to attend meetings of the SACRE for a continuous period of 12 months, beginning with the date of a meeting shall, on expiry of that period, be deemed to be no longer representative and will cease to hold office forthwith. They may be reappointed.

4.8 Co-opted Members

4.8.2 Co-opted members shall be appointed only by members of the SACRE who have not themselves been co-opted, that is, the representative groups. No representative group shall be entitled to co-opt additional members, but the whole SACRE can

4.8.3 Co-opted members shall hold office on such terms as may be removed at any time by the representative members, and hold office at the pleasure of, and may be removed at any time by, the representative groups.

4.8.4 Co-opted members shall not be entitled to vote.

4.9 Substitute Members

In order to promote elective representation at meetings, a named substitute member may attend meetings in place of a representative member of the SACRE in accordance with the following provisions:

a) a substitute member may only attend a meeting in place of a relevant representative member.

b) the substitute must be notified to the Lead Officer for the SACRE at least 1 hour prior to the published commencement time of the meeting.

c) It shall be the responsibility of the relevant representative member:

- To determine whether or not it is necessary for the relevant named substitute to attend a meeting in their place.
- To notify the named substitute of the time and place the proposed meeting.
- To notify the Secretary in advance of the meeting that the named substitute will attend the meeting in their place.
- To brief the named substitute on the proposed meeting

d) a substitute member may only attend a meeting in place of a relevant representative member.

e) a named substitute shall have the same voting rights as the representative member in whose place (s)he is attending.

4.10 Resignation

Any representative or co-opted member of the SACRE may at any time resign his/her office.

5. ADMINISTRATION

5.1. SACRE will usually meet three times a year. Meetings are administered by Constitutional Services and supported by the LA SACRE Officer. Meetings are attended by the Director of Education or an appropriate representative.

5.2 Chair and Vice Chair of the SACRE

5.3 The Chair of the SACRE shall be the Nottingham City Council Executive Member with responsibility for education matters.

5.4 The Chair shall preside at meetings of SACRE. The Vice Chair of the SACRE shall preside at meetings of the SACRE during the absence of the Chair. In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice Chair at a meeting of the SACRE, the members of the SACRE shall elect one of their number who is a member of a representative group to preside at the meeting during such absence.

5.5. The person presiding at a meeting of the SACRE shall have a second or casting vote but only in relation to questions concerning co-opted members in accordance with paragraph 7.3 below

5.6 The Vice-Chair shall be elected every two years by the SACRE from among the representative members of groups A, B and C.

5.7. The office of Vice-Chair shall rotate between the representative groups as follows:

- Group A in the first year.
- Group B in the second year.
- Group C in the third year.

In succeeding years, the rotation shall continue through the representative groups in alphabetical order, with Group A following again after Group C.

Academic Year	Vice-Chair Group
2024/5	A
2025/6	B
2026/7	C
2027/8	A

5.8 A person nominated for Vice-Chair shall be a representative member of the SACRE but need not be a member of the nominating representative group.

5.9 If at any particular time, the relevant representative group is unable or unwilling to nominate a person as Vice-Chair of the SACRE, the representative group shall lose the right of nomination and it shall be passed in accordance with these rotation arrangements.

5.10 If a casual vacancy arises in the office of the Vice-Chair, the representative group which nominated the Vice-Chair shall be entitled to nominate a person in his/her place for the remainder of that year.

6. Chair and Vice Chair of Representative Groups

6.1 The Chair of each representative group shall be appointed annually by the members of that representative group from amongst their number to take office on 1 September each year.

6.2 Each representative group may appoint a Vice Chair on similar terms as its Chair. The provisions of paragraph 5.5 above shall apply to meetings of representatives groups, such as if they were meetings of the SACRE.

6.3 The person presiding at a meeting of a representative group shall have a second or casting vote.

7 Voting at SACRE meetings

7.1. SACRE will endeavour to achieve consensus on its work and come to agreement about issues without the need for a vote, except in very rare circumstances.

7.2. All members are entitled to speak and vote on any issue as invited by the Chair, but substitute or Co-opted members may speak but not vote at any meeting. Any questions to be decided by the SACRE shall require a majority of votes cast by those present and entitled to vote.

7.3 Only the representative groups shall be entitled to vote on any question and each such group shall have a single vote.

7.4 The Chair presiding at a meeting of the SACRE shall have a second or casting vote, but only in relation to questions concerning co-opted members.

7.5 If the question before the SACRE is concerned with the appointment of a co-opted member then the Chair shall be entitled to a second or casting vote in the event of a tie.

8. Voting at Meetings of the Representative Groups

8.1. Any questions to be decided by a representative group shall require a majority of the votes cast by those present and entitled to vote.

8.2 Each member of a representative group shall be entitled to one vote.

9. Proceedings

9.1 No issue shall be discussed at a meeting of the SACRE unless notice of the intention to discuss that issue is given in the agenda for the meeting.

9.2 The quorum for a meeting of the SACRE shall be three named members (consisting of one member from each of the three different representative groups).

9.3 If within a period of fifteen minutes after the published start time of a meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting shall not formally be held. However, those present may continue with an informal meeting, but no decisions can be taken.

9.4. If during the course of a meeting, a quorum is no longer present, the meeting shall be terminated at the point it becomes inquorate. However, those present may continue with an informal meeting, but no decisions can be taken.

9.5 A meeting of the SACRE shall be convened by the Lead Officer for SACRE after consultation with the Chair, but the Lead Officer for SACRE shall comply with any direction given by the SACRE at a previous meeting, or with any direction (which is not inconsistent with a direction of the SACRE) given by the Chair, or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair of the SACRE.

9.6 A meeting of the SACRE may be called in writing, specifying the business to be transacted, by any three representative groups and the Lead Officer for SACRE shall proceed to convene such a meeting.

9.7 Every member (including every named substitute) of the SACRE shall be given, not less than five clear working days before the date of the meeting, written notice of the meeting, provided that where the Chair, or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair, so directs on the grounds that there are matters demanding urgent consideration, it shall be sufficient if the written notice convening a meeting is given within such shorter period as (s)he specifies.

9.8 Notice of a meeting may be given to members by sending an email.

10. Minutes

10.1 Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of the SACRE.

11. Validity of Proceedings

11.1. The validity of the proceedings of the SACRE shall not be affected:

a) by any vacancy in the office of a representative.

b) on the grounds that a member of the SACRE appointed to represent any: denomination or association does not at the time of the proceedings represent the denomination or association in question.

c) by reason of an individual not having received notice of a meeting or an agenda.

11.2 The validity of the proceedings of the SACRE shall not be affected by the failure of any representative group to agree on how its vote should be cast on any particular issue before the SACRE.

12. Advice, Guidance and Determinations

12.1. SACRE guidance will be disseminated to schools by the Local Authority through regular mailings and meetings with schools as appropriate.

12.2 All maintained schools must provide 'daily collective worship for all registered pupils' and that this 'must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character': Department for Education Circular 1/94 (1994). Maintained schools under the control of the Local Authority may apply to the local SACRE for a 'determination'. The determination lifts or modifies this requirement for some or all pupils, while safeguarding the interests of children from Christian families. Applications for a Determination should be made to the Director of Education.

12.3. Academies should apply for a 'determination' directly to the DfE.

13. Code of conduct; All members of SACRE are expected to follow the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1)

14 Approval and amendments of arrangements

14.1 SACRE members, legal services and the Local Authority have been consulted on this Constitution, It is due for review in the academic year 2027/8.

15.2 These arrangements may not be amended so as to make them inconsistent with provisions of the Education Act 1996.

15.3 To the extent that these arrangements may be amended, those arrangements which relate to SACRE may only be amended by a decision of the SACRE

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