

Wandsworth Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Annual Report for the academic year September 2022- August 2023

1. Introduction

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Chair's welcome

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this report as the Chair of Wandsworth SACRE. The 2022-23 academic year was a welcome return to normal, post pandemic. We had three meetings during the year, two of which were at the Town Hall and one hosted at one of our places of worship, where we enjoyed a presentation and tour of the Quaker Friends Meeting House.

We welcomed new members this year – in Group A: Imam Usman Shahzad Butt from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association, Rev. Rosalind Hollingsworth from the Methodist Church of Great Britain; in Group C: Claire Beecher from the NEU and Brigitte Sayers- Eugster from the NASUWT; and in Group D: Cllr. Denise Paul; together with Jon Fayle from Humanists UK as a new co-opted member.

We also said goodbye to some members this year – Ewa Bednarek, Claire Wood, Sharon Docherty, Cllr Norman Marshall and Cllr Juliana Annan.

Wandsworth SACRE has continued with its work to ensure that all pupils in our schools develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally as well as academically. We participated in the NASACRE AGM and continue to follow with interest developments in RE nationally; for example, we looked to see what progress had been made in the ideas presented in the draft handbook of the Religious Education Council, and considered the impact that further academisation would have on our ability to support RE in our schools.

Our SACRE actively seeks to ensure all children in Wandsworth have access to high quality and challenging RE and we provide support to primary RE subject leaders through the teachers' network meetings. These are free of charge to maintained schools and we urge school leaders to recognise the importance of allocating school time for staff to attend. We also produce a termly newsletter which signposts

resources, draws attention to issues of interest in the RE world and highlights forthcoming festivals among other features.

Pupils' learning in RE has continued to be enhanced by the Faith Trails which have allowed our children to experience exciting learning opportunities while promoting an ethos of respect for others. We are very grateful to our Group A members who have facilitated these. The trails have built on pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures and beliefs while also celebrating the religious and cultural diversity found in Wandsworth.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to members of Wandsworth SACRE and all others who work so hard to support RE in Wandsworth.

Councillor Sana Jafri
Chair, Wandsworth SACRE

Overview

1. This annual report of Wandsworth SACRE outlines the work of SACRE during the academic year 2022 to 2023. The GCSE and A-level statistics for Religious Studies for the past year are provided as an appendix to this report, with thanks to the Wandsworth Research and Evaluation Unit, which provides this information.

Meetings held in the reporting year

2. Wandsworth SACRE met on three occasions during the academic year 2022-23. Meetings were held in the evenings. After two years of virtual meetings using Teams, it was a delight to be able to hold all our meetings in person again. Two were held at the Town Hall and one at a place of worship; this was at the Friends' Meeting House in Wandsworth High Street, and preceded by a tour and presentation by a member of the Society of Friends.

Attendance was generally good, and no meetings were inquorate. New members were welcomed, as listed above. There were three resignations and one member moved from representing the NAHT to Group B, the Church of England and another to being the Catholic representative, whose place was taken up by a Group C member moving to Group A. Another member from Group C moved into Group B. There were also two new teacher members. The Chair of SACRE resigned and Councillor Jafri became the new SACRE Chair.

3. The NASACRE briefing is a standing item at all SACRE meetings.

Autumn Term Meeting 2022

4. Meeting held on Monday, 3rd October 2022.

The Ofsted monitoring report prepared by the Local Authority's (LA) SACRE Officer was presented for discussion. This made an analysis of any comments on

Religious Education (RE) or spiritual, social, moral and cultural development (SMSC) that were found in the Ofsted reports from Wandsworth schools inspected in the academic year 2021-22. Just one school had had a deep dive in RE.

The next item for discussion was the Government White Paper regarding schools changing to academies. The effect that academisation would have on SACRE and its statutory remit was a major cause of concern. It was decided to maintain a watching brief and co-ordinate a joint response with other boroughs should this progress.

The Wandsworth Locally Agreed Syllabus (LAS) was now five years old. A vote was taken for the LA to be formally requested to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). The SACRE Officer invited interested SACRE members to join a working party of teachers who would support the ASC. Several members put themselves forward.

The Draft Religious Education Council handbook had been included in the agenda pack for SACRE members to consider in small discussion groups as a refresher activity, before its expected revision in 2024. The feeling of those present was that the discussions were helpful.

NASACRE's training plan, which enabled all members to attend any training provided by NASACRE free of charge, was shared with the group and members encouraged to sign up for any sessions in which they had a particular interest.

Spring Term Meeting 2023

5. Meeting held on Monday, 27th February, 2023.

The new Wandsworth Community and Partnerships Service Voluntary Sector Development Manager introduced herself and explained that her role was to develop and strengthen communities in the borough, including faith groups' links. A borough-wide voluntary and community needs analysis was taking place and progress would be reported back to SACRE.

The SACRE Annual Report for 2021-22 was presented and discussed. While the NASACRE template for the report was used, it was very similar to the format that had been used by the LA in previous years. There was some discussion on Wandsworth schools' Religious Studies (RS) GCSE and A-Level results, which were better than the national average and with some very good individual school results.

The 2021 Census Data on Religion for Wandsworth was considered. There were some direct correlations between the England and Wandsworth's statistics between 2011 and 2021, such as the decrease in percentage of those who were Christian, and an increase in those with no religion. The Jewish and 'other religion' percentages were the same as the English results. Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu numbers were listed at a higher percentage and Sikh at a lower within

the borough than the whole of England. Members also discussed the breakdown of the 'other religion' Wandsworth figures for 2021 which were many and varied.

Summer Term Meeting

6. Meeting held on Monday, 12th June 2023

The SACRE Officer reported back on the NASACRE conference which had been held in person again for the first time in three years and celebrated 30 years of NASACRE. The feedback and notes from the keynote speakers provided by the conference were also included. The Officer noted that national analysis of SACREs had been undertaken, and Wandsworth SACRE was one of only 23 who had provided their 2021-22 annual reports, and one of a smaller group who had submitted reports over the last three years. The new format for this conference was the holding of subsequent online workshops. The SACRE Officer would attend the interfaith dialogue and the Welcome Project and share the information later.

SACRE was pleased to be able to receive a virtual presentation on RE Hubs, funded by The National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) and the RE Council. The website was explained as a 'one stop shop' to support the teaching of RE nationally and its features were explained. Some SACRE members expressed an interest in registering with the RE Hub and accessing the training to become Kite marked approved speakers.

Brigitte Sayers-Eugster from Shaftesbury Park Primary School provided a very interesting and practical presentation on how the Wandsworth Locally Agreed Syllabus has been used in her school.

An update was given on the Faith Trail initiative. There were now three trails running in each of the autumn and summer terms; Wimbledon Parkside with the Buddhaddipa Buddhist Temple, Wimbledon Synagogue and St Paul's CE church; Southfields with Ahmadiyya Fazl Mosque, South London Gurdwara and the Friends' Meeting House; and Balham, with Balham Mosque, Balham Hindu Mandir and St Mary and St John the Divine CE church. Each trail gave a chance to visit three contrasting places of worship of Abrahamic, Dharmic and Christian faith. All the trails were fully booked, with some returning schools now making it part of their RE curriculum offer for Year 6.

2. Religious Education

Syllabus

The current Wandsworth Locally Agreed Syllabus (LAS) was originally launched in September 2017. Due to the new directions in RE relating to Worldviews and forthcoming commissions for exemplar syllabi, it was updated and extended rather than replaced. Working parties from the teacher network assisted the ASC to produce the revised document, which was approved in February 2023.

Monitoring and standards

Standards in RE in secondary schools were monitored by scrutinising the exam data from GCSEs and A level. See appendix.

A trawl was also made of Ofsted reports to look for references to RE and SMSC. This was done and reported upon in the first meeting of the new academic year, October 2022. Section 48 reports are also sent to SACRE, but due to the break in the carrying out of inspections, there was only one in the last year.

The workforce data for secondary schools, produced by NATRE is discussed, and follow up made to schools where there had been no submission, or where time allocation to RE appeared low. It should be noted that in Wandsworth, only one secondary school was a community school until March 2023, while with the exception of one voluntary aided school, the others all have academy status. Some primary schools were working towards the RE Quality Mark (REQM). Two schools currently hold the award.

Continuing professional development

The primary RE subject leaders' network met once in each term at Wandsworth's Professional Development Centre. The foci for meetings in the last year were:

- A presentation and discussion on the Baha'i faith, followed by input into the revision of the LAS (autumn 22)
- Talks and discussions from faith representatives of Hinduism and Judaism; presentation from a primary school on how they had incorporated the LAS into their whole school curriculum (spring 23)
- Presentation from the Faith and Belief Forum; sharing of RE portfolios (summer 2023)

Other support for schools

The email network group set up by the LA SACRE Officer has continued to enable members to keep in touch with each other to seek advice and share good practice. It includes some subject leaders from independent schools as well as LA community schools.

The LA SACRE Officer produces a termly newsletter which has a calendar of events including major faith festivals, signposts good practice and shares resources.

SACRE produced guidance for schools on Ramadan, which is updated annually (see appendix).

No complaints about religious education in schools were referred to SACRE this year.

3. Collective Worship

No monitoring of collective worship, either of quality or compliance to statutory requirements, took place during the year. No requests for determinations were received during the year. No schools in Wandsworth have been given determinations in the past.

No complaints regarding collective worship in the community schools of Wandsworth were referred to SACRE during the year. SACRE produced guidance for schools on collective worship (see appendix).

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

There was one FOI request during the past year, from NASACRE in relation to funding.

4. Links with other bodies

Wandsworth SACRE is affiliated to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

One meeting per year had in the past been held jointly with Wandsworth's Multi Faith Forum, with an agenda chosen to reflect the interests of both bodies. This group had not met since lockdown; however Wandsworth has now appointed a Voluntary Sector Development Manager, one of whose briefs is to connect and support faith groups across the borough. She attended some SACRE meetings and been active in promoting multi faith/cultural events.

There are good links with the Church of England Diocese of Southwark and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark, whose advisers to Wandsworth's VA schools are much valued by the schools themselves and the School Improvement Service.

5. Other SACRE local involvement

The Faith Trails for Year 5 and 6 pupils in primary schools, a SACRE initiative which began in the 2021-22 academic year, have grown and flourished during the last year, and have been described above. Some Group A members have been very helpful in facilitating these.

Nine different schools have taken part so far, with some of these schools making this a part of their regular curriculum offer in RE. A longer list has signed up for future dates. Evaluations from hosts and schools have been extremely positive and pupils' work from the visits of a high standard, showing much thought and perception.

6. SACRE's Administrative Arrangements and Financial Support

SACRE meetings are clerked by a Democratic Services Officer from Wandsworth Council. An officer is provided to support the LA. Specialist RE professional support for SACRE was provided by an external consultant, Lesley Prior, who supported a number of London SACREs.

The annual budget for support for SACRE in 2022-23 was £6000, the same as in 2021-22. This funded the external consultant, LA SACRE Officer, NASACRE membership and other incidental expenses. Wandsworth Town Hall provided a room for meetings, but it is an aspiration to hold at least one meeting a year at a place of worship. As noted, this year, two meetings were at the Town Hall and one at the Friends' Meeting House.

Membership

While some members had been in place for a number of years, there is always some movement in the membership, but vacancies were quickly addressed. There were no inquorate meetings in the past year.

Group A contains representatives of all the major faiths and some denominations or branches within them, and two nominated deputies for some faiths. The Humanist member was co-opted during this reporting year, but arrangements were made for this member to request full membership of Group A.

Training

The LA Officer attended the NASACRE conference in 2023. SACRE is also happy to fund a certain amount of training for members and signed up to NASACRE's training package.

7. Appendices

Tables of exam results for the year 2022-23

CPD provided for schools – see above

SACRE has provided advice for schools on Collective Worship -

[wandsworth sacre guidance on collective worship.pdf](#)

and on Ramadan

https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/media/10197/sacre_ramadan_guidance.pdf

(updated annually)

In addition to the DfE and NASACRE, the report is circulated to SACRE members and schools.

Appendix

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SACRE - MARCH 2024

STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES EXAMINATIONS IN 2023

Introduction

This paper summarises the Wandsworth and England results for 2023 Religious Studies GCSE and A Level examinations. It provides more detailed data for Wandsworth down to school level.

This is provided for information and discussion.

Summary of national data

Outcomes are still provisional to date (software to be updated with final data in April). Headline figures are as follows:

The key outcomes for Religious Education in England at KS4 and KS5 in 2023

- There were 193,610 entries for the full course in GCSE Religious Studies (RS), a significant increase from 2022 (144,010).
- After a dip last year, this meant that the numbers taking the full GCSE RS examination course were comparable to 2019 (207,720).
- There was no data available for entries for the short course in GCSE RS.
- The points average had dropped (from 5.3 in 2022 to 5.0 in 2023).
- There were 14,720 entries at A level, continuing a downward trend since 2018 (16,660).
- Percentages of A*- B dropped from 68.1 in 2022 to 55.1, and A - E from 99.1 to 97.3.

Summary of Wandsworth data

- 1,040 students sat a Religious Studies (RS) examination in Wandsworth in 2023, very similar to the numbers in 2022 (1,029).
- 939 students sat the GCSE full course (952 in 2022), but none the short course. Nine students from Francis Barber had sat this the previous year.
- As for previous years, the number of students in the cohort has been included in the data, which shows the wide variation in the percentage of a cohort opting for RS. There was again a great divergence between schools in this: St Cecilia's, St John Bosco and Graveney entered all or almost all their students; Chestnut Grove the vast majority and Ashcroft about half.
- The lowest proportion was at Harris Battersea, where it was about a seventh of the cohort.
- Ark Putney again entered no students as it was not offered as a GCSE option, although it appears that it will be offered in future. Southfields and Ernest Bevin did not enter any students this year, although it is normally an option.
- It is not surprising that church schools enter more pupils, as RS is entitled to a defined amount of curriculum time, 10% in Catholic schools.
- The points score averages for Ashcroft, Graveney and Chestnut Grove were all above the LA average, Ashcroft significantly so; Harris and St Cecilia's perceptibly below. While St John Bosco was still below the LA average by 0.3, it had made a great improvement of 0.5 from last year; from 4.9 to 5.4, comfortably above the national average. Although the LA average of 5.7 was lower than the 5.9 of last year, it was much higher than the national average of 5.0, which had also dropped – from 5.3 last year.
- The highest average points (6.7) were earned at Ashcroft, the lowest at Harris (4.7) Only St Cecilia's (4.9) and Harris were below the national average.
- Overall the indicator of grades 9 - 4 showed that Wandsworth was again above the national average – 80.6% compared with 70.6% national, though below the LA 2022 9 - 4 average of 85%.
- In Wandsworth there were 97 entrants for A Level, up from 69 in 2022. Except for two, all passed with at least an E grade.
- There were six entrants for AS level, all from Graveney, for which there had been none in 2022.
- At A level, the percentage A* - B comparator in Wandsworth dropped to 45.4%, well down from the 73.9% of 2022. This was also below the national comparator, which had only dropped from 68.1% to 55.1%. Above this were Ashcroft at 71.4% (7 students) and St Cecilia's (12 students) at 75%.
- At A* - E, Wandsworth (97.3%) was only slightly below the national average of 97.9%.

Subject: Religious Studies (4610)
Qual: GCSE Full Course

Centre	Entries/NOR				% 9 - 4				Average points			
	2018	2019	2022	2023	2018	2019	2022	2023	2018	2019	2022	2023
NCER National	162230	207720	144010	193610	71.8	72.4	75.3	70.6	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.0
LA Comparator	778	804	952	939	82.6	78.9	85	80.6	5.8	5.7	5.9	5.7
Ark Bolingbroke Academy	9/102	45/111	28/104	29/112	100	82.2	79	79.3	8.0	5.6	5.5	5.4
Ashcroft Technology Academy	128/201	98/199	97/203	108/209	88.3	91.8	96	91.7	6.4	6.1	6.5	6.7
Battersea Park School/ Harris Battersea	10/101	23/115	33/166	23/174	100	91.3	88	73.9	6.2	6.4	6.2	4.7
Burntwood	51/262	60/264	86/261	104/280	84.3	80.0	91	81.7	5.9	6.0	6.2	5.5
Chestnut Grove	97/148	131/163	157/175	150/171	91.8	76.3	91	84.0	6.0	5.6	6.2	5.8
Elliott/ Ark Putney	0	0	0/118	0								
Ernest Bevin	21/176	6/175	13/164	0	90.5	83.3	100		5.5	6.5	5.8	
Graveney School	249/258	245/255	269/281	265/277	86.3	84.1	89	84.9	6.1	6.1	6.3	6.0
Saint John Bosco College	56/62	37/45	121/130	115/133	71.4	83.8	73	73.9	4.8	5.8	4.9	5.4
Southfields (GM)	20/133	26/164	0/145	0	25.0	50.0			2.8	3.7		
St Cecilia's, Church of England School	137/137	133/135	148/148	144/147	73.7	62.4	70	66.7	5.2	4.8	5.1	4.9
Francis Barber PRU				1/36				100				8.0

A& AS level results in Wandsworth schools (does not include sixth form colleges)

Subject: Religious Studies (4610)

Qual: GCE AS level

Centre	Entries					%A-B	%A-B	%A-B	%A-E	%A-E		%A-E
	2018	2019		2022	2023	2018	2019	2023	2018	2019		2023
NCER National	16130	7180				35.8	36		86.4	87.6		
LA Comparator	159	130		None taken	6	52.2	60.8	0	93.1	95.4		50
Ark Bolingbroke Academy												
Ashcroft Technology Academy	28	31				64.3	80.6		96.4	100		
Burntwood	7	0				-			28.6			
Chestnut Grove	31	38				80.6	63.2		100	100		
Elliott/ Ark Putney												
Ernest Bevin	9	0				44.4			88.9			
Harris Battersea	7	5				71.4	80		100	100		
Graveney School	50	48			6	54.0	54.2	0	98.0	91.7		50
Saint John Bosco College	0	0										
Southfields	10	1				-	-		100	100		
St Cecilia's, Church of England School	17	7				23.5	-		82.4	71.4		

Subject: Religious Studies (4610)
Qual: GCE A level

Centre	Entries				%A* - B				%A* - E			
	2018	2019	2022	2023	2018	2019	2022	2023	2018	2019	2022	2023
NCER National	16600	15980	14950	14720	52.3	50	68.1	55.1	98	97.9	99.1	97.3
LA Comparator	82	105	69	97	52.4	51.4	73.9	45.4	98.9	96.2	100	97.9
Ashcroft Technology Academy	11	7	19	7	81.8	100	89.5	71.4	100	100	100	100
Bolingbroke Academy			3	12			100	25			100	100
Burntwood	19	17	9	18	42.1	23.5	55.6	38.9	100	88.2	100	100
Chestnut Grove	11	18	14	23	81.8	66.7	57.1	43.5	100	100	100	100
Ernest Bevin	4	9	0	0	25	22.2	0	0	100	88.9	0	0
Graveney School	16	22	11	11	62.5	54.5	58.3	41.7	100	100	100	91.7
Harris Academy Battersea	0	5	0	0	0	80	0	0	0	100	0	0
Saint John Bosco College	3	0	0	13	0	0	0	38.5	100	0	0	100
Southfields	7	10	0	0	0	20	0	0	100	90	0	0
St Cecilia's, Church of England School	11	17	12	11	54.5	64.7	91.7	75	90.9	100	100	91.7

2023 data is provisional